

“Keeping In Touch”

Quarterly Newsletter by/for Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
Retirees/Families and Interested Former Employees

October 2010, Vol. 6, No. 4

Dates to Remember

**Retiree Luncheon
Schedule
Golden Corral
on Emerald in Boise
11:30 a.m.**

**2010
November 11**

**2011
January 13
March 10
May 12
July 14
September 8
November 10**

Mark Your Calenders!

Editor's Note:

This issue is not one of the most pleasant ones I've had to do. At the time of the latest accident which claimed the lives of two Fish and Game biologists, Bruce Palmer made an inquiry about another accident that claimed the life of Sam Buntrock. As you will note, most of this issue will cover these two incidents.

* * *

Helicopter Crash Kills Pilot, Two Fish and Game Biologists

A helicopter carrying two Idaho Fish and Game fisheries biologists and a pilot crashed in Kamiah between 9:30 and 9:45 Tuesday morning (August 31), leaving three dead.

Two were pronounced dead at the scene, the third was taken to a hospital but was later pronounced dead. Dead are *Larry Barrett*, 47, of Lewiston, who worked for Fish and Game since 1985; and *Danielle Schiff*, 34, of Lewiston, who worked for Fish and Game since 1997.

The crash occurred behind the U.S. Forest Service building in Kamiah. The biologists were counting salmon redds — spawning nests — on the nearby Selway River. Fish and Game biologists have counted redds annually since the 1950s using fixed wing and helicopters.

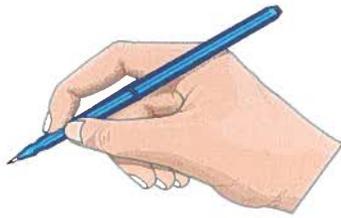
The counts are primary index of the status of naturally spawning salmon. Aerial counts are the only way to count many of Idaho's remote and wilderness streams.

The last previous fatal Fish and Game aircraft accident was in December 2000 when a wildlife biologist crashed in the Kelly Creek area on the North Fork of the Clearwater River. None of the three people on board suffered life-threatening injuries. Fish and Game biologists fly about 1,000 hours annually on aerial surveys, wildlife counts and capturing wildlife for research. Fish and Game takes safety seriously; all personal are required to take safety training before flying and adhere to strict safety procedures. — (Courtesy of IDFG)

Sam Buntrock

A recent request to IDFG Headquarters Bureau of Communications started a real search for information about *Sam Buntrock*, another Fish and Game Employee who lost his life in 1974 while on the job. *Melissa Coleman* of the Communications Bureau forwarded me *Bruce Palmer's* request for information and it was forwarded to all retirees. The response was very overwhelming. The main detail from each response was that Sam was a really good guy.

(Cont. on Page 2, See: Sam)



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and
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All donations should be sent
to the above address.

Sam, cont. from Page 1

Due to limited space, I am only including the three most detailed responses.

"I believe the crash that killed Sam occurred the first week of June 1974. Sam, along with the pilot, Tom Stoor and two USFS biologists were flying an elk calving survey in Montpelier Canyon. Interestingly enough, Sam had walked away from a helicopter crash earlier in the year near Sulphur Canyon just outside Soda Springs . . . I do know that *Al and Lynn (Nicholson)* named their son Sam after Sam Buntrock." — **Butch Welch**

"Sam and I were college roommates at Oregon State for two years. Sam was the Best Man at my wedding and my best friend when he died. He was stationed in Soda Springs as a new Conservation Officer. He died in a fix-winged aircraft while flying and looking for new elk calving grounds. Two Forest Service geologists and the pilot were also killed. This was in the spring of 1974.

"Sam lost his dad and only brother in an auto crash when he was 12. He was the only survivor of the crash and his mother raised him until she passed away in 1969. For those who knew him, he was a large man and had a scar over his eye and walked with a limp which would give the first impression

of 'Don't Mess with Me.' However, he had a heart of gold and was a gentle man. He would have had a very good career with the Department as he made friends easily and enjoyed life. Thanks for making me think about an old friend." — **Al Nicholson**

"Sam died in a plane crash along with two Forest Service employees and the pilot about 20 miles northeast of Montpelier. They were doing game counts and heading up a canyon, at the top a strong headwind smashed the loaded aircraft into the ground. They had taken off fairly early in the morning and by mid-afternoon we knew at the Pocatello office that the plane was missing. After closing the office at 5 p.m., most of us went to the Supervisor's office of the Forest Service to await news (they had better radio reception). Word came through about 6 that evening that they had found the plane and that there were no survivors.

