

A Take Pride in America National Award Winner

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President's Message

Dear Volunteers, Members, and Friends of the SGWA,

All of us who have hiked the Sky High Trail on our way to the San Gorgonio Summit have come across the wreckage of an old C-47 cargo plane that slammed into the mountain December 1, 1952. Most of us pause and reflect at what we are sure was a horrific event, but so few of us know the details of that fateful crash.

While researching material for one of our Greyback Amphitheater Ranger Talks I came across the 1953 obituary for the pilot of that plane. For so many years I had walked the site where he lost his life -- knowing some of the details of his life makes hiking the Sky High Trail more inspirational.

Captain George F. Bingham had served overseas as a WW2 B-17 pilot during the bombing of Germany industries, and he participated in

providing air cover to the initial D-Day landing in France. He received many citations and decorations for personal exploits. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross when he successfully piloted a B-17 across the English Channel after the rudder controls had been shot away during combat over Germany.

Capt. Bingham served as a flight instructor after returning home from the war, and he specialized in instrument flying and weather service. He was probably one of the few pilots with the experience and training to safely fly across the San Gorgonio area during stormy winter weather. Unfortunately, some situations exceed our experience and training. He and the 12 other young men on board were instantly killed when the C-47 slammed into the mountain mere minutes away from landing at March Field on December 1, 1952.

It was Capt. Bingham's 32nd birthday.

Heavy snowfall impeded search and rescue efforts that included over 60 aircraft at a time. When the wreckage was finally sighted the weather and excessive snowfall made recovery impossible. The bodies of these brave young men remained on the mountain until they could be recovered the following May.

The wreckage remains on the mountain side. It serves as testimony that nature and wilderness are unpredictable, dangerous, beautiful, and awe inspiring. The next time you hike the Sky High Trail take a moment as you pass the wreckage and tip your hat to Capt. Bingham and his crew.

Many of us hiking the Forsee Creek Trail now have a new bittersweet remembrance. In late October this year, volunteer **Sue Crowell** passed away on the trail

while hiking off-duty with her friend and fellow volunteer **Ardis Beckner**.

Capt. Bingham and Sue Crowell both left this mortal world while near Mt. San Gorgonio doing what they both loved. We will honor their lives by following their example and living life doing what we love.

Jarome

Volunteers and Contributors Help Forest Visitors by John Flippin

Our working volunteers and contributing members/sponsors made the summer of 2005 the best ever. Working volunteers and contributing members/sponsors once again enabled us to care for the forest and help visitors better understand and enjoy the very special and wonderful resources of the San Bernardino National Forest. By providing clean and safe trails and camps, and by providing education in historical and natural resources, the continuing work of the SGWA ensures a safe, enjoyable source of low cost recreation that helps forest visitors improve their mental and physical health.

Our volunteers' service was amazing and varied as it has been for the past 25 years. Of course, it is people, and how well they care for others, that make any program as successful as this volunteer program has been for many years. We've been very lucky to have very caring Forest Service personnel and volunteers over the years from the Forest Service founders of our program, **Dave Hood** and **Bob Shuker**, and our SGWA founding directors **Jim Bolson**, **John Flippin**, **Dorothy Fotheringham**, **Dana Klatt**, **Alice Krueper**, **Dave Hallet**, **Linda Roddick**, **Val Silva**,

and **Dale Silvernail**, to all of the great volunteers and Forest Service personnel we have today. We were lucky again this year to have several excellent new volunteers come on to help our veterans. As a result, volunteer accomplishments were truly unbelievable.

