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Special President's Message

Dear Volunteers, Contributing Members, and Friends of SGWA

On October 25 the fire we had all been dreading erupted.

As I write to you, the fire continues to wreck havoc on the mountain. Tens of thousands of residents from Highland to Hesperia and Devore to Big Bear, Angeles Oaks, Forest Falls, and Mountain Home have been evacuated and few know whether they will have a home to return to.

Exhausted firefighters continue to wage a fierce battle to save as many homes as possible. Thousands of residents have lost their homes so far, and the fire continues to rage.

By the time you read this the final boundary of this fire should be known, but one thing is already for certain - the forest in many parts of the San Bernardino Mountains has been altered at least beyond the time most of us will live. Homes, businesses, and recreation areas have been reduced to ash.

The love many of us have for these mountains is fueled by cherished memories. How many of us first fell in love under a Ponderosa Pine tree somewhere in the San Bernardino Mountains? How many of us caught our first fish on the shore of one of

those lakes? How many of us sat in a turnout on the Rim of the World Highway looking down on the cities below as we contemplated important life choices?

There are certain trees, creeks, and vista viewpoints in these mountains that always trigger memories for me as I pass. Several of these triggers have been destroyed by the selfish and pitiful act of someone who feels the world doesn't pay them enough attention.

To despair, however, gives power to the arsonist. No, we shall not despair - we will build new memories. We will honor our love of these mountains by honestly and candidly examining the root causes of the forest conditions that permitted such a destructive fire even if it means we have to re-examine strongly held passions and beliefs. And we will be grateful for forest service and other agency firefighters and support crews who saved lives, homes, and many beautiful parts of our forest including the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

Jarome Wilson, President SGWA
October 30, 2003

Volunteers Excelled During Fires John Flippin, Volunteer Coordinator

During fires as large and long lasting as the Grand Prix and Old fires, most of the professional Forest Service employees are pulled away from their normal geographic areas of responsibilities to work directly on the fire. Therefore, our SGWA volunteers were called on to provide vehicle patrols of the evacuated areas of Mountain Home, Forest Falls, Angeles Oaks, Seven Oaks, and Barton Flats. These patrols, managed by our Forest Service Liaison, Alfredo Zarate, maintained a Forest Service presence to provide public assistance and fire information where needed, to help spot any new unrelated fires that

might occur, and to help deter looting in the vacated communities.

The following volunteers made themselves available for this duty during more than a week's period of time: **Lynda Agee, Bill Carr, Michael Garant, Michael Gordon, John Grzeskiewicz, Dan Kerr, Janelle Kotzin, Lisa Kutzmarski, Jeff Lynn, Bob Lehmann, Dee McCoy, Cindy McGregor, Joe McGregor, Richard Nyerges, Bob Oppermann, Marco Perales, Mike Ricca, Dan Riley, Diane Riley, Linda Roddick, Karen Saffle, Tony Schneller, Ted Schofield, Dan Scott, Bob Seidenberg, Kathy Seidenberg, Larry Stiles, Mark Voykovic, Bob Williams, Jarome Wilson, and Wiley Wohlf.** Also, **Joyce McIntire** spent many busy days helping provide temporary homes for hundreds of evacuated horses.

We used more than half of you on patrols but were not able to use all. Still, it was only because all of you were available to call when needed that we were able to cover our patrol responsibilities completely without much scheduling effort. So whether you were actually called out or not, thank you all very much - we could not have done it without each and every one of you. I especially thank **Janelle Kotzin** who came out on at least six different days and **Larry Stiles** who served as one of the patrol drivers on at least six different days. Also, **Gabe Garcia**, Front Country District Ranger, stopped by our SGWA office at Mill Creek on November 3 to pass along his deep appreciation to all the volunteers for their tremendous help.

