



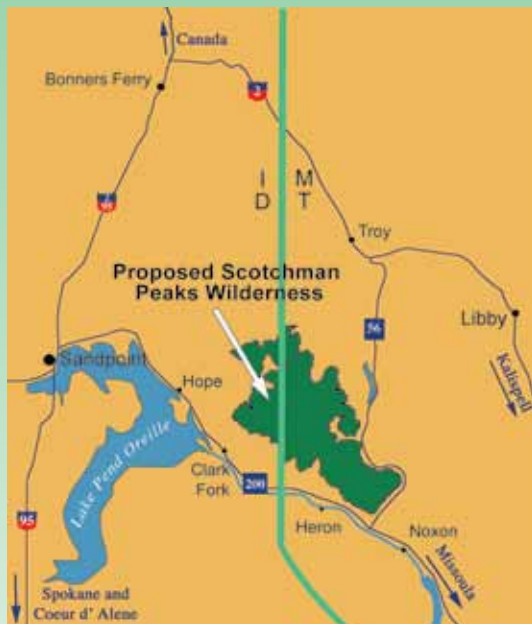
PEAK EXPERIENCE

The Newsletter for Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Inc.

Volume 10, Number 5 • September/October 2014

Mission Statement

“Spanning the Idaho/Montana border, the Scotchmans are one of the last, and largest, wild areas in our region. We conduct education, outreach and stewardship activities to preserve the rugged, scenic and biologically diverse 88,000 acre Scotchman Peaks Roadless Area. We believe the Scotchman Peaks deserve congressional designation as Wilderness for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.”



Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Inc. (FSPW) is a non-profit organization. The proceeds from all events and sales benefit our wilderness preservation efforts. Donations are tax deductible.

If you are receiving this newsletter by mail and have an email address please help us save postage by sending us your email address.

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A Voluntary Return

The 1944 lookout comes back to Star Peak.



Lew Faber flies over the mountain on which he spent his 17th summer
Photo by Chris Compton

By Sandy Compton

In early 1944, 17-year-old Lewis Faber saw an ad in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, newspaper that read, in effect: “Wanted. Young men to work as fire lookouts in the West.” It probably said more than that — likely a minimum age of 16, a description of the work and living conditions, and compensation information. What Lew remembers is that he wrote back expressing willingness and the few qualifications he had, and a few weeks later he got a letter telling him that a.) he was hired; and b.) he was to report to the Noxon Ranger District in Noxon, Montana by June 1. He did, and worked that summer as the lookout on Star (Squaw) Peak.

After he returned home in September of 1944, and until August 5 of this year, he never came back. But on the wall of his living room in Cadillac, Michigan, is a photo he took that anyone who climbs Star Peak might recognize: a long, undulating ridge of meadow and scree fields stretching toward dark stone ramparts that look as if they might slide off to the right, given a good shake. It’s the view to the north from Star Peak Lookout, with Billiard Table Mountain in the distance.

“I look at that picture every day,” Lew says. And that’s what drew him back.

Late last summer, Lew’s daughter-in-law Brenda contacted our Forest Service partner — and FSPW volunteer — Joel Sather and told him that

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Message from the Executive Director

Wilderness: An Unfinished Vision

Fifty years ago, Congress passed the Wilderness Act, creating the National Wilderness Preservation System and immediately protecting just over 9 million acres in 54 areas and reserving to itself the right to designate new areas to the system.

Congress has added Wilderness in nearly every session since 1964, passing over 300 bills protecting over 750 areas and 109,000,000 acres!! Wilderness work is not finished yet. Many deserving areas are still under consideration with popular support and active campaigns.

The value of Wilderness can't be measured through mere statistics alone. The measure of Wilderness can be taken by looking for the blank spaces on the map. The unfinished work is to protect the places which are still beyond our immediate view, the places that we must work to get to. These places hold a mysterious "pull" beckoning us onward. Photos and names may describe these wild places, but they must be visited to be understood.

In 1981 a couple of friends and I set out to hike south-bound on the Pacific Crest Trail and into the Glacier Peak Wilderness area. Our destination was Image Lake. It was the end of September. Picking late-season huckleberries, we made fewer miles than expected and camped short of our destination. During the night snow began to fall, accumulating rapidly. At 4am we broke camp and headed back out, towards home. Seeing Image Lake would have to wait till another day.

Deep in the heart of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, Image Lake remained a blank spot on my personal map and visiting it has held my imagination for decades. Call it my own unfinished business.

Through-hiking the PCT in 1994, I hoped to make a detour to Image Lake but a tight schedule did not allow for it. In 2004, on my second PCT thru hike, we skipped the detour due to foul weather and low visibility.

A couple weeks ago we filled the void left on the map of my adventuring soul when Deb and I took a 6 day back pack trip, destination Image Lake. We had an extra day, so we crossed the divide north of Image Lake into Canyon Creek, camping on a high shelf. By day we explored an old trail, not maintained in decades stopping in very seldom visited basins but turning back before Canyon Lake 6 miles distant from our camp.

Although we did not get to Canyon Lake, that's OK. I think it is best that there are some places which we can continue to wonder about, at least until we have more time to wander about.

This is the enduring power, the beauty, and the vision, of the Wilderness Act. As Congress continues to work on the unfinished business of designation Wilderness we are assured that there will continue to be places to explore, preserving the blank spaces on the map and in our imagination.