Volunteers donated over 13,600 hours, worth over \$325,000 to the Forest Service and the public. Volunteers protected and cleaned the forest, improved facilities and trails, and helped tens of thousands of visitors, including 16,000 with whom they had face-to-face contact. Some of the major volunteer accomplishments in 2005 were:

- Removed thousands of pounds of litter, trash, and junk from roads, trails, campsites, and picnic areas.
- Cleaned up 31 illegal fire rings and prevented many more.
- Presented a couple dozen nature talks to over 2000 visitors.
- Provided lunch and fishing buddies to 84 children at the Forest Service Fish Festival.
- Operated and maintained the Barton Flats Visitor Center where volunteers talked with over 4,000 visitors.
- Operated and maintained the Horse Meadows historical site along the South Fork Trail.
- Operated and maintained the visitor information station at the Big Falls Picnic Area.
- Provided complete patrol of the San Gorgonio Wilderness and surrounding areas.
- Provided frequent fishing and litter control and education along 10 miles of the Santa Ana River.
- Performed minor trail maintenance along 100 miles of trail in and around the Wilderness.
- Served 200 hours on major trail projects.
- Removed a few miles of brush and several trees from across trails.
- Patrolled and monitored mining operations in the forest.
- Managed educational sales outlets in five locations on the forest.
- Maintained an extensive web site containing forest information, including weather and trail conditions.

- Operated and maintained a permanent volunteer work camp.
- Provided current trail/camp conditions reports for Wilderness visitors.
- Provided seven public assists to lost, injured, and/or stranded forest visitors.

Well, you get the idea. Volunteer services are amazing in quantity, quality, and variety. And that is why all volunteers were honored by the Forest Service at our awards ceremony on October 22. Awards were presented by Gene Zimmerman, Forest Supervisor, and our most constant day-to-day Forest Service supporters, **Gabe Garcia** (District Ranger), **Bob Wood** (Recreation Officer), and **Alfredo Zarate** (Wilderness Manager). Special awards were presented to **Teddi Boston** (Children's Fishing Festival), **Teri Cappuccio** (Newsletter Printing and Distribution), **Michael Gordon** (Website Manager), **Mary Hart** (Whispering Pines Trail Maintenance), **Richard Nyerges** (Assistant Patrol Coordinator), and **Ann Robinson** (Newsletter Editor). Also, for providing on-going volunteer leadership in key areas of our operations, special recognition was given to **Dee McCoy** (Interpretive Sites), **Bob Oppermann** (Fund Raising Events), **Karen Saffle** (Forest Festival), **Ted Schofield** (Earth Share Payroll Contributions), **Val Silva** (Equestrian Coordinator), **Danny Silva** (Volunteer Work Camp Manager), and **Jarome Wilson** (Interpretive Programs). **Jeff Lynn** and **Steve Myers** received special gifts for their many hours of outstanding trail maintenance. We were very pleased to recognize **Teddi Boston**, **Karen Flippin**, **Bill Hedekin**, and **Greg Silver** for completing ten years of volunteer service. We then finished up the day with special awards to **George Annas**, **Del Hawkins**, **Cindy and Joe McGregor**, and **Mary and Ross Stark** who all completed 15 wonderful years of volunteer service. Congratulations to all volunteers for another great year!!

Volunteer Sue Crowell Moves On

Sadly for those of us still in this world, Sue Crowell left her body behind in late October while out hiking on the Forsee Creek Trail with her long time friend and hiking partner, volunteer Ardis Beckner. Both Sue and Ardis have been SGWA volunteers since 1995. Sue was physically small but tough and strong with a sweet disposition and beautiful smile. Sue and Ardis were the first volunteers to staff our Big Falls station when it opened about four years ago and they worked there many times since. However, Sue's true love was greeting and helping visitors out on the trail. Sue has been an outstanding volunteer with us, serving well over 100 hours again this year - over 1500 hours since joining us. A few years ago Sue received the Forest Service Chief's Award for volunteering over 1000 hours.

