

# FSVA Newsletter



Winter 2007

San Jacinto Ranger District

www.fsva.org

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

### VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY A BIG SUCCESS

Garner Valley Commons provided a beautiful setting for the volunteer appreciation party on October 22 from 12:00 – 3:00 p.m. Thanks to Kathy Bowman and Ron Lawson for procuring it.

Over 30 volunteers attended and enjoyed the marinated chicken and meat that Mike Taggart prepared and BBQ'd. Thank you, Mike, it was delicious! There were also appetizing salads and a large decorated cake for dessert. To those of us sitting outside, we had the pleasure of listening to Dave Heveron play his guitar.

Brad Eells gave a great PowerPoint presentation on the Wilderness and how important it is to be a FSVA Volunteer. We saw a DVD of our Equestrian Team in the Bishop Mule Days Parade that Bill Snead had very professionally done. Thanks to both of them for allowing us the opportunity to see their field of expertise.

We especially want to thank the Forest Service for the many nice awards that were given out that day. We really feel appreciated!

And thanks to the volunteers for pitching in and helping in so many ways at the party; for Melinda for organizing it and getting all the thoughtful awards.

*Gail Heveron and Sharon Middleton*

**Note: Please see photos on Page 8.**



### CAMPFIRE RINGS

Pass this on to everyone that participated in cataloging and obliterating campfire

rings in the wilderness. Since my Patrol 55 position (fire prevention in and out of the Wilderness) has been vacant, I don't believe that we have had any fire prevention folks in the wilderness during 2006. We are trying to fill the vacancy.

The work that the volunteers did will bolster our fire prevention efforts in the wilderness by removing what makes it look like fires are OK. I know it's hard work to obliterate the fire rings and restore the land. Thanks to everyone who helped out.

*Norm Walker, Division Chief, San Jacinto Ranger District (radio call sign Division 5)*

Norm, thank you for the acknowledgement. I know I speak for all the FSVA wilderness volunteers, working both inside and outside wilderness boundaries, to say we all make an effort every time we go out to search for, find and disperse illegal fire rings. It sometimes seems like a never-ending job but every ring we find and disperse is one less invitation to the next person that comes along to have a campfire. The wilderness volunteers also take every opportunity, when meeting backpackers on the trail, to mention that no camp fires are allowed in the wilderness. Most backpackers are proud to say their camp stove is all the fire they need. Thank you.

*Bob Romano, Volunteer Wilderness Coordinator, FSVA*

### FY06 FIRE RINGS

Many thanks to Bob Romano, Steve Ricker, Andy Koperdak, John Edmiston, Dolores Hewitt, Kris Leasher, and Brad Eells for taking care of the 23 illegal fire rings found in the San Jacinto Wilderness during fiscal year 2006!! Rings were found, rocks dispersed (up to 40 rocks per ring),

ashes buried deep, cans/bottles/trash carried out, and left to look natural - all by our great Volunteer Wilderness Rangers. This is just what was found, near trail and way off trail, it is an ongoing problem. Also, many thanks to Greg Rolfi for cleaning hundreds of rings in campgrounds and at yellow post sites.

*Gail Heveron, Wilderness Ranger*

## **MY TAKE ON 41 YEARS WITH THE FOREST SERVICE**



I have used this forum to give you “my take” on a variety of issues over the past several years. Today, I announced my intention to retire on February 2 after 41 years of service, having been Chief for almost six of those years. So here’s “my take” on leaving the agency that has been such a big part of my life.

In a letter to all employees when I first became Chief, I talked about our history and rich traditions but emphasized the need to look to the future. I shared my view about what the important work of “caring for the land and serving people” meant to me...that our care for the land should continue to be multiple-use, with a focus on stewardship and sustainability of the land, the water and the communities we serve. I said that I felt that the best approach to meeting that stewardship objective would be to focus on what we leave on the land rather than what we take from it. I also speculated that through the use of stewardship contracts and other innovative management tools, we could have healthy ecosystems and continue to produce goods and services.