It was a long battle in the air and on the ground with many different government agencies, private companies, volunteer organizations, and thousands of individuals fighting on the front lines and providing support. I know first hand that our sister volunteer organization, the San Bernardino National Forest Association, provided tremendous support in many different capacities all

across the Forest. And I am sure that the other volunteer organizations of the San Bernardino National Forest did as well. Americans are the best of people. Congratulations to all Forest Service personnel including volunteers, for a job done extremely well – you are the best of the best. Hug your loved ones and say a prayer for those who lost loved ones and/or homes during these terrible fires.

Volunteers and Contributors Improve Public Health

Our working volunteers and contributing members/sponsors made the summer of 2003 one of 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, which helps the public improve their mental and physical health.

Our volunteers' service was amazing and varied as it has been for the past 20+ years. Of course it is the people and how well they care for others that makes 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 founders **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 13,000 hours, worth over \$300,000 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 14,000 with whom they had personal contact. Some of the major volunteer accomplishments in 2003 were:

- Removed thousands of pounds of litter from roads, trails, and camp sites
- Cleaned up 72 illegal fire rings, and prevented many more
- Presented several nature walks and talks to several hundred visitors
- Provided lunch and fishing buddies to 83 children at the Forest Service Fish Festival
- Put on a free forest festival for over 400 visitors
- Operated and maintained the Barton Flats Visitor Center where volunteers talked with 5,000 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 900 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 work camp for all volunteers
- Provided current trail/camp conditions reports for Wilderness visitors
- Provided a dozen 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 18. Our most constant day-to-day Forest Service supporters, **Gabe Garcia** (District

Ranger), **Bob Wood** (Recreation Officer), and **Alfredo Zarate** (Wilderness Manager), presented very special awards for volunteers **Jarome Wilson**, SGWA President and Assistant Volunteer Coordinator; **Karen Saffle**, Forest Festival Director; **Teddi Boston**, Fish Festival Donations Manager; **Mary Hart**, Adopt-a-trail leader; **Teri Cappuccio** and **Ann Robinson**, Wilderness Dispatch Editors; **Val Silva**, Equestrian Coordinator; **Danny Silva**, Tulake Volunteer Camp Manager; **Ted Schofield**, Funds Development; **Michael Gordon** and **Sandy Messner** for completing ten years of volunteer service; **Phebe Baty** for fifteen years of service; and **Danny and Val Silva** for twenty wonderful years of volunteer service. Congratulations to all volunteers for another great year!!

President's Message

Dear Volunteers, Contributing Members, and Friends of SGWA

Today's sunset from the summit of San Gorgonio will be slightly earlier than yesterday's, reminding us that the summer season is passing. And so passes another successful season of volunteer activity by SGWA.

SGWA volunteers really came through this year and lived up to the legacy set forth by our founders. In the shadows of millions of dying pine trees, SGWA volunteers continued to demonstrate personal dedication and selfless sacrifice for the betterment of the San Gorgonio Wilderness and surrounding areas.

Every season has different challenges and opportunities, and our veteran volunteers provide necessary stability to our organization. To all volunteers who returned for another season on the mountain this year, I have the highest gratitude and admiration for your continuing service. You provided the foundation for which the success of this season rests. You helped train and guide new and eager volunteers so that the legacy of your service continues long into the future. Thank you.

Just as we know that new saplings will grow to replace the forest's dying



pine trees, our new volunteers provide the vitality and energy that will carry SGWA well into the future. To the new volunteers who made it

through their first season, I am proud of how quickly and eagerly you adopted our motto to Serve, Protect, and Educate. As I review the results of our "Class of 2003" I am confident that you will live up to the legacy of the many volunteers who have served before you for you have already added to that legacy. Thank you.

The great public service provided by SGWA volunteers would not be possible without the financial support of our Contributing Members and other donors. To the members of SGWA who provided financial support to our program, which provided the means for the new and veteran volunteers to achieve their service, I have the deepest appreciation for your support. As I look upon the great works performed by SGWA volunteers this summer I can report to you that your donation was very well spent. Thank you.

The crisp cool bite in the evening air reminds us that the autumn season is upon us. It is fitting to end such a season of service with a season of thanksgiving. Thank you.