Sue's heart gave out on her as they were out enjoying an off-duty hike in beautiful weather beneath gorgeous fall colors. I'm thankful that Sue was able to enjoy this past summer of more water and wildflowers than we've had here in many years. Sue started this patrol season off earlier than usual on a trail conditions survey of the San Bernardino Peak Trail with Ardis on April 30. Later they did the first patrol of the Lost Creek Trail this year and besides doing a lot of early season trail clearing work were amazed at the tremendous abundance of tall grasses and wildflowers - they submitted a list of 22 different wildflowers they enjoyed that day. Sue's last Forest Service volunteer duty was a two-night patrol working out of Dry Lake with Ardis on September 16 - 18. On that patrol they made travel much easier for many hikers by removing many rocks from the trail and by reporting two trees down across the trail that the trail crew soon removed. Sue and Ardis also helped a lady with severe altitude sickness (vomiting and headache) from 10,600 feet back down to 9,000 feet where they tended to the lady as she recovered and waited for friends to arrive - a perfect example of Sue's life of helping others.

I'm also thankful Sue was able to move on without suffering and while

We need articles!!!

Please submit newsletter articles and comments to sgwa@earthlink.net.

doing what she loved. I will miss Sue, but find comfort in knowing we are all immortal spirits loved by God on a temporary human adventure to learn how to love well. Sue had some wonderful adventures while here and certainly loved well in doing things unselfishly for other people.

As Sue moves on to greater adventures, may God touch the hearts of Sue's family and friends with comfort and peace.

John Flippin, SGWA Volunteer Program Director

Personal Thanks from Volunteer Program Director

As every year at this time, I cannot help but extend my deepest thanks to the SGWA officers, board members, and volunteers for allowing me to continue coordinating your wonderful services to the public. I feel very proud and fortunate to be associated with the greatest group of volunteers I have ever known. Everyone has different amounts of time available that they can donate to the forest. However, all the hours you donate, whether 20 or 400 are vitally important to the success of this Forest Service team.

I've now finished my thirteenth season as your program director and each year seems like the first – they go so fast and it continues to be exciting and inspiring to see all the wonderful service provided by you. We can all be proud of helping thousands of visitors maintain and improve their mental, physical, and spiritual health while we've protected the forest resources which will enable thousands more to do the same for many years to come. Working on the mountain this year has been a tremendous pleasure thanks to wonderful Forest Service personnel and all of you great volunteers. Many people and national organizations continue to recognize your volunteer accomplishments and formalized that recognition this past year through several awards – the Helen Glenny Award, the Take Pride in America National Award, and the US Forest Service Volunteer Service Award (see other articles here).

Last winter provided a wonderful boost to the health of our forests. We enjoyed more water everywhere than we've seen in many years. Some

small patches of snow up high on the north slopes of Mt. San Gorgonio survived the summer and have already been covered by fresh snow this fall. A few more years of that and we'll have glaciers again. Hopefully, we will have another good winter of above normal precipitation.

This coming summer holds great promise and excitement as we will be moving back into a remodeled Barton Flats Visitor Center. Also, by this time next year we all will be enjoying a new San Bernardino National Forest Headquarters building near the southwest corner of Tippecanoe and Mill Streets in San Bernardino. Our fantastic interpretive volunteers look forward to continuing our partnership with the Forest Service and Alpine Camping Services (**Pat Baker**) in providing our third exciting summer of Saturday evening ranger talks at the Greyback Amphitheater. And so much more coming in the new year – though I'm enjoying the winter slowdown in our volunteer program, I can hardly wait for next summer!

I'll continue to stop by our office at the Mill Creek Ranger Station but will be there much less through the winter. Remember my home phone, 909-790-2157, and email address, sgwa@earthlink.net are open to you all as usual. Thanks again for all your time and the wonderful things you do for others. I look forward to seeing you next May. Have a wonderful holiday season, a great winter, and take care out there.