When we read or hear about these wild, untamed, unknown places, they capture our imagination. The Wilderness Act manifests our need protect them for future explorations. And so the work of designating Wilderness continues on, still unfinished. Let's savor the journey!

-Phil Hough

"To those devoid of imagination a blank place on the map is a useless waste; to others, the most valuable part."

~Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

From the Top

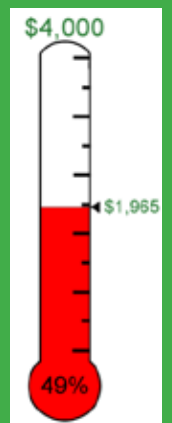
Our regular editor, Ann Wimberley, has taken a few issues off to attend to other things that need her attention. We miss her, and look forward to her return. In the meantime, the job has fallen to me, as I have a little experience with words and such. In this issue of Peak Experience, we have a variety of great writers, old and new, including our backcountry ranger, Joe Zimmerman; FSPW volunteer Ben Olson; outdoor educator extraordinaire Mindy Ferrell; plant guru Valle Novak; our "rock guy" Mark McFadden; and FSPW project coordinator Kristen Nowicki. We sincerely hope you will enjoy this issue.

-Sandy Compton

Cinnabar Matching Grant allows FSPW donors to double their money.

Thanks to the generosity of the Cinnabar Foundation, Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness have an opportunity to double their donations, whether \$5 or \$500 until the first of October. As of August 26, we were about halfway there! Thanks to all who have donated already!

Cinnabar, a Montana-based conservation organization, has been providing Friends donors this opportunity for a number of years, and recently increased the match amount from \$3,000 to \$4,000.





Tales of the Scotchmans: #999 — A new old trail

There's a new trail on the Cabinet Ranger District; a new trail that's an old trail. Volunteers and staff from Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness cut the last 1800 feet of tread necessary to connect Historic Star Peak Trail #999 to Big Eddy Trail #998 on August 1, 2, and 3. This was the culmination of four years of planning and hard work by the Forest Service, Montana Conservation Corps, the local Youth Conservation Corps and FSPW.

It's been a long time coming, and a lot of work," said FSPW executive director Phil Hough, "but the new tread is worth every ounce of sweat expended."

And there were many ounces of sweat. After an initial year of reconnaissance, survey and NEPA work in 2011, with the USFS Cabinet trail crew leading the way cutting out the flag line, FSPW volunteers began cutting tread on the project in July of 2012. Three years and 2.7 miles later, they connected with #998 a third of a mile above where that trail transitions from an old minerals exploration road to single track.

FSPW program coordinator Sandy Compton, who has been the FSPW lead on the project, said, "I was excited when Joel (Sather) presented this idea to us in 2011. The first time I hike to Star Peak, I was 13, and it was still Squaw Peak. I hated that

road then, and it's still not a hiker-friendly route. For me, taking the road out of the loop and providing a better hiking experience for backpackers and day hikers was a no-brainer. ATV riders can still use the road for access, but they are not going to get the tremendous views hikers will get on the new trail. And hikers aren't going to suffer the long, excessively steep runs the road makes in places."

Cabinet District Recreation Technician Joel Sather, who has been the Forest Service lead on the project, "discovered" the old trail while looking through some maps stored in the basement at the Cabinet Ranger District Office near Trout Creek. "I was looking at a map, and saw a trail along the west side of Big Eddy Creek."

Sather says, "I thought, 'There's no trail there.' But I asked around, and a retired guy who had been an old-timer on the district said, 'Yes. That was the original trail up the south side to the lookout.' We went looking and started to find old sections of tread, and my summer intern for 2011 undertook

flagging the old line as closely as we could."

FSPW put together a crew of volunteers and began rebuilding the trail in July of 2012. Since then, an accumulation of over seventy people — FSPW volunteers, MCC crews, YCC crews

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FSPW volunteers put in three hard days to finish the new tread, finishing on August 3
Photo by Sandy Compton

The Future Looks Bright

Wednesdays: The Libby Office at Fourth and Mineral, Suite 205, is open from 9 to 4 on Wednesday.

September 3: The 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Wilderness Act.

September 5 & 6: FSPW and Idaho Conservation League will celebrate the 50th in Sandpoint. Friday night ICL After Hours Event will feature a panel on Wilderness. Saturday hikes in the Selkirks and Scotchmans. Saturday evening party at Evans Brothers Coffee Roasters. Live music, no host beer, wine and food.

September 9 – 11: FSPW volunteers and staff will participate in a Whitebark Pine Study in the Lightning Creek Treasured Landscape.

September 20: FSPW fun fundraiser! Join us on the Shawnodese for a gourmet hors d'oeuvres buffet, beverages and a three-hour cruise (not to Gilligan's Island) on Lake Pend Oreille. \$50 per person. This event is limited to 30 passengers. Deposit is required. Visit <http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/event/fspw-pend-orielle-lake-cruise/> to sign up.

September 21: Dedication of Star Peak Historic Trail #999, Star Peak Trailhead, on Fatman Road #2292, MP 6.3 ± on Montana Highway 200. 1:30 pm ceremony at trailhead. Trail Crew Appreciation Party to follow at Compton Pavilion.