Jarome

From Friends in Distant Lands

David Hallet, a founding director and past president of the SGWA, stopped by the Barton Flats Visitor Center and the Mill Creek Ranger Station on a trip out from Kansas with his family. Dave, his lovely wife Sandy (a past Forest Service interpretive specialist here), and their beautiful daughter Emily Ann extend their fond best wishes to all the volunteers and Forest Service folks.

Lisa Mizuno, is the Forest Service biologist we had the pleasure of working with on the Fish Festival for several years. Lisa recently transferred to the Gila National Forest in New Mexico. Lisa sent a nice card thanking the SGWA for a small going away gift, expressing her appreciation for all the volunteers, and saying she "will especially miss the fun at the Fish Festivals."

Accepting Applications

For a part-time summer job in the mountains – SGWA Interpretive Sites Manager responsible for volunteer operations at the Barton Flats Visitor

Center, the Horse Meadows Interpretive Site, and the Big Falls Information Station.

Requires ability to work well with the public and to supervise volunteers. We are looking for someone with minor repair/maintenance skills, some knowledge of the area, home email and Microsoft Word computer skills, and the capability to work most Fridays through Sundays (and holidays) from mid-May through mid-October.

This is an "at-will" employee position with no benefits and modest pay. If you would like an application form, please submit your name, address, phone number, and email address to SGWA - John Flippin, 34701 Mill Creek Rd., Mentone, CA 92359 or jflippin@fs.fed.us.

Eagle Scout Projects at Barton Flats Visitor Center John Dombrowski Interpretive Sites Manager

If you have had the opportunity to visit the Barton Flats Visitor Center (BFVC) this year, you probably noticed the wonderful condition of our wood porch and wood picnic tables. The rotted and chipped planks of the porch and the peeling paint of 12 tables are all gone. This was due to very industrious Eagle Scouts from Troop 520 of Moreno Valley.

Late last season, Eagle Scout **Gaetano Bologna** and a fantastic crew of volunteer scouts and parents descended upon BFVC for a weekend of warp-speed activity. It was no small operation; they had to totally remove the old wood porch down to the foundation. Gaetano, being a very effective organizer, had the members split into several groups, with adults overseeing each operation. Using wood and paint supplied by SGWA and the Forest Service, scout members started the awesome job of building a new porch. With heavy emphasis on safety, they began cutting and painting floor planks and support timbers according to plans drawn by Gaetano (and several relatives who are building contractors). Undaunted by cold and rain, the teams went about their individual and collective business, ensuring that the new porch would be completed in the allotted time (Saturday and Sunday). And, to

top it all off, we kept the visitor center open the entire weekend.

It was a job well planned and executed. It should also be noted that everyone did a super job in the housekeeping department; cleaning tools and work areas completely. ("Leave no trace" in practice.) In addition, many special thanks and praises go to the moms who completely cleaned the BFVC residence.

Eagle Scout **Mark Manning**, also of Troop 520 of Moreno Valley, offered to complete his Eagle project by helping BFVC. Reviewing the possible applications of his talents and interests, he asked if we wanted something done that required painting. Lo and behold! Picnic tables came to mind.

A lot of planning went into that project also. Because repair would be necessary, each table had to be thoroughly inspected. Sanding and filling holes and cracks was a very necessary aspect of this operation. Defining the paint needed was very critical too because it was part of fulfilling his Eagle requirement.

After many calls and correspondence to the Forest Service and SGWA, Mark scheduled his work crew from Troop 520 for May 31, 2003. After a briefing on safety, he assigned specific tasks to each team of scouts. The adults present provided assistance and supervision as needed. Mark had the plan so well implemented that not only were the picnic tables completely refurbished, a fresh coat of paint was applied to three bench seats, several interpretive stands, water hose holders, and tent cabin walls. Also, Smokey's hat was freshened up.



At day's end, Mark and his fellow scouts and parents made a remarkable impact upon the visual aspect of our Visitor Center. The wood tables and benches, not to mention the added support items, now "glowed". Even Smokey appeared to stand taller. Again, Troop 520 did an exceptional job of producing a professional performance in the areas of workmanship, safety, and cleanliness.