John Flippin

Cleanup Festival by John Flippin, Volunteer Program Director

We didn't have our Forest Festival this year due to ongoing construction at the Barton Flats Visitor Center. But we didn't let that stop our fun. Fifteen wonderful volunteers showed up to trim trees and shrubs, pick up a hundred wheelbarrow loads of tree debris, make a sidewalk safety improvement, paint railings and other things, etc.. In addition, the volunteers with the help of ranger **Audrey Scranton** hauled off two large stake bed-truck loads of old junk that has been hanging around Barton Flats and Camp Tulake for many years. Our deep thanks to volunteers **Pam Bailey, Del**

Hawkins, Karen Kimmel, Suzy Kirkwood, Walt Kirkwood, Cindy McGregor, Joe McGregor, Steve Myers, Richard Nyerges, Steve Ohse, Tony Schneller, Val Silva, Dave Van Horsen, Kim Van Horsen, and Bob Williams. While they did the maintenance work, volunteers **Phebe Baty, Larry Fuerstinger, Marco Perales, and Karen Saffle** took care of almost 200 visitors coming in all day for permits, maps, books, and information. Karen Saffle even set up two large tables with animal displays and handicraft projects for visitors who were expecting a full-blown Forest Festival.

In the afternoon, five of the volunteers moved up to Horse Meadows. There they cut weeds back from buildings, collected and piled up junk and debris for a future dump delivery, and built a ground level wood and rock entry for a storage shed.

Of course, the day was not complete without a free bar-b-q for the volunteers, courtesy of our master chef, **Danny Silva**, Camp Tulake Manager. This was a perfect day completing much needed work in beautiful weather under the tall pines with great volunteers enjoying excellent food together.

Camp Mountain Chai at Alpine Meadows Honors Volunteers

In appreciation for all the services provided by you volunteers, Camp Mt. Chai (Executive Director **Len Keilin**) provided the facilities of their camp and a wonderful lunch for the 70 volunteers and family members who were able to attend our awards ceremonies on October 22. They had also provided us with the use of their camp and two meals at our training day last May.

It is a very good partnership that we have with Camp Mt. Chai as together we all help people have some wonderful experiences in the mountains – experiences that improve mental, spiritual, and physical health and provide wonderful memories for the future. THANK YOU CAMP MOUNTAIN CHAI!



Volunteers Earn State-wide and National Recognition

After many years of award-winning service to the public, and much appreciated local yearly recognition from the Forest Service and others, SGWA volunteers were recognized state-wide and nationally this year. Three of these awards are as follows:

Earth Share of California Presents Helen Glenny Award to SGWA

Earth Share of California (ESC), the premier environmental fundraising organization of California, presented the Helen Glenny award to the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association on June 24th for outstanding and exemplary service over the past year. As the first executive director of ESC, Helen's vision and hard work has made it possible for California citizens to more easily support the environment they love through convenient payroll charitable deductions going to over 85 respected environmental organizations. These organizations, like the SGWA, promote and help ensure healthy, clean, and safe communities and recreational opportunities. They are many working together for the mental, spiritual, and physical health of us all.

SGWA Receives Take Pride in America National Award

On September 30, The Secretary of the Interior, **Gale A. Norton**, presented a Take Pride in America National Award to representatives of the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association in Washington D.C. The award was presented for the SGWA's partnership with the US Forest Service in protection and enhancement of the San Bernardino National Forest. The SGWA works with the US Forest Service to recruit, train, administer, support, and recognize citizens who volunteer their valuable time to protect and maintain natural resources and facilities in the San Bernardino National Forest and to help visitors better understand and enjoy their National Forest. One hundred and ten (110) SGWA volunteers (hikers, backpackers, equestrians, and interpretive specialists), ages 10 to 85, from all

walks of life donated over 13,000 hours in 2005 to serve the public.