September 27: National Public Lands Day work project in the Lightning Creek Treasured Landscape. Contact trails@scotchmanpeaks.org for information or visit our events page to sign up.

October 4: The Annual Scotchman Peaks Plein Air Paintout will be headquartered at the Outskirts Gallery in Hope, Idaho. Contact sandy@scotchmanpeaks.org

October 5: Annual FSPW Highway 200 Cleanup near Clark Fork will be held. Contact jacob@scotchmanpeaks.org for information

October 7: The Community Prosperity Forum on Healthcare will be held at the Cabinet Peaks Medical Center in Libby, 6:30 pm

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Community Kids Wilderness Hikes

All Smiles After a Few Miles

By **Kristen Nowicki**

The 2014 Community Kids Hike program has blossomed into a successful effort bringing local youth to iconic natural treasures in the Scotchman Peaks proposed wilderness. These events are the product of a partnership between FSPW and Transitions in Progress (TIPS), cooperative action that fostered the development of this summer's program. For many of these kids, this was their first opportunity to experience a wilderness setting.

Knowledgeable and motivated volunteers led 5 hikes with our youth participants over the course of the season. Every 2nd Friday throughout the summer, groups of 8-12 kids ages 4-12 years were transported by the TIPS organization to FSPW's pre-established trailhead locations. These locations varied throughout the event series, exposing kids to a variety of wilderness landscapes. Hikes were led in the Lightning Creek stream complex, in the Ross Creek Cedars old-growth stands, and up to scenic vistas on the Star Peak Historic Trail, all within the proposed wilderness boundaries.

The kids had their summer's first expedition along the Morris Creek trail, north of Clark Fork, ID. This trail meanders in gentle undulations alongside the banks of Morris Creek, amongst pockets of Western Red Cedar openings and hillsides of Grand Fir forests. The kids enjoyed skirting cobbles and boulders bordering the trail, as well as navigating the seeps cutting through the tread. The kids' many inquiries were responded to by hike leaders, questions about insects, stumps, and flowers they discovered along the path. For lunch, the kids grouped under large cedar trees and talked with FSPW intern Joe Zimmerman all about being a Wilderness Ranger. The current restoration activities on the Morris Creek trail have been accomplished through a collaborative effort between FSPW and the USFS Sandpoint district,



The Light at the end of the Tunnel

Photo by Sandy Compton

a partnership that allows for the continued enjoyment of this beautiful trail. Thank you to everyone who assisted this great hike, including volunteer Holly Clements, TIPS staff and parent chaperone, FSPW staff, and FSPW intern Joe Zimmerman.

In the Ross Creek Cedars recreational area, the kids enjoyed two great hikes this year. The first hike meandered freely through the loop trails. The kids followed their adult leaders into the mysteries that piece together this old

growth stand of western red cedar, and listened to stories about the ancient forests' origins. Their journey was highlighted by an exciting 'creek ford' across Ross Creek, a cobble side lunch, a crawl through a hollow log tunnel, and amphibian sightings in the backwaters. Thanks so much to volunteers Diane Brockway and Pam Conrad for their leadership, as well as TIPS and FSPW staff.

For the second Ross Creek adventure, FSPW staff Sandy Compton and volunteers led the kids off the beaten path and up the creek to uncharted territories. The kids continued to grow confidence in their abilities as hikers, a sense of their connection to nature, and a respect for the world around them. Thank you to the staff and volunteers who participated in this event.

At the Star Peak Historic Trail, the kids learned what it meant to "climb a mountain" as volunteers John Hastings and Ben Olson, assisted by TIPS and FSPW staff, led our troops



One excited hiker

Photo by Ben Olson



FSPW volunteer guide John Hastings points to the Clark Fork River from Star Peak Trail #999

Photo by Ben Olson

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Scotchman Natives

Spiraea offers floral beauty in area woodlands

By Valle Novak

There are three *Spiraea* that grace our Panhandle forests: *S. douglasii*, the most common, with dark rose-pink plumes – often called steeplebrush; *S. betulifolia* or birchleaf spiraea, with dense, flat-topped clusters of pinky-white blooms; and the more rarely seen *S. densiflora*, with flat-to-rounded blooms of dark rose-pink.

All are members of the Rose family, and all share the endearing “fuzzy” appearance caused by their many protruding stamens. Each, while often overlapping their cousins’ territories, has its own range and preferred habitat.

S. douglasii flourishes mainly on stream banks and other wet, boggy sites from coastal to subalpine. They range throughout Idaho, peripheral areas of adjoining states, and north to Alaska. Shiny oval leaves, sometimes fluted, cover the many branched shrub that reaches from two to six feet tall.

S. betulifolia, is listed in Dr. Dee Strickler’s *Wayside Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest* as preferring scattered to dense for-



Douglas Spiraea puts on its show in North Idaho forests and mountains during June and July. Its dark rose-pink plumes brighten the woodlands with their delicate beauty

Photo by Marilyn George

shrub, two to four feet high, with bright green oval leaves toothed on the ends.

est from low montane to subalpine altitudes, and ranging from Western Canada to Oregon and in Wyoming (and coincidentally, in Asia). He does not mention Idaho particularly, but surprisingly this is the only spiraea mentioned in the *USDA Field Guide to Forest Plants of Northern Idaho*, and is referred to as “shiny leafed spiraea.” Its leaves are alternate, oval, one to two inches long and toothed on the ends. It reaches only 10 to 24 inches tall.