Our thanks to these fine scouts of Troop 520 of Moreno Valley. Their hard work is very much appreciated by the Forest Service, SGWA, and visitors.

New Record Catch
115 Trout Caught at
9th Annual Jenks Lake
Children's Fish Festival
by John Flippin

The **9th 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 Saturday September 13th. The 83 kids had some real beginners' luck this year, catching 115 fish – the most ever at our Fish Festivals. One fish was a giant – 1 pound, 14 ounces. The proudest angler was probably a little boy who caught a fish only 4-5 inches long. It was the boy's first time in the mountains and his first fish. He held that fish high as he and his fishing buddy, **Jarome Wilson**, went around the lake to the fish weigh-in table. As he rounded the other side of the lake from where he had been fishing with his friends, the boy could not contain himself from shouting back across the lake to his friends and holding the fish even higher. And then there was the little girl, not so lucky with the fishing, but thrilled to actually put her hand in a lake for the first time. All of the volunteers made very special moments like these possible for all the kids.

We had over 50 volunteers including members of Deep Creek Fly Fishers, Fisheries Resource Volunteer Corps, Rancho Rod 'n' Reel, San Gorgonio Wilderness Association, and the Fire Emergency Volunteers. In addition to the volunteers were 20 San Bernardino National Forest personnel led by **Sherri Sullivan**, Resources, including 11 from the Front Country Recreation staff, 5 on Engine 17, **Battalion Chief Bruce Schmidt**, and 2 from the Mountain Top Recreation Staff. The County Deputy Sheriff, **Shannon Kovich**, also showed up to help.

San Gorgonio Wilderness Association volunteers serving lunch, helping children fish, and presenting nature displays were -

- Lynda Agee
- Dolores Annas
- George Annas
- Teddi Boston
- Bill Carr
- John Flippin
- Jeff Haggard
- Richard Nyerges
- Doreen Palomino
- Dan Riley
- Diane Riley
- Linda Roddick
- Don Rosene
- Phil Rosenkrantz

- Del Hawkins
- Mickey Kacherwski
- Janelle Kotzin
- Lewis C. Kyle
- Joe McGregor
- Cindy McGregor
- Sheila McMahon
- Sandy Messner
- Karen Saffle
- Tony Schneller
- Ted Schofield
- Gail Seymour
- Val Silva
- Danny Silva
- Larry Stiles
- Bob Williams
- Jarome Wilson

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 for several years now include **Albertson's Food Center of Anaheim, The Anaheim Convention Center, Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim, Anaheim Rotary #921, 7-Up Bottling Company of Orange, and Crabill & Sons**. Also, **Danny Silva, Jr.** designed the beautiful fish festival t-shirts given to the children. Donators of significant funds for t-shirts, film for children's souvenirs, and other supplies included **Ted Schofield, Richard Nyerges, Jarome Wilson, Jim Fuller, and Mary Ann 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.

One of Our Own Completes
One of the Big Trails

Dan Greene, one of our volunteer wilderness rangers, completed hiking the entire Appalachian Trail on September 9, 2003, in Maine. Dan started his little stroll on March 17 in Georgia. His primary support was from his wife Lupe (also one of our wilderness rangers) who spent many hours sending food and supplies to various towns along the way. After 2,167 miles, Dan was anxious to see Lupe and the rest of his family now staying in Connecticut.

Because he was always anxious to get going and keep going in the mornings and took only ten to 30 minutes for lunch instead of the customary hour, Dan picked up the trail name of "Itchy Foot." Itchy Foot enjoyed the benefits of "trail magic" – drink and food items sometimes left

along the trail by anonymous persons. He also enjoyed the hospitality of at least a couple "trail angels" (those along the way who help the long distance hikers) in the persons of **Roger** (past SGWA president) and **Patti Gossett**. Roger and Patti live near the Appalachian Trail in New Hampshire.