US Forest Service Washington Office Awards SGWA

On October 22, **Gene Zimmerman**, San Bernardino National Forest Supervisor, presented the Senior, Youth, and Volunteer Programs Exemplary Volunteer Service Award to the SGWA on behalf of **Arthur Bryant**, Director of Senior, Youth, and Volunteer Programs, US Forest Service. To our volunteers, Director Bryant wrote, "It is impossible to measure or overestimate the importance, usefulness, and value of the volunteer work accomplished and the public service provided by volunteers. Your personal contribution has added immeasurable benefits to this agency. Over the last year, we have put agency-wide emphasis on watershed health and restoration, recreation, getting more dollars to the ground, improving financial management, and seeking ways to get work done more efficiently by streamlining processes. Your caring, unselfish attitude and dedication have allowed us to pursue these goals that otherwise would never have been possible. Because of your service, we are more readily able to accomplish our mission. Your service is commendable, and you exemplify what the Forest Service stands for, 'Caring for the Land and Serving People.' You can look at your volunteer service with the Forest Service with satisfaction and pride."

Farewell to Gene Zimmerman Forest Supervisor

They are finally going to let **Gene Zimmerman** enjoy a much deserved retirement as of the end of 2005. He tried to retire before, but the Forest Service simply could not do without his skills and experience to help everyone get through the initial stages of restoration after the drought, tree beetle-kill, and record breaking wildfires of recent years. Now that he has led the Forest back to good health he will be moving on to new adventures. Being a volunteer organization, we will especially miss Gene for all the tremendous encouragement and support he has given to us and all the volunteer groups across the San Bernardino

National Forest. He has helped the SGWA grow and prosper and he has increased the services of volunteers across the Forest by many tens of thousand of hours every year. The dollar value of those increased volunteer hours over Gene's long term of service is in the millions - all resulting in a better, healthier, safer, and more enjoyable forest for all. Thank you for everything Gene, we will miss working with you and hope to see you now and then enjoying the forest you love so much.

A Sunny Cool Day

The 11th Annual Jenks Lake Fish Festival organized by the San Bernardino National Forest Fisheries and Front Country Ranger District Recreation staff and the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association took place on a perfectly beautiful sunny, cool day in late September. The 84 kids had one of the most beautiful days on a mountain lake that I've seen in a long time.

We had over 70 volunteers, including members of the Fisheries Resources Volunteer Corps, Anaheim Rotary #921, San Gorgonio Wilderness Association, Americorps, and the Fire Education Volunteers. In addition, there were over 20 San Bernardino National Forest personnel led by **Sherri Sullivan**, Resources. Volunteers and Forest Service personnel served a free hot lunch, helped children fish, took Polaroid souvenir pictures for children with their fish (62 fish caught), cleaned and iced fish to take home, and presented nature and fire education displays and activities.

People coming out to spend time with the children are not the only keys to a successful event. People and organizations donating money and goods also make the event possible and much more enjoyable for the children. Those supplying apples, sodas, hot dogs and buns, cookies, chips, and transportation through the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association included The Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim Rotary #921, 7-Up Bottling Company of Orange, and Crabill & Sons Produce of Fullerton - all pulled together by our wonderful volunteer **Teddi Boston**. Also, SGWA volunteer **Danny Silva** designed and silk-screened the beautiful fish festival t-shirts given to the children and

volunteers, and Fire Education volunteer **PJ Smith** produced a huge Fish Festival banner that will be useful for many years. Donators of significant funds for t-shirts, film for children's souvenir photos, and other supplies included **Mary Ann Schofield, Joanne Meier, and Ted Schofield**. All of these folks and many more are all essential members of our Jenks Lake Fish Festival team making life better for some wonderful children.

Thanks to Pat Baker and Alpine Camping Services

We have completed another year of a wonderful partnership with **Pat Baker** and her Alpine Camping Services in providing free Saturday evening Ranger Talk programs to the public at the Greyback Amphitheater. We have many wonderful volunteers who present the programs all summer long to almost a hundred campers each evening around the Greyback campfire. However, we could not do it without the monetary and staff support provided by Pat. Pat is also the operating concessionaire for the Jenks Lake Recreation Area and we greatly appreciate her assistance there for the annual fishing festival for disadvantaged children.

Thanks to the Trophy Store

SGWA greatly appreciates the discounts provided by **Maryvonne Bragg** of The Trophy Store at 32999 Yucaipa Blvd. #107, phone 909-797-9090. Maryvonne's generosity helps us provide well deserved recognition to our volunteers who give so much of their time.