S. densiflora, also known as Pink spiraea and Subalpine spiraea, prefers subalpine stream banks and lakeshores and alpine tarns and lakesides. It ranges from British Columbia to Montana, Wyoming and California. Seemingly, this curving swath would include North Idaho, and I’m sure I saw it years ago in the Idaho/Montana border area above Murray. This is a low

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Trail Talk

By Joe Zimmerman

Being first, an intern, and now a backcountry ranger, I have been lucky enough to get to spend a large amount of my time hiking the trails in Scotchman Peaks. No matter how many times I have hiked them, I am always excited to get to go again. When I started this summer, I was concerned that after a few weeks on the same trails I would become bored with them and find it hard to find the motivation to keep hiking them week after week. But every time I make it to one of the peaks, I remember why this is probably the best summer of my life.

It does not happen many times in one’s life where you can do something that you absolutely enjoy and get to call it a “my job.” I have found that I really enjoy building and maintain these trails, getting to talk with other hikers and watch the wildlife. It never

seems like I have enough time on the trails, the days just disappear while hiking.

Out of all the trails that I have been able to hike this summer, my favorite by far would have to be Little Spar Lake.

While it’s great to be able to hike to the top of a peak and see for miles and miles around, there is just something about mountain lakes for me. When I plan a hike, especially in a new place, it is usually to one of the more remote lakes in the area.

The hike up to Little Spar Lake I think is one of the best. Not just because it is flat when you compare it to a hike like Scotchman Peak, but I have always liked the view from hiking in a valley bottom, surrounded my high ridges. When you reach about the half way point you come out of the trees to see these steep mountain walls around you, it



Wilderness ranger Joe Zimmerman looks up from his work on Star Peak Trail #999

Photo by Sandy Compton

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Peak Views

Hike date	Exertion Rating	Destination/ Hike Name	Leader(s)	Description and contact info
9/06/14	S	Scotchman Peak	Joe Zimmerman	Contact info: joe@scotchmanpeaks.org Join our backcountry wilderness ranger for a ramble up Star Peak in honor of the 50 th anniversary celebration of the Wilderness Act. This is part of a larger celebration. See our The Future Looks Bright on page 3
10/04/14	S	Scotchman Peak	Phil Hough and Deb Hunsicker	This is th at a slow lake Sorry, this hike is full at this time. To be added to the waiting list, write to trails@scotchmanpeaks.org 4 miles one way, 8 round trip with an elevation gain of 3,800 feet. but steep. We will go and stunning views of will be highlights.
10/11/14	M	Reading Maps, Compass, Tracks and Sign	Brian Baxter	Contact info: b_baxter53@yahoo.com A basic orienteering class with emphasis on utilizing a Silva Ranger Compass and topographical maps to lay out adventures and return home safely. Morning classroom session covers map keys and symbols; contour lines and intervals; figuring scales and measuring horizontal distances; and hands-on practical use of compass and maps as well as other orienteering tips. There is an eight-dollar fee for class materials, providing student with their own topo map to work from. Please bring a ruler, pencils, calculator and if possible, a Silva Ranger compass with rotating dial and declination adjustment. Instructor will have a few extra compasses. Our field study will include an afternoon of hands on track and sign recognition, scatology, and practicing use of compass and maps in the field. Come prepared for a full day with lunch, water, gear, and smiles.

Exertion rating: E = Easy; M = Moderate; S = Strenuous

Along the Trail

July 4: Marchers for Wilderness populated the streets of Clark Fork, Sandpoint, Heron and Noxon; and volunteers and staff worked in our booth at the Troy Fourth of July celebration.

July 11, 12, 13: FSPW, Cabinet Resource Group, the Forest Service, and Montana Wilderness Association hosted a fun and successful three-day celebration of wilderness and the Wilderness Act at the Bull Lake Rod and Gun Club.

July 11: Staff and volunteers took kids from the TIPS program in Sandpoint for a hike at Ross Creek Cedars

July 18: Joe Zimmerman led a work day on Star Peak Historic Trail.

July 19: FSPW volunteers were on hand for outreach at the Yaak Valley Forest Council's Wilderness Festival

July 25: Staff and volunteers took kids from the TIPS program in Sandpoint for a hike at Ross Creek Cedars.

August 1, 2, 3: Sandy Compton and Brad Smith led a three-day work weekend on the Star Peak Historic Trail during which Trail #999 was connected to Trail #998. See the article on page 3.

August 8, 9 and 10: FSPW volunteers, led by staffer Joe Zimmerman, were on hand for the The Huckleberry Festival at Trout Creek.

August 8: Staff and volunteers took kids from the TIPS program in Sandpoint for a hike on the new Star Peak Trail #999.

August 15: Backcountry Ranger Joe Zimmerman led a workday on Star Peak Trail #999 to improve tread work.

August 19 – 23: FSPW staff and volunteers signed dozens of new Friends at a booth at the Bonner County Fair.

August 22: Staff and volunteers took kids from the TIPS program in Sandpoint for a hike on the new Star Peak Trail #999

August 23: FSPW and Montana Wilderness Association presented a half day of fun family activities as well as Wylie and the Wild West Show in Libby in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

August 28: FSPW Program Coordinator Sandy Compton attended a Job Fair at University of Montana in Missoula.