I have traveled all over the country doing this job, and I am in awe of the beauty of the land we manage. You have embraced the idea of the “Four Threats” and I have been gratified by your hard work in response to those threats. You truly are the protectors of our nation’s forests. We have lived through traumatic events such as September 11 and Hurricane Katrina, and we responded to those events and many others as only the Forest Service can. We have grieved too often for those who lost their lives in support of our mission. I continue to be startled and pleased at the skill, talent and enthusiasm of our people. Your dedication to our

mission, to the land, and to the American people amazes me.

The hardest moments for a Chief are when we lose people. I have tried hard to make safety a big part of my work. My deepest hope is that the Forest Service truly develops a culture around safety. At the end of the day, I want everyone to go home.

This has been a time of great change for the Forest Service. You have struggled with me through the changes, and I can’t begin to tell you how much that has meant to me. I have felt tremendous support from Forest Service people, during both the good times and the bad times. I know that you will give the next Chief that same support. Like me, your new Chief will be awestruck and grateful for it.

Words can’t begin to describe how I feel today. Thank you for everything that you do. As I said in April 2001, it is important work. I am proud to have served with you. That’s my take.

*Dale Bosworth*

*Forw. by Email from Melinda Lyon,  
Wilderness/Trails Manager 1/18/07*

## **NEW FOREST SERVICE CHIEF**



Washington, January 12, 2007 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the selection of Abigail Kimbell as the 16th chief of the Forest Service. Kimbell succeeds Chief Dale Bosworth, who is retiring on Feb. 2 after 41 years with the Forest Service. "Abigail Kimbell is a veteran of the Forest Service who began as a seasonal worker and has since filled an impressive series of field assignments," said Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns. "I am grateful to Dale Bosworth for his 41 years of public service and especially for the tremendous leadership he provided during his six years as chief." Kimbell currently serves as Regional Forester for the Northern Region in Missoula, Montana, which includes northern Idaho, and North Dakota. As

Forest Service Chief, Kimbell will oversee an organization of over 30,000 employees and a budget of just over \$4 billion. Before becoming regional forester, Kimbell served in the Washington Office as Associate Deputy Chief for the National Forest System, with responsibility for assisting in the development of the Healthy Forest Restoration Initiative.

### **DATES FOR 2007 TRAININGS:**

#### **Adventure Pass Compliance Training:**

**March 10, 10:00 a.m., approx. 5 hrs., Idyllwild office**

**Radio Training: March 27; 1230 - 1630; Idyllwild office**

This training is being taught by one of our dispatchers. If you are unable to make it but have questions or concerns for them, please let me know and I will try to get some answers for you.

**New Member Training: April 22, April 28; 0830 - 1530; Idyllwild office**

**Refresher Training: May 6, May 12; 0830 - 1300; Idyllwild office**

This is the mandatory training that is required to remain active in the Forest Service volunteer program. Please plan to attend on one of these days and mark it on your calendar. Please RSVP to Melinda for trainings.

*Melinda Lyon, Wilderness/Trails Manager  
San Jacinto Ranger District  
San Bernardino National Forest  
phone: 909-382-2929  
[mlyon@fs.fed.us](mailto:mlyon@fs.fed.us)*



### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO COUNT BALD EAGLES**

Eagle Counts for this winter have been scheduled for Saturday morning, March 10. Volunteers are needed for the counts--they are stationed at various vantage points around the lakes where they map and note any eagle observations

during the 1-hour period from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. Mark your calendars now. Volunteers need not have experience--just bring binoculars, a watch and dress warmly. Volunteers for Big Bear should come to the Forest Service Big Bear Discovery Center on North Shore Drive at 8:00 a.m. for instructions. Volunteers for Arrowhead should go to the Sky Forest Ranger Station at 8:00 a.m.. For more information, please call Marc Stamer, Wildlife Biologist at the Big Bear Ranger Station 909-382-2828. Volunteers for Silverwood Lake State Park should contact Rick Reisenhofer for information during business hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at 760-389-2281, and plan to meet at the Visitor Center at 8:00 a.m. Volunteers for Lake Hemet should contact Heidi Sellers at 909-382-2945 and plan on meeting at the Lake Hemet Grocery Store at 8:30 a.m. for instructions.