Wishes Come True

We thank the following very much for their donations. Their generosity will benefit the public greatly.

- **Bob Beckner** – table, chairs, etc., for Tulake volunteer camp
- **Karen Smith** - 72 AA radio batteries for volunteer forest patrol radios
- **Jarome Wilson** - Speaker system for Interpretive Programs

Thank You For Your Support!!

Many who know the great value of our forest and wilderness areas may not have the time but have the monetary resources to help the SGWA continue to "Serve, Protect, and

Educate." Recent contributing members to whom we and forest visitors owe many thanks are:

Traitor Blazers (\$50 or more annually)

Michele Gross

Neil F Brosnahan

President's Summit Team

(\$100 or more annually)

Michael Rodarte

Enhanced Volunteer Memberships

(active working volunteers who also make monetary donations)

Stewards – Family

(\$28 or more annually)

Jaimie & Jerry LaPointe

Sentinel – Individual

(\$40 annually)

Christina Havens

Sentinel – Family

(\$64 annually)

Walt & Suzie Kirkwood

Defenders -- Individual

(\$80 or more annually)

Peggy Manning

Richard Nyerges

DONATIONS TO WILDERNESS

FOREVER FUND (an endowment

fund from which only earnings on

donations are used to protect and

maintain the wilderness and

surrounding forest)

In Memory of Sue Crowell

Phebe and Roger Baty

Sandra and Donald Danko

Jodi and Mike Ernest

Linda and John Linn

Sandy and Adrian Messner

Cassie and Mark Ostrander

Karen Saffle

LIFETIME MEMBERS (Individuals

who have made one-time donations

of \$600 or more)

Karen Saffle

Gitty Denver

Jarome Wilson

Bryan Walton

David Brisban

"Without wilderness, the world would be a cage." - David Brower

Thank you, Ideal Graphics!

Printing of the Wilderness Dispatch contributed in part by Scott Watson, Ideal Graphics, Ontario, CA. A big thanks goes to Scott and his staff for their service and consideration.

SGWA Wish List

To enable us to better serve the public we wish we had the following items. If you know of someone who would like to donate these items, new or used, please let us know. Tax deductions are applicable.

- Folding metal chairs.
- Digital Image Projector for computer slide show (Power Point) presentations.
- Ten AA battery holders for Bendix/King radios
- Heavy-duty portable electronic equipment boxes for interpretive programs
- Digital Camera and software for nature talk programs and displays

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San Gorgonio Wilderness Association

Office: Phone--909-382-2906, Email--sgwa@earthlink.net

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Jarome Wilson

Vice President
Ted Schofield

Secretary
Karen Saffle

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John Flippin

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Newsletter Circulation
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Forest Festival Manager
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Interpretive Sites Manager
Dee McCoy

Interpretive Sites Asst. Mgr.
Janelle Kotzin

SGWA Office Manager
Vacant

Earth Share Coordinator
Ted Schofield

Fundraising Events Leader
Bob Oppermann

Accounting & Payroll Services: Marvin J. Siddel, MBA, Accounting and Consulting, lakewagon@earthlink.net



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OF CALIFORNIA

One Environment... One Simple Way to Care for it

How can you choose between the eagle and the buffalo? Between the elephants and the whales? Between drinking clean water and breathing clean air? Between forests and beaches? Would there be a right choice?

Now there's a way to help not just one, but all these things. It's called Earth Share of California – the world's leading environmental and conservation charities working together.

Through Earth Share you can make a payroll deduction donation that helps to preserve and protect the environment – locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. Or you can choose to help specific organizations such as the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association through your payroll deduction.

Earth Share not part of your employer's workplace giving campaign? The SGWA would like to help you with that. Call **Ted Schofield** at 909-862-1089 or send an e-mail to him at flyer1955@aol.com.