Future, from page 3

October 11: Brian Baxter will lead a class on finding your way in the outdoors: Reading Maps, Compass, Tracks and Sign. Join our outdoor education expert by writing to b_baxter53@yahoo.com

October 13 - 20: Phil Hough and Sandy Compton will attend the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance and the National Wilderness Conference 50th Anniversary celebration to be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

October 14-15 (tentative dates): White pine planting days in Mud Creek for the continuing National Forest Foundation Lightning Creek Treasured Landscape restoration project.

On The Horizon

November, time and date to be announced: Community Prosperity Forum in Libby.

November, time and date to be announced: The annual Sip-and-Shop event at the brand new Pend Oreille Winery facility on Cedar Street in Sandpoint.

December, time and date to be announced: Pints for the Peaks. A fundraiser at the Idaho Pour Authority.

January 9, 2015: A gala celebration of the 10th anniversary of Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. To be catered by Tango Café in the main level of Panhandle State Bank Atrium.



Scotchman Rocks

Sinkers and Skippers

By **Mark McFaddan, PhD**

One of the very first things that most of us learned about rocks (beside the fact that most are not very tasty) was that some of them could be made to skip over the surface of the water if thrown

just right. It became a simple form of magic to cause a heavy object normally gone with a splash into the depths below to instead leap airborne and leave a trail of rings far from shore. As children, we generally investigated each new beach with an eye for the ideal shapes that could entertain us for hours as we attempted to master the perfect toss resulting in the most skips.

Our world of rocks was conveniently divided in half: sinkers and skippers. But why are really great skippers rare on most beaches? To find the answer, we just need to turn our backs on the fun and look inland - it all comes down to the bedrock along the shoreline.

Some beaches along our northern Idaho lakes and rivers are predominately sand; they result from the weathering and breakdown of rocks that disintegrate relatively eas-



Pebbles on the beach at left are predominately thin, disk-shaped skippers; those on the beach on the right are mostly thicker sinkers.

Photo by Mark McFaddan, PhD

ily over the span of geologic time, and have joys all their own for soft lounging and sand castle engineering. Others are a disappointing gooey mud composition, where finer-grained sediment is abundant and currents are too leisurely to carry away the tiny particles. Rocky beaches are likely in places where fast currents or high wave energy

tend to remove fine sediment and deposit it in deeper, quieter water and leave the heavier stones behind. Exposures of bedrock along the shore are essential, but the composition of the rock is really the key to the resulting beach pebble shapes.

Sinkers, with their roughly equant dimensions, result from the breakdown of rocks that lack thin layers in the first place. Whether the clasts have the speckled appearance typical of granite (resulting from magma cooling at depth), or are the more uniform colors of quartzite (formed by the compaction, heating, and deep burial of sandy sediment over time), more cubic shapes are the product of the breakdown of massive rocks or those with

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Trail, from page 5

always makes me stop and stare at them. Getting to stand below them and see the many small waterfalls, the last remains of snow and the aftermath of avalanches is always good.

Life for me does not get much better than getting to spend a few hours by the lake. Its calm, you can hear the wind in the trees, the birds in the air, and watch the fish jump in the lake and swim around the rocks. I can never seem to get over how clear the lake is, it seems you can almost see all the way to the bottom. I can find a spot and sit there for hours as I look around at the surrounding cliffs, looking of any sign of the local wildlife. And no trip to a lake is complete without jumping in! While it is still fairly cold, it is so refreshing to be able to cool off on a hot summer day. The thought of the plunge is a great motivation to reach the lake, no matter what the temperature is.

The other great part of doing so much hiking is getting to talk to and meet so many great people. Pretty much every day I go out, I meet at least one group of hikers. It does not really matter the weather, rain or shine I will meet someone. The busiest day I had was on a cold, rainy day on the Scotchman Peak trail. I was able to talk to around 30 people as they were making their way up and down. Despite the less than ideal weather, everyone had smiles on their faces, laughing as they hiked and happy to stop and talk for a minute or two.

Having experiences like that, seeing people outside and enjoying the trail and everything it has to offer always makes me smile. I continue to look forward to the second half of my summer and all those who I will meet along the way.

Editor's note: Joe Zimmerman is a back country ranger who works for FSPW in cooperation with the Cabinet Ranger District.



Lew, from page 1

Lew wanted to — finally — come back to where he had spent his 17th summer. Joel had Brenda then contact me, and, as they say, “the rest is history.”

It took a winter of e-mail and phone calls and false starts and good leads, but finally, this is what we arranged. Early on Wednesday, August 7, Joel was to give Lew a ride in a Forest Service ATV to the end of the road that makes up the lower half of Big Eddy Trail #998. Mule-packer — and FSPW volunteer — Jim Thompson was then to take Lew to the lookout on one of his animals. Lew’s three sons, Jim, Gerrit, and Marty would ride to the meeting point with Joel. Large animal vet — and FSPW volunteer — Celeste Grace was to ride one of Jim’s mules as far as the end of the road. Brenda and I were going to walk up the new Trail #999 (See story on page 3) and meet the party halfway, at which point Brenda, Celeste, the brothers and I would continue to the Lookout, following Jim Thompson, Lew and the mules.

Great plan. But it didn’t quite happen that way.