"Sam was a Conservation Officer and stationed at Soda Springs. He had been working for the Department about two years before the crash. A few months previously, Sam was involved in a helicopter crash; however, neither Sam nor the pilot was injured. They did have to struggle for quite a distance through deep snow before being helped.

(Cont. on Page 3, See: Sam)

Sam, cont. from Page 1

Sam was from the Nampa area, single and at the time of his death his closest living relative was his aunt. I think he was raised by her. He was buried in the Nampa Cemetery. On the day of his funeral we closed the Fish and Game office in Pocatello and everyone in the Region traveled to Nampa for his services. It was a sad day as Sam was well liked by everyone." — *John Heimer*

(While all this information was coming in, Melissa found out that Bill Cope, a columnist for the "Boise Weekly" magazine graduated with Sam from Meridian High School and he had written a column about him. Bill has graciously allowed us to include that column in this newsletter. The column appeared the Spring of 2002.)

**The Game Warden**

*Courtesy of Bill Cope
Columnist for "Boise Weekly" Magazine*

Doing the story on IDFG, I made some new friends. Not the bowling buddy kind, probably, but people I'll look forward to seeing again.

Rod Sando. Smart, reserved . . . maybe even shy . . . has a tendency to mumble . . . cautious, honorable . . . dressed up in a Hemingway package. Fred Christensen and Don Clower — one an ex-F&G commissioner, the other current. When Fred and I were done talking shop, he showed me his garden. Don wanted me to see his ham radios.

Gene Bray and Lynn Fritchman, both activists coming from unlikely backgrounds to an activist involvement. Bert Bowler, retired after 22 years as a fisheries biologist with F&G, but still battling for the fish. And I can't even name others because they, on their way to work in the morning, know they are skating on thin ice. It's a shame. They care about the same Idaho I care about, but can't show it. But as I was lurking around the IDFG headquarters one day, looking for another fragment to the piece I ended up writing, I came across someone I knew from way back. An old pal . . . someone I'd almost forgotten about. His picture was hanging on a F&G wall, and as soon as I saw it, I knew I had to tell this one IDFG employee's story. It doesn't relate to the other story I wrote for this issue, but then again, it does. I don't know how. I just know it does. You'll either get it, or you won't.

Sam Buntrock. We graduated together. Meridian High, class of '65. For years before that, we were in Explorers together, and because of that organization, Sam and I had as much fun as teenagers can have, legally. Had our own rifle range and every Tuesday night, we met to shoot targets and tell jokes and listen to Sam's lexicon of bawdy songs. He sounded like Burl Ives when he sang.

We went on scout outings together, weekend affairs around a campfire, and most exciting of all, we belonged to Mountain Search and Rescue. When some hunter got lost or maybe some kid, we went out and helped look. We were like junior g-men --

(Cont. on Page 4)

The Game Warden

(Continued from Page 3)

volunteer grunts — no real responsibility, but we felt great about it. Sam and I and a couple of others even carried a dead body out of a bad spot on the Payette River once. Take my word for it, if that ain't a bonding experience, there's no such thing.

Sam was fat. They'd call it "heavy" now, but back then, we called it fat and I remember hurting his feelings in junior high. I made a fat joke when I thought he wasn't listening but he was. And he told me, right then and there, in a manner so fiercely honest that I wasn't ready for such honesty . . . not at that age . . . that goddammit, I'd hurt his feelings and, goddammit, he thought we were friends. I'm sorry about it to this day.

I might not have felt so bad about insulting any other fat kid, but I already felt a little sorry for Sam. He came across big and rough and gruff, but when you knew him well enough, you'd see a sweet, hurt kid under that disguise. See, Sam was not only fat, but his face was mildly scarred from the car wreck that killed his father and brother. His mother and he were alone and it was a struggle, you could tell.

But Mrs. Buntrock somehow made sure Sam went on those scout outings, and could shoot on the rifle team . . . all the things we did together. I imagine because she knew not only how important Sam's friends were to him, but how important the outdoors were to him. The Idaho outdoors. He was an outdoors Idaho kind of 60's kid, definitely. We hunted pheasants on Meridian farms and went out past Kuna to shoot shit, and by the time we graduated, Sam decided he wanted to work for Idaho Fish and Game. Wanted to spend his life in Idaho's outdoors. If I remember right, he wanted to be a biologist, and he coulda because he was a good student and when he wanted something, he worked like a dog to get it.