The San Bernardino mountains support the largest wintering bald eagle population in southern California. Eagles typically begin arriving in the area in late November and continue to stay in the area until early April. Numbers using the Big Bear Basin have fluctuated over the past 22 years, from lows of 10-12 to highs of 35-40.

The U.S. Forest Service has organized monthly winter counts since 1978. Observers are stationed around the mountain lakes for a simultaneous 1-hour census/mapping effort once a month December through March. Through this method, the Forest Service has gained information about high-use foraging, perching, and day resting areas, fluctuations of numbers, and changes in use areas depending on weather, ice, and lake level conditions. Concurrent censuses are conducted at Big Bear Lake, Baldwin Lake, Lake Arrowhead, Silverwood Lake, Lake Gregory, Little Green Valley Lake, and Lake Hemet.

Fifteen winters ago (1991-1992), the Forest Service started a research project to learn more about what areas in the mountains are important for eagle foraging, perching, and night roosting. Fifteen eagles were caught and equipped with tiny radio-transmitters that allowed us to track their movements. Through radio-tracking, we learned that some of the same individual eagles return to the San Bernardino mountains year after year. We also determined that there is a lot of movement of eagles between the different mountain lakes and that the lakes do not have distinctive separate populations—the eagles regularly move between Silverwood, Big

Bear, and Arrowhead lakes. We have also learned that some of the San Bernardino Mountains' eagles travel to Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Canada, and even the Northwest Territories (about 2000 miles one-way!) for nesting.

Scientists at Lake Silverwood have equipped some bald eagles with transmitters tracked by satellites. One of the eagles caught in 1999 returned to Big Bear Lake in early December of 2000! Current information regarding bald eagle migratory routes for these and other California eagles can be viewed from the University of Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group's web site at <http://www2.ucsc.edu/~scprbg/migration.htm>.

Breeding populations of bald eagles in southern California were extirpated by the late 1950s. Until reintroduction efforts began in the 1980's on Catalina Island, the southern-most nest site known in California was in Lake County. During the Winter/Spring of 2003 one pair of bald eagles successfully fledged two young at Lake Hemet in the San Jacinto's! Two bald eagles also nested again in 2004, however the two fledglings were killed during a storm when the nest blew over. Potential nesting habitat exists on San Bernardino National Forest lands adjacent to Big Bear Lake, Lake Arrowhead, Baldwin Lake, Lake Hemet, and Lake Silverwood State Park. The Forest Service will be monitoring these areas in the spring for future nesting attempts.

The bald eagle is a federally-listed Threatened Species. It has full protection under the Endangered Species Act as well as the Bald Eagle Protection Act. Although once gravely threatened with extinction, the bald eagle population is now on the increase. Bald eagle populations have done so well in recent years that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "down-listed" bald eagles from the Endangered status to the Threatened status. Captive breeding programs, reintroduction efforts, the banning of DDT, and public education have all helped in the recovery of this species.

Catching a glimpse of our breath-taking national symbol is relatively easy during winter months in Big Bear. There are some fantastic opportunities for excellent close-up photographs too. Just look in the tallest trees around the lake near open water for perching eagles. Or, if the lake is partly frozen, look for eagles perched on the ice near small groups of ducks using the open water. Stop by the Forest Service's Big Bear Discovery

Center (on North Shore Drive, 1/2-mile west of Stanfield Cutoff) and pick up a handout on eagles.