After meeting the mules on Tuesday, Lew — who is spry, alert and 87 years old, if you didn’t do the math already — spent a restless night. He announced to the family in the morning that he was regretfully choosing not to attempt the mule ride to the top of the mountain.

That was a hard decision to make, after a year of planning and anticipation, but Jim Thompson, who had given Lew a ride on a mule the day before, agreed it was a good decision. Lew’s three sons and Brenda were still willing and desirous of getting to the top, so Joel ferried the sons up



Lew Faber gazes fondly at Star Peak, where he was a lookout in 1944

Photo by Sandy Compton

the old road in the ATV. Jim Thompson was still itching for a ride, so he and his sister Sigrid brought three mules and Sig’s horse and rode to the end of the road with Celeste riding one of the mules and the third critter hauling water and lunches. Brenda and I went up #999 to meet them where the new trail comes close to the road.

Where was Lew while all this was all going on? He was getting the look at Star Peak Lookout he thought he wasn’t going to get. While everyone else was getting ready to make their way up the trail, Lew was escorted to “Blue Creek International,” where he accepted a ride in FSPW volunteer Chris Compton’s bright yellow 1949 Stinson.

In the end, Jim, Brenda, Celeste and I made it to the lookout, and the Faber descendents got a small look at what lookout life might have been like for a 17-year-old from Michigan. Though the lookout itself was “changed out” in 1953 and the stone house is no longer used to store stock feed and fire fighting tools, the view is pretty much unchanged.

Lew got a good look at “his” lookout — from a slightly different angle, perhaps — but one that still had him glowing at the end of the day. His sons and daughter-in-law got an up-close and personal experience — and a half-Nalgene of huckleberries — from Star Peak.

And a handful of over-the-top volunteers have my great appreciation for a job well-done.

Lew Faber’s story continues in the next issue with a first-hand account of his time on the lookout that contains some historic surprises — at least for me. — SC

Rocks, from page 7

thick layers. The relentless action of waves can round off the sharp edges, but nice, smooth spheres are still sinkers.

Really nice skipper beaches result from the weathering of hard rocks with thin internal layering. The Belt Supergroup rocks common throughout the Idaho panhandle and western Montana have many intervals that are just the ticket to skipper paradise. Formed as thin layers of sand, silt, and mud accumulated in the region approximately a billion and a half

years ago, the strata have been welded into tough, resistant rock during deep burial within the crust. Exposed again during the uplift of the Rockies, the rock naturally splits along the original sedimentary laminations. Thin plates with square corners are the first result of weathering disintegration of the outcrops, but years of wave energy soon smooth off the sharp edges and leave our favorite thin disk shapes. The next time you are headed to the water’s edge of your favorite lake, keep an eye on the rock outcrops as you approach the shore. Thin layers are a good clue to great skippers ahead!



Wild Creatures of the Scotchmans

Bushy-tail Woodrat, *Neotoma cinerea*

By Mindy Ferrell

Rats! Most folks have a pretty negative reaction to these ubiquitous creatures. “Ew!” But, after all, there must be a purpose for all of the Earth’s creatures, right? And, certainly, this is also true for the bushy-tail woodrat, which we commonly call the pack rat.

This rat makes itself known by the pile of debris — often several feet high — consisting of anything that can be carried — sticks, tin cans, litter, manure, or any kind of litter it finds. And, if something catches its eye, it will happily drop whatever it is it is currently carrying. Thus, campers can sometimes find something missing, while something else is left in its place.

These rats are mainly nocturnal — often keeping you awake at night as well — but long summer days will find them out exploring, largely trying to find and cache food for the coming winter nights. Since they don’t hibernate, they must be sure to lay in enough supplies for winter’s scarcity.

Neotoma cinerea is a sexually dimorphic species. What that amounts to is that the males and females are distinctly different in size and shape and often color. The males can weigh 300 – 600 grams, with the females only weighing in at 250 – 300 grams. Their body

size is correlated with climate, which is theorized in “Bergmann’s Rule” – when a species is found in a wide range of latitudes and elevations, their body size will be larger in colder climates. The

bushy-tail woodrat is found extensively throughout western North America ranging from the Canadian arctic to northern New Mexico and Arizona, from boreal woodlands to deserts. If nothing else, this creature is an adaptable opportunist.

The bushy-tail woodrat is an herbivore, but beyond that, it can consume just about anything it can find. Since it can be found in deserts as well as in the high country of the Scotchman’s, it can eat succulents as well as woody vegetation. Since it gets all its water needs met from food, it can be found in very dry or rocky environments. Certain chemicals in its diet, oxalates, play a big role in the smell and behavioral habits of the pack rat.



Bushy tailed woods rat, AKA Pack Rat

Photo source: National Parks Service

Middens are a built mound system within which a pack rat will live, make a nest, and sometimes store their food. They are built in caves or crevices, and are made with a combination of plant materials and feces, then solidified or crystallized with their urine. The oxalates in their urine allow them to create these odiferous, hardened “dens”. This den can help shelter them from temperature extremes, and is, in part, a

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Tales from page 3

and USFS workers — have put in hundreds of hours on the new tread. “It’s not been an easy project,” Compton says. “On scree fields, we built trail by moving rock by hand; we dug out hundreds of service berry, mountain maple, buck brush and ocean spray root wads. Some of the hardest digging was through heavy sod on very steep slopes in the meadows up high. And sometimes, we had to do some “re-engineering” around rock outcroppings. As much as we might love to try it, none of us are experienced with dynamite.”