He ended up with Fish and Game, sure enough, but not as a biologist. I called him a game warden, but the correct term is conservation officer, and I'll bet he was a good one. I'll bet he was because big heavy Sam had been good at everything I ever saw him take on. I can't know for sure because . . . well, with college and all, and then I moved away . . . well, I lost touch with Sam. You know

how that goes. Next thing I know I'm back in Ohio talking with my folks on the phone and my dad tells me how my old pal Sam was in a small plane, along with a couple of Forest Service guys and the pilot, of course, doing an elk survey, and the plane went down. No survivors. May 29, 1974. That's why his picture's on the wall at F&G headquarters along with six other employees who've died in the line of duty.

Probably the only names you'd recognize are Bill Pogue and Conley Elms.

So there was big Sam, in a place of honor, still rough and gruff and you can still see the scars on his face and the sweet kid in his eyes, and I'm ashamed to say I almost forgot about him. I'd almost forgotten how fiercely honest he was and how much he loved being outdoors in Idaho. Thanks To You!



2010 USA Track and Field Masters National Championship

Sacramento State University

(July 21 to July 24, 2010)

By Bill Platts

SSU's track and field complex is equivalent to BSU's sports complex so the facilities provided a great place to hold a National meet. I do not know how many thousand athletes showed up to compete, but the large complex was very crowded.

I started out well the first day of the meet beating the Pentathlon expert scores from Atlanta, Georgia to become the National Champion in the Pentathlon. I was pretty well wasted by the end of the long day, but, by the next morning I was ready for the Discus and edged out a former Olympian to be the National Champion in the Discus.

I got through the preliminaries for the 100 meter dash and qualified for the 100 meter finals for

the next day. My next event was the long jump and on my first jump I tore a right calf muscle, but my jump was long enough to be the National Champion in the long jump.

My last event of the day was the javelin and I did well as the muscle tear did not hinder me all that much. I come within 2-foot twice of my still existing "World and National record javelin throw", but just could not do any better. I become the National Champion in the javelin, beating out some very good javelin throwers.

The next morning my calf muscle was feeling pretty good, but with high mountain lake fishing starting as soon as I returned home and only one month until the blue grouse

season opens, I decided I was not going to take any more chances on being a cripple all fall and scratched out of the 100 meter finals.

This meant I could not win the "Golden Tri-fecta" (*win a gold medal in a run, jump and throw in the same World or National meet*). I do not know of anyone ever winning one, but I come very, very close.

The javelin competition ended my meet, I received my four National Championship gold medals and I hobbled back to Boise to mend. I do not know if I have it in me to ever beat being a four time National Champion in one year or not, but there is always next year and the Huntsman World Games are only 2 months away.

Welcome New Retirees!

Sharon Watson, recently retired from the Bureau of Communications Front Desk.

Tom Lucia, Regional Conservation Officer, Pocatello, retired effective August 31.

Need a Vacation?

Here's your chance. Ed Jochum, DCO in Sandpoint, is offering retirees the opportunity to utilize his Costa Rican beach house. It is located on the central Pacific coast south of Jaco and north of Quepos. All major airlines fly into the capital of San Jose. It is 75 miles from the airport (SJO). Ed says, "Think of it as a patrol cabin in the tropics."

You can contact Ed by e-mail at ejochum@wildblue.net; phone 265-6149 (Home), 265-8835 (Work) or write to him at 54 Wildwood Lane, Sandpoint, ID 83864. *(Ed sent additional documents with all the particulars; however, during the learning process of my new computer system, they were accidentally deleted. So, if you are interested, contact Ed personally.)*

Another Apology

Please don't give up on me. I'm still having big troubles trying to format the newsletter properly with the new software and I'm not up to snuff as yet! In order to get this one out before I leave for New York, I'm keeping it simple. Thanks! JJF

Thank You Again!

A huge thank you to *Jerry and Janet Conley* for their very generous donation to the Retiree Newsletter Fund. It is very much appreciated.

Retiree News

First, the good news. *Sandy and Pat Cudmore* are finally on the mend. Sandy says her foot is finally getting better. However, the news about the helicopter crash really devastated Pat, as I know it did many others.

Received the following from *Wayne Melquist*: "Just got back from a month (June) traveling to Las Vegas for a wedding, then to Colorado to visit some friends, and finally to Wisconsin to visit family and take in my 45th high school class reunion — yikes!