The rainy summer made the trail more difficult than usual and Dan kidded that he sometimes thought, "What the hell am I doing here." Dan went through three pairs of hiking boots often full of mud and water. However, there were many picturesque portions of the trail – parts in the Shenandoahs, New York, and Maine being very memorable.

About nearing the end of the trail, Dan said he was "excited, but you're anxious to get home." He also said, "You become close to the individuals you're walking with. You hate to leave them." Dan may try the Pacific Crest Trail out west or become a "trail angel" for the Appalachian Trail. "Being a banker," Dan said, "I wanted to do a 180. And I did."

(Adapted from [The Trail Adventures of a Man Called "Itchy Foot"](#) by Mike Chaiken, Editor, The Thomaston Express, October 9, 2003)

Personal Thanks from
Coordinator John

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 for the past year. 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 eleventh season as your coordinator 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 the volunteers. 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 our great volunteers.

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, johnpauljp@earthlink.net are open to you all as usual. I look forward to seeing you next May. Have a wonderful holiday season, a great winter, and take care out there.

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.

- High density molded plastic folding tables for Forest Festivals, volunteer training, Fish Festival, and other activities.
- Heavy duty 36" security screen for volunteer work camp kitchen door.
- Propane stove/oven for Barton Flats Visitor Center.
- Self-focusing slide projector with timer for nature talks.
- Metal cabinet for SGWA Mill Creek Office.
- Folding metal chairs.
- Copy machine for Barton Flats Visitor Center.

Wishes Come True

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

- Bob and Kathy Seidenberg – Microwave oven.

Alpine Meadows Camp Honors Volunteers

In appreciation for all the services provided by you volunteers, Dr. Peter Huber and Linda Crawford, provided the facilities of their camp and delicious bar-b-que chicken dinner for the 70 volunteers and family members who were able to attend our awards ceremonies on October 18. They had also provided us with the use of their camp and two meals at our training day last May. We are very thankful for the support of Alpine Meadows Camp

staff including **Michael Dennison**, Camp Director; **Susan Sostman**, Director of Sales and Marketing; and **Chris Hajek**, Food Services Director.

It is a very good partnership that we have with Peter, Linda, and their staff as together we all help people have some wonderful experiences in the mountains – experiences that improve mental and physical health and provide wonderful memories for the future. THANK YOU ALPINE MEADOWS CAMP!

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:

Individual (\$25)

Family/Dual (\$35)

and Student/Senior Members (\$20)

Marie Kupecz

Trail Blazers

(\$50 or more annually)

Gitty Denver

La Tanya Eiland

Karen Smith

President's Summit Team

(\$100 or more annually)

Peggy Manning

Upper Santa Ana River Users Assoc.

Barton Flats Flora Sheila McMahon

On Sunday, August, 24, four of our members, **Sue Crowell**, **Sandy Messner**, **Larry Stiles**, and **Sheila McMahon** took advantage of the opportunity to learn about the plants of the Barton Flats area. Information was presented by **Lorrae Fuentes** of the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens.

There were also other experts available to share their expertise. Now we know that weed we've all been wondering about is none other than tarragon.

Thank you, Ideal Graphics!

Printing of the 4-Victor Newsletter is contributed in part by Scott Watson, Ideal Graphics, Ontario, CA. A big thanks goes to Scott and his staff for their service and consideration.

Smoking Horses

Following are a few actual comments left on Forest Service registration sheets and comment cards by hikers completing wilderness camping trips.

"A small deer came into my camp and stole my bag of pickles. Is there a way I can get reimbursed? Please call..."

"Instead of a permit system or regulations, the Forest Service needs to reduce worldwide population growth to limit the number of visitors to wilderness."

"Found a smoldering cigarette left by a horse."

"Trails need to be reconstructed. Please avoid building trails that go uphill."

"Too many bugs and leeches and spiders and spider webs. Please spray the wilderness to rid the area of these pests."

"Reflectors need to be placed on trees every 50 feet so people can hike at night with flashlights."

"The places where trails do not exist are not well marked."

"Need more signs to keep area pristine."



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

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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.