The trail opened August 3, and the first group of day hikers used it August 6 for an FSPW-led hike to the lookout, but there’s still work to do. FSPW



Volunteers Irv McGeachy (foreground), Brad Smith (rear), Celeste Grace and Phil Degens (far right) share a laugh with FSPW program coordinator Sandy Compton and FSPW wilderness ranger Joe Zimmerman as Laddie the trail supervisor dog looks on.

Photo by Phil Hough

and the Forest Service will continue to improve the tread work as time goes by. “FSPW will work to finish up #999 over the next few years,” Compton says, “and we’ll continue to do maintenance, but our initial goal is achieved. We have a findable, hikeable, enjoyable and extraordinarily scenic trail that will continue to mature and “set up” with use.”

The reconstructed Trail #999 begins near the east end of Fatman Road #2292, which intersects Montana Highway 200 at about Milepost 6.3. The new tread enters the forest at the crux of the switchback about 200 yards up #2292 from the highway. A dedication ceremony and celebration for volun-

teers is planned for September 21. All who have worked on the trail are invited



Kid Hikes, from page 4

up the steep and newly restored Star Peak trail. Climbing up near Big Eddy Creek, the moist air kept spirits high, even as the trail began to grade fiercely upwards. That, and Mr. Hastings' uber-cool mister bottle that kept their red-hot faces refreshed. The kids learned that hiking up takes work, wondering perhaps, will this 'up' ever end? Soon they sprawled upon the trail's first great bedrock bench, and were graced with an amazing view of the Clark Fork delta. They listened as Mr. Hastings illuminated this new perspective of the land where they live. Lunch with a view, in the shade of a giant Ponderosa pine, was enjoyed by all. Back down by the creek, the kids lingered and listened, poked and rolled, and learned a little more about life by the riverside. The Star Peak Historic trail has finalized its restoration in 2014 thanks to cooperative efforts between FSPW and the USFS Cabinet district. Thanks to all the volunteers and staff members who assisted this event.

FSPW has been so grateful for this opportunity to show these enthusiastic and wonder-filled kids a deeper view of the wilderness land potential in their very own backyards. Thank you so much to everyone who had a hand in making this program possible, including volunteers Diane Brockway, Pam Conrad, Holly Clemets, John Hastings, Ben Olson, Ben Galloway, and Bonnie Jakubus and Ken Thacker, Tami Martinsen and TIPS staff and parents, our amazing and inspiring youth participants, and FSPW staff Sandy Compton, Kristen Nowicki, and Joe Zimmerman. For more information about our youth program potentials, our restoration work in the Lightning Creek Drainage, or our stewardship activities on the Star Peak Trail, please contact kristen@scotchmanpeaks.org or visit our website at www.scotchmanpeaks.org

Creatures from page 9

defensive mechanism for predation from bears, weasels, martins, bobcats, or hawks, or just about any other critter found in our mountains that would enjoy a tasty morsel to eat.

But, I alluded to the fact that they have a positive purpose. Certainly we can all agree that they are an important part of the food web for carnivores of our area. They'll have up to 3 litters per year, and can even breed 12 hours after giving birth. But, the long-standing habits of the pack rat provide an unusual benefit for those interested in climate changes in a given area. Because the structural integrity of their middens, paleoclimatologists can excavating the midden's contents for everything those pack rats put into their walls, and are learning from the plant macrofossils and even the bones that might have been stuffed into the walls.

So why the bushy tail? Simply this: every creature finds comfort wrapped up in their own blanket during those long winter nights.

Celebrate in Style

Check out our bandanas, tees, sweats and hats available at Mountain Meadows in Libby, MT, The Hope Market Place in Hope, ID and Foster's Crossing, Eichardt's, Greasy Fingers Bike Shop and Outdoor Experience in Sandpoint, ID. Out of the area, contact jim@scotchmanpeaks.org. Other Scotchman merchandise is available in our online store run by Café Press at www.scotchmanpeaks.org/store/html.



Fall Fundraiser on the Shawnodese September 20!

Sign up now for this great event

Thanks to the generosity of Linda Mitchell, first mate on the Shawnodese, FSPW will host its first ever Fall Fundraiser floating on the surface of Lake Pend Oreille with Scotchman in view.

This is a limited space three-hour cruise that will leave Hope at 3:30 and return at 6:30. During the three-hour cruise, munch some dandy appetizers prepared by (camp) chefs Sandy Compton and Kristen Nowicki, sip some superb Walla Walla Wines supplied by chief (wilderness) steward Joe Zimmerman and poured (and field tested) by sommelier Phil Hough. Three-hour cruise, appetizers, wine and a story from the not-so-mysterious StoryTeller are included in the price of \$50.00 per person. Extra fun may be had by wearing your favorite three-hour cruise outfit and answering Gilligan's Island trivia questions. You can earn bonus points for the name of Mrs. Howell's dog (This could be a trick question). Those of a certain gender may also ponder the eternal question, "Ginger or Mary Ann?"



Did we mention this will be a three-hour cruise? Or that there will be a couple of killer silent auction items?