**Remember that human presence may distract or disturb the eagles - so, try to limit your movements and don't make loud noises when they're nearby. If possible, remain in your car while looking at eagles - the car may act as a blind.**

To welcome and celebrate the eagles in Big Bear, the Forest Service and San Bernardino National Forest Association invite you to participate in Eagle Season. Discovery Tours to view bald eagles will be held each Saturday and Sunday and during holiday periods. The tours consist of an introductory slide show and a tour bus ride around Big Bear Lake to look for eagles. Binoculars and spotting scopes will be provided. Call ahead at 909-382-2790 for reservations and information.

*Marc Stamer, Biologist*



**"USDA FOREST SERVICE" VS. "U.S. FOREST SERVICE" VS. "FOREST SERVICE"**

January 9, 2007. The directive to change how we refer to ourselves in reports, correspondence, and other documents should be signed today or tomorrow. In brief, the Chief has asked us not to refer to ourselves as "USDA Forest Service" over and over again throughout documents; say it once, and thereafter, just say "Forest Service". This is for internal and external documents. If you look at a lot of our reports and correspondence, we repeat "USDA Forest Service" over and over again, and therefore, our documents don't read well. The directive does not change the name of the agency. Covers of reports, etc., will still show USDA and FS logos, so that will not change. Our documents read much better when we just use Forest Service. In situations where we need to distinguish ourselves from non-federal forests, we should use U.S. Forest Service.

*Thanks. Thelma J. Strong, Director, Office of Regulatory and Management Services (ORMS), Yates Building, Mailroom Stop Code 1150, 201 14th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250*

## WEBSITE COORDINATOR'S CORNER

As everyone can see, the FSVA website ([www.fsva.org](http://www.fsva.org)) has gone through a dramatic change. Although much of the work has been done, the website is not complete. Over the next few months the site will have new features added to aid the public and the volunteers here at the San Jacinto District. New features will include a secure login for members, trail information, wilderness/wildlife calendars, and much, much more.

I am asking for suggestions from the FSVA volunteers on what you would like to see on the new web site. Please send your suggestions to [fsvawebsite@fsva.org](mailto:fsvawebsite@fsva.org).

I am personally thanking Brian Otto, our new FSVA webmaster, for his hard work on the design and setup of this new web site. I would also like to thank Brad Eells, photography coordinator, for converting the Time and Hours Form, FSVA Application, Trail Reports, etc. into PDF formats to be used on the website.

*Scott Huseth*



A big Thank You to Kathy Bowman for seeing that the Fall Newsletter got to all of us when I was unable to get up the Hill due to the Esperanza fire. She willingly and quickly came to my aid, "taking over the reins", and did a great job. Thanks, Kathy!

*Sharon Middleton, Editor*

## USFS CONTACT INFO

Idyllwild Ranger Station: 909-382-2922, -2923, or 951-659-2117 then 5. Open 7 days, 8-4:30.

Website: [www.fs.fed.us/r5/sanbernardino](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sanbernardino).

Melinda Lyon: [mlyon@fs.fed.us](mailto:mlyon@fs.fed.us), 909-382-2929, FSVA Liaison, District Wilderness and Trails Manager

## MONUMENT CONTACT INFO

USFS and BLM are partners in the Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, which offers classes, hikes, and events. Call or visit the Visitor Center, 51-500 Hwy 74, Palm Desert, 760-862-9984 for a schedule.

## A FELLOW VOLUNTEER IN NEED OF HELP

John and Wendy Fellows could use our help and prayers. They were recently interviewed in their Fern Valley home by the *Town Crier*. Wendy has been a volunteer for the Forest Service for many years. John, a master craftsman and woodworker, was recently diagnosed with late-stage multiple myeloma, a very serious form of cancer of the blood.

He was first seen by a medical facility in April 2006, then by county doctors, and finally by Veteran's Hospital in Loma Linda in December where he was diagnosed. The disease has taken its toll both physically, emotionally, and financially. Besides being unable to finish their home interior, he cannot tackle the jobs he committed to.

Those who want to help or learn more about the Fellows may call Chris or Julie Austin at 951-659-4959. Donations may be made directly to the Fellows' account at Guaranty Bank in Idyllwild.