While back there, a friend of 50 years and I took a week's trip to Canada fishing and caught lots of nice smallmouth bass (largest was 20") and couldn't keep northern pike off of the hook! Walleye fishing wasn't so good, however, but it was a fun time sharing blood with lots of mosquitoes!

"Just finished collecting the final 20 nestling ospreys and shipped them to South Dakota for their restoration project (during July). This makes 110 birds sent to them since the project started in 2004. Frankly, I'm glad it's finished, although I'll continue to band nestlings as long as I can climb the ladder or scale bridges to reach the youngsters. This makes 39 years and counting,

with more than 2,000 nestlings banded here in north Idaho and NE Washington."

Robert "Bob" Royce finally checked in. He says, "Had 3 sons graduate from college this year. All five sons have a college degree. Gabe has a degree as a chef; Ben has his masters in Social Work — Child Protection; Ki has his degree in Graphic Design; Josh has his masters in Engineering; and Rod had his degree in music teaching. We are totally BROKE! But still happy!

"I still supervise ushers and ticket takers for athletic activities: Taco Bell Arena and work Saturday and Sunday doing security for eight BSU facilities. I am on my third year of taking weekly accordion lessons. Whose retired, not me! I guess they will have to run me down to put me away. I have survived cancer and a heart attack. Not giving up yet. Betty is working at the airport in the 3 store. Take care everyone."

Received word from the Lewiston Office that *Sam McNeill's* son Steve was in a car wreck the week of July 11. "His neck was broken, but his spinal cord was not severed. They did surgery yesterday (July 15) and removed the C-5 vertebra and did a bone graft. Sam's wife Fran called a few minutes ago and said that Steve still does not have any

(Cont. on Page 7, See: McNeill)

McNeill, Cont. from Page 6

movement below the neck. She also said that the doctors are not as optimistic as they were before the surgery, but we need to continue to hope that he will get some of his movement back after the swelling goes down. Steve also has a broken jaw so can't talk, but does seem to know that Sam is there with him." (You can check updates on Steve's condition on the website called: caringbridge.org/visit/stevemcneill.)

Here is another update from **Kent Ball**: "I stopped and talked with Fran's (McNeill) sister-in-law this morning and got some news about Steve. He is in the construction business and things were really slow, so he got an offer to go to Alaska. He had only been there for three weeks when the car accident happened. The air bags didn't deploy and he hung upside down for two hours before help came. He is starting to get some feeling in his legs now. They have been having to put him back on the ventilator because one lung keeps collapsing, but he is doing better."

After checking the website, Steve is now in Rehab in Seattle. We wish you the best, Steve, and hang in there Sam and Fran.

Bob Salter is now home from the hospital where he spent

several weeks after taking a fall from a ladder and cracking open the back of his head. He was trying to take down the 4th of July flag when he fell. Well, Bob, you know what I told you; STAY OFF THE D --- N LADDER!@"

And **Barbara Alverson** is now back home after weeks in the Rehab hospitals. She got an infection in the knee that she had replaced a while back. This resulted in replacing the knee replacement. She can finally walk again with help and she is determined to get back to her old self again. We know you will, Barb.

Seems as if all my friends are having problems. **Jo Toomey** has been suffering with a blood clot in the leg and has had to be very careful. She is now much better and also getting around again. And **Corinne Barlow** has been down with a sore throat and I have been suffering with a cough. But we will survive and will be out causing trouble again soon!!!

In Memoriam**Jim Moore**

A memorial service was held September 18 at the Roberts Community Park for **James "Jim" Lowell Moore**, 63, of Roberts who passed away July 28 at his home after a courageous battle with cancer. Jim

had just retired from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in April after 24 years of dedicated service.

Jim is survived by his wife, Carolyn, of Roberts; his daughter Danielle Weekes of Ririe; a stepdaughter, Brandy Hall of Idaho Falls; two stepsons Gary (Peggy) Johnson of Ririe and Johnny Johnson of Boise; grandchildren Jesse and Keri Weekes and Kyler Bryant; a sister, Pam (Ned) Sauer of Rigby; a brother Russell (Pat) Moore of Idaho Falls and an uncle Dean Moore of Irrigon, Oregon. He was preceded in death by his parents, Lowell and Gerry Moore; a son, Derek Moore; and a son-in-law Bart Weekes.