Bargain priced at \$50.00 per person. Sign up online on our events page or write to sandy@scotchmanpeaks.org.

National Public Lands Day is September 27! Celebrate with us with a workday on Morris Creek Trail in the Lightning Creek "Treasured Landscape. Picnic to follow at the East Fork Creek Trailhead. Sign up online at <http://www.scotchmanpeaks.org/event/national-public-lands-day-trail-project/>



The Volunteer's View

Community Kids Hike - Star Peak Trail

By Ben Olson

One of the most rewarding experiences for Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness volunteers is to pass along their love of nature to the generations to come. The Community Kids Hike is a sure-fire way to introduce good habits to the mountaineers of the future, opening up a lifetime of exploring in the wilderness that surrounds us.

The hike began at the trailhead of the newly-constructed lower Star Peak Trail #999. Attending the hike were a dozen local kids ranging in age from six to ten years old, each with his or her own levels of outdoor experience. Stopping frequently to hydrate, to explore, and to learn about local flora and fauna, the group hiked up and away from the shady creek bed to an overlook with great views of the Cabinet Gorge on Clark Fork River.

A half mile up the trail, the group stopped for lunch and a siesta in the shade. A line formed around John Hastings's ever popular mist-spraying water bottle. Kids threw Goldfish crackers into one another's mouths. Some laid their heads onto their packs to power nap before heading back down into the cool shade of the creek bed.



The group traversed the section of rocky trail and stopped again in the shady glen of the creek, where the more adventurous kids stripped their shoes and socks and waded in the ankle-deep water.

Upon leaving the trailhead and returning to the van, I thought of my own childhood, how I was lucky to have been taken out in nature often by experienced guides who taught me the lessons that have stuck with me three decades later. It dawned on me then that other kids may not have been given that opportunity.

Events like the Community Kids Hike, and the volunteers who make it happen, are so important to our next generations. Appreciation of the outdoors is a vital life skill, in my opinion. It continues to enrich my life more and more

every time I take that first step on the trail, up the mountain, away from the roads and civilization to that place in the wild where things just seem to make sense again.



They had absolutely no fun on this hike

Ben Olson Photo

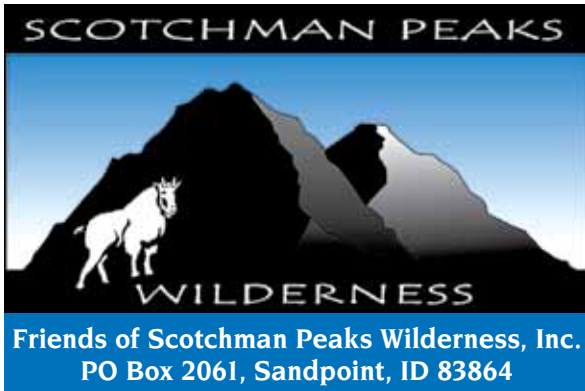
Natives, from page 5

Landscaping with Native Plants in the Idaho Panhandle, the Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society's most excellent paperback, describes both *douglasii* and birchleaf spiraeas as being excellent for inclusion in the ornamental landscape. They're right, of course, and the bonus of any native plant is their hardiness. They need no fertilizer, preferring simply our naturally acidic soil. Douglas spiraea prefers moist soils with good drainage, but tolerates very wet soils and changing water tables. *Betufolia*, on the other hand, is described as a "good understory plant for the dryish woodland garden," and prefers a more sunny, open location than what *douglasii* demands. All spiraeas grow easily from seeds or cuttings, and since they grow from creeping underground stems, offshoots of these can be easily established in the garden.

As usual, I must pass on my first sighting of *S. douglasii*. It was in the foothills around Chilco, where I spent my early child-

hood. I was about five, I imagine, and was following a trail with Daddy, who was passing on his store of woodland lore, and we came to a slight grade leading down to a small open fen. It held cattails and yellow waterlilies, and surrounding it were bushes of the beautiful fuchsia blooms of the spiraea. Where we stood, and continuing half-way down and around the circular grade, were several Ocean Spray (*Holodiscus*) in full flower of creamy hanging pendants. It couldn't have been better planned by a garden designer. My little mind told me I was in fairyland. I didn't know then that Ocean Spray and Spiraea are closely related, both being members of the rose family. The little separation of habitat gave each what they desired (Ocean Spray prefers dryer soil) while still allowing a lovely counterpoint of size, color and habit that showcased the pond.

We've all had these breath-taking moments in the woods. That's Mother Nature's gift to hikers and wanderers – it keeps us coming back for more - and it sure helps to offset the mosquitoes!



How You Can Help

Support Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness

As concerned citizens, we support protecting and preserving the Scotchman Peaks area for ourselves and future generations. Highway 56, Highway 200, Lightning Creek Road, and Rattle Creek/Keeler Road surround this 88,000 acre scenic area which straddles the Idaho and Montana border. Wilderness Designation for the Scotchmans will protect plants and wildlife, including the endangered grizzly bears, mountain goat, and bull trout; it will protect water quality; and it will preserve a special place for future generations. In addition, local communities will benefit from the unparalleled recreational and economic opportunities such wilderness provides.

Name: _____

Address: _____

e-mail: _____

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Donation enclosed (optional). Donations are tax deductible.
 Please make checks payable to the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, Inc. Detach & Mail to the address above.

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