*Sharon Middleton, Editor*

## UPDATE - REBUILD MARIA'S HOME

FSVA volunteers have helped already by donating hundreds of dollars to the firefighters' families, and by working hundreds of hours to facilitate the donations. Additionally, volunteer help is still needed to help rebuild Maria Loutzenhizer's house in Idyllwild, Mark was the Captain of Engine 57. They were remodeling when the Esperanza Fire happened, she has young children and is living nearby. It is a **Habitat for Humanity** venture, they are now in Phase 3 - the Rebuild Phase. Phase 1 was to move the family, Phase 2 was tear down, it was in bad shape structurally. For Phase 3 they need skilled and unskilled help. To get on the list call **Joyce Gilden at 951-659-2678**. She will call you the day before they need someone fitting your skill level. I have little building skill but am on her list, some days helpers are needed. If you are available that day, great, if not she will call again. If you live in Idyllwild, she will ask you to pick up a form at the bank to fill out and mail to her with your skill/contact info. They do not need group help so we will not organize a FSVA day.

*Gail Heveron, 2/12/07*

## SMOKEY COLLECTOR'S ITEM

We have carried a book which is now out of print, and I was able to get us the last few copies of *Guardian of the Forest, A History of Smokey Bear and the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program*. Some volunteers own it, Bob Romano says it's very good. Photos of the Smokey campaign, specialty posters, and cartoons are great. Price is \$18.95 minus your 15% discount. Happy reading!

*Gail Heveron, books volunteer*

## FSVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS

President:	Mike Taggart
Vice President and Equestrian Parade Unit Captain:	Karleen Esparza
Treasurer:	Denise Edmiston
Secretary:	Barbara Haines
Wilderness Coordinator:	Bob Romano
Board member :	Gale Salavati
Board member:	Tom Unwin
Website, Volunteer Hours, and Uniform Coordinator:	Scott Huseth
*****	
Asst. Wilderness Coordinator (non-board member):	Dolores Hewitt
Webmaster (non-board member):	Brian Otto
Photography Coordinator (non-board member):	Brad Eells
Newsletter Coordinator (non-board member):	Sharon Middleton
Retail Outlet (non-board member):	Gail Heveron

**Note:** The FSVA Board meets at the Idyllwild Ranger Station Conference Room. All volunteers are invited to attend. Please call Melinda Lyon at 909-382-2929, or Email [mlyon@fs.fed.us](mailto:mlyon@fs.fed.us) for date and time of meetings.

## IN MEMORY OF.....



Memorial Service for Engine 57,  
November 5, 2006, Devore, CA.  
Attended by several FSVA members.  
*Photos by Sharon Middleton*

**TO ALL SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL  
FOREST EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS:  
ENGINE 57 SUPPORT UPDATE,  
FEBRUARY 1, 2007**

It's important to me that you be informed of activities and staffing related to Engine 57 support, so I am providing an update of staffing, counseling, and other activities relative to this effort. All of us on the Forest have been affected by the Esperanza events and many are contributing to this essential, ongoing support work.

First of all I would like to thank the folks detailed to the Forest, who have helped us out over the holidays and the beginning of this year. Tom Gillett, District Ranger on the Cleveland, has been coordinating all efforts, Sherry Rollman has lead the forest public affairs effort, and Greg Cleveland and Rita Cantu have provided public affairs support to San Jacinto RD. These folks have been great.

Recently we've made some additional Forest staffing adjustments related to Engine 57 support in recognition that this work will continue for quite some time. Deputy Forest Supervisor, Max Copenhagen, will assume the lead coordinator role for Engine 57 support behind Tom Gillett. Tom will conclude his temporary assignment February 2. Max will have these responsibilities for the duration. This will help the Forest build continuity in dealing with support issues, activities, and events over the long term.

Dick Markley, Deputy Forest Supervisor on Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, will be personally assisting me with supervisor duties while Max is focused almost entirely on Engine 57 support. Dick brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Forest and will be a valuable addition the Forest leadership. Dick arrives February 5 to begin his 120 day assignment.