Carol Ann Anglen

Carol Ann Sams Anglen, 67, passed away at home in Cottonwood on July 24, 2010, after a three year battle with ovarian cancer. She was the wife of retired Conservation Officer A memorial service in her honor was held August 2 at Emmanuel Baptist Church. A private family graveside service is planned for a later date. Carol is survived by her husband, Eldon; eleven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren; two brothers and numerous nieces and nephews.

Always one to think of others more than herself, she donated
(Cont. Page 8, See: Memoriam)

Memoriam, Cont. from Page 7

her body to the WWAMI program for scientific study in order that some progress might be made in the fight against ovarian cancer. Donations in Carol's memory may be made to Syringa Hospital Hospice, 607 Main Street, Grangeville, ID 83530.

(FYI: WWAMI is an enduring partnership between the University of Washington School of Medicine and the states of Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho. The WWAMI name is derived from the first letter of each of the five cooperating states.)

Joanne Schneider

A picnic and celebration honoring **Joanne Meredith Schneider**, 64, was held in Boise August 20. Joanne, the sister of **Terry Holubetz**, passed away at her New Plymouth farm July 27. She is survived by her

brother, Terry; three children, Brian (Christine) Fendley, Sarah Fendley and James Schneider; and three grandchildren.

Donations in Joanne's memory may be sent to Justice Memorial Fund, c/o Eagle Animal Clinic, 435 S. Eagle Road, Suite #2, Eagle, ID 83616.

John Morrison

A former wildlife biologist with IDFG, **John A. Morrison**, 85, passed away at his home in Anchorage, AK September 19. According to **Roger Williams**, John was stationed at McCall and Lewiston while with the department. In 1955, he began his career as wildlife biologist and researched in Montana and Idaho.

He received a Ph.D in zoology from Washington State University in 1977. In 1978 John moved to Anchorage to

head the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information Management System. After retirement in 1985, he was an adjunct professor at UAA and APU. He worked for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill until 1995.

John and his wife, Joyce "Jodie" just recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. John is survived by his wife, Joyce; son, Jim Morrison of Hansville, Washington; daughter and son-in-law, Julie (Jim) Ferguson; Cynthia Morrison, the mother of two of his grandchildren, Leanne Morrison and John E. (Jessica) Morrison, Anchorage; two grandsons and three stepgrandchildren; and his brother and sister-in-law of Wichita, Kansas.

Our deepest sympathies to the families and our thoughts and prayers are with you.

!!Happy Birthday!!

October Birthdays

- Bill Horton, October 2
- Lonn Teeter, October 3
- Jerry Conley, October 4
- Bud Ainsworth, October 4
- Mark Armbruster, October 6
- Bill Davidson, October 6
- Ted Meske, October 6
- Chris (Ewing) Craig, October 7
- Bob Royce, October 7
- Roger Williams, October 8
- Brent Ritchie, October 8
- Pat Cudmore, October 8
- Lynda Beach, October 15
- Gary Phillips, October 20
- Gerald Mowery, October 22
- Kent Ball, October 22
- Frank NeSmith, October 24
- Lynn Merrill, October 24
- Joe Curry, October 27
- Al Nicholson, October 28
- (Would have been Ralph Pehrson's 80th Birthday October 27)

November Birthdays

- Dale Baird, November 2
- Bill Snow, November 2
- Ardella Reinke, November 4
- Bob Salter, November 5
- Gary Gadwa, November 7
- Dick Scully, November 11
- Steve Agte, November 12
- Dave Neider, November 13
- Sharon Wavra, November 14
- Dick Orcutt, November 18
- Fred Partridge, November 21
- Jerry Neufeld, November 22
- Don Carr, November 24
- Mike Schlegel, November 25
- Ned Horner, November 25
- Gary Loveland, November 26
- Lloyd Oldenburg, November 28 (80th Birthday)

December Birthdays

- Donna Dillon, December 1
- Tom Levendofsky, December 2
- Ardith Butterworth, Dec. 7
- John Heimer, December 14
- Rod Parker, December 16
- Virgil Moore, December 18
- Don Anderson, December 20
- Anna Marie Halpern, December 23
- Ed Stackler, December 27
- Bill Gorgen, December 28

Happy Anniversary!

- Jim and Ann Graban, 52 years, December 27
- Gloria and John Elliott, 51 years, December 28

My Apology

In the last birthday page, I incorrectly listed Martin Luther's birthday as September 29. His real birthdate is January 29. Sorry, Martin!