Valerie Baca will soon be returning to the Forest as PAO on February 5. Valerie's experience with Engine 57 support will also bring continuity to this ongoing work. Rita Cantu will continue to provide PIO support at the District through the month of February.

We have other folks "in the wings" contributing support from other locations and many on the Forest who have been providing valuable assistance - from helping with contracts to serving as family liaisons. Again, thank you for all your dedication and willingness to help. We have a

couple of important employee assistance programs available and underway. We recently expanded the eligibility for counseling services under the EAP Concern Program to include the families of the fallen firefighters and former employees of the Forest who are impacted by the Esperanza Fire and fatalities. Please don't hesitate to avail yourself of these services which are paid for by the Forest Service. To access these services, call 1-800-937-7770.

We'll also be offering peer critical incident stress management (CISM) counseling through Anne Kellogg of Los Angeles County Fire Department. The San Jacinto RD has already begun to use these services. Several CISM sessions are also scheduled at the Supervisor's Office on February 20. These services are available to any employee or group of employees on the Forest. Please contact Max Copenhagen if you're interested in arranging a session.

I realize there's a lot of interest and questions about memorial events and monuments honoring the fallen firefighters of Engine 57. We're still in the initial discussions on this and there will be opportunities to provide input and serve on cadres to help us plan and implement these projects and events. Additionally we are working with the San Jacinto RD and Regional Office to determine how best to recruit and fill positions on Engine 57 for this coming fire season.

There has also been keen interest in the joint FS/CDF accident investigation and report. This report is still being prepared. Our understanding is that the report won't be finalized until late March/early April. The accident investigation team will be on Forest to brief employees and families of our fallen fire fighters when it is completed.

Again I want to thank every employee and volunteer for your help in the support efforts that are ongoing. This has been a difficult time and you all have been wonderful in the face of it all.  
*Jeanne Wade Evans, Forest Supervisor, San Bernardino National Forest*



## HUMOR IN THE FOREST

Two robins were lying on their backs, basking in the sun. A mama cat and her kitten were walking by.

The kitten complained, "Mama, I'm sooo hungry, what can we eat?"

To which the mama cat, spying the two robins, replied, "How about some Baskin Robbins?"

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A forest ranger is making rounds in a remote part of the wooded reserve when he comes across an unkempt man, sitting at a makeshift campfire. To the ranger's horror, the man is eating a fish and a bald eagle.

The ranger arrests the man and puts him in jail. He is brought before a judge the next morning. The Judge asked the man, "Do you know that eating a bald eagle is a federal offense?"

"Yes I do," replied the man, "but please let me explain what happened."

"You may proceed."

"I got lost in the woods, and hadn't had anything real to eat for two weeks," the man explained. "I was so hungry, I was eating plants to stay alive."

"Then one day, I arrive at a lake. I see a Bald Eagle swooping down to the water and flying away with a fish in its talons. I thought, 'if I startled the Eagle, maybe I could steal the fish.'"

"Low and behold, the eagle lighted upon a nearby tree stump to eat the fish. So, I picked up a rock and threw it. I meant to hit the stump and startle the bird. I hoped he would drop the fish and fly away."

"Unfortunately, in my weakened condition, my aim was off. The rock hit the eagle squarely on his poor little head, and killed it. I agonized over what had happened, but I figured that since it was dead I might as well eat it."

The judge says he will take a recess to analyze the defendant's statement. 15 minutes pass, and the judge returns.

"Due to the extreme circumstances, and because you did not intend to kill the eagle, the court will dismiss the charges." The Judge then leans over the bench and whispers, "If you don't mind my asking, what does a bald eagle taste like?"

"Well your honor, it is hard to explain. The best way I can describe it is that it's much more tender than a California Condor, but the meat is bland compared to a Spotted Owl."

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VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY

OCTOBER 22, 2005

*Photos courtesy of Brad Eells,  
Photography Coordinator*

