



# San Juan Public Lands People



## Employee News of the San Juan National Forest & San Juan Field Office-BLM Winter 2004

### San Juan Cleans Up on Regional Forester Awards

By Ann Bond

**DURANGO** – Two San Juan National Forest employees, one San Juan Mountains Association employee, and a local fire chief’s association were honored in Denver in December as recipients of this year’s Rocky Mountain Regional Forester Awards.

**San Juan Financial Officer Linda Knipp** was recognized for years of consistently performing excellent work in the Business Administrative Support category. Specifically she was cited for her work with the Financial Management Improvement Plan, Business Process Re-engineering, and keeping the Budget and Finance staff on target with their daily workload. The San Juan Leadership Team nominated Linda for her “continued excellence in providing support to various staff areas on the unit.”

**Chimney Rock Archaeological Center Manager Glenn Raby** was honored in the Volunteer Leadership category for his work at Pagosa’s premiere Ancestral Puebloan site. Glenn has been involved in one way or another with Chimney Rock for 25 years and puts in many volunteer hours himself. More than 10,000 visitors enjoyed the tours at Chimney Rock this year, which are hosted by a team of 72 volunteers.

**The Montezuma County Fire Chiefs’ Association** was selected to receive the National Fire Plan Partnership Award. The community group, formed in 2002, has designed a fire-prevention program for its communities and hired a seasonal Fire Prevention Officer to serve its five fire districts. They work closely with the San Juan Public Lands fire organization and have been very proactive in securing Rural Fire Assistance funds to equip and train their firefighters and promote inter-agency cooperation.

**San Juan Mountains Association Cultural Program Director Ruth Lambert** received the Cooperative Support and Community Connection Award for her work with the Cultural Site Stewardship Program. Ruth watches over some 90 trained volunteer site stewards who monitor more than 110 archaeological and historical sites on San Juan Public Lands. She was cited for her educational outreach, partnerships, and efforts to expand the current program.

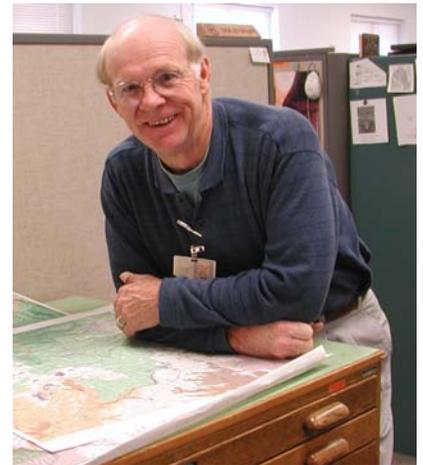


Photo by Ann Bond

### Dick Recognized

By Ann Bond

**DURANGO** – Dick Ostergaard, San Juan Landscape Architect, has received the USFS Professional Excellence Award for 25 years of exemplary service, including outstanding achievements in planning, design, interpretation and training.

Dick was one of several Landscape Architects from every region to receive awards this fall at the Interagency Design Symposium in Salt Lake City.

He was cited for his participation in the *Scenic Byways Design Guide* and the *Built Environment Image Guide*, teaching module projects developed through USFS San Dimas Technology and Development Center.

“We thank Dick for his vision, passion and dedication to quality FS landscapes and facilities,” said Chris Spori, Rocky Mountain Region Landscape Architect Center for Design & Interpretation.

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# SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER NEWS



Photo by Ann Bond

## Eric Lands "Dream Job"

By Ann Bond

**DURANGO** - Eric Gray, new San Juan NF Civil Engineer, is already hard at work inspecting the construction of the new Dolores Public Lands Office building.

Before moving to Durango, Eric worked as a post-tensioning engineer for a contractor in California, on construction of the new San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge.

He also spent two years working as an engineer on the Arapaho & Roosevelt NFs.

Eric calls his new job here, "a dream come true," and enjoys backpacking, hunting, and fishing.

His father, Vergil Gray, is project manager for the Animas La Plata Pumping Plant. Younger brother Ryan is pursuing an engineering degree at Colorado State University. His mother, Lorraine, and sister, Sara, live in Durango.

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## Welcome, Mary

By Ann Bond

**DURANGO** - Mary Blanchard is a new San Juan NF Civil Engineer, working on compliance of water systems and capital improvement projects.

She'll also help develop a roads analysis for the Forest. Mary previously worked for the Durango office of URS Corporation, an engineering and environmental consultant.

Mary grew up in Anchorage, Alaska, then headed way south to earn her degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Florida.

After college, she migrated north again to work as an engineer on the Tongass NF for one year. Her responsibilities included ensuring compliance of water and wastewater systems, environmental investigation and remediation planning, construction inspection for the Southeast Alaska Visitors Center, and water-quality assessment.

"I look forward to working on projects from conception through completion," Mary says. "In my previous life, I spent most of my time in the planning phase, rarely getting to see projects through to completion."

Mary enjoys skiing, mountain biking, hiking, backpacking, and gardening. She and her partner, Annette, who is a pharmacist at Mercy Medical Center, have two girls, Jane, 7, and Josie, almost 4, along with three dogs, two cats, a hamster, and a goldfish.



Photo by Ann Bond



Photo by Ann Bond

## Annett Moves Upstairs

By Ann Bond

**DURANGO** - Annett Hitchell, who started out working as a San Juan NF Engineering Technician in 1980, is now back as Engineering Assistant.

Annett has been an Accounting Technician for three years in the PLC. Before that, she was PLC Office Manager for five years.

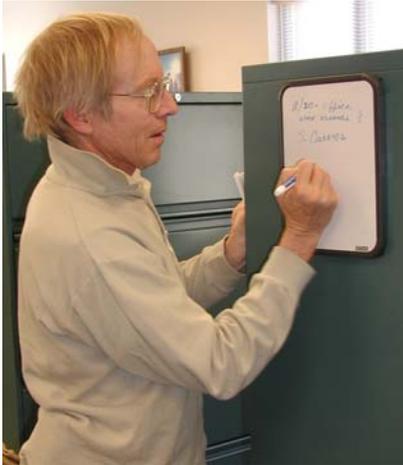
"It's nice to be back with the people I started with, but I'm still helping out with Budget and Finance, because they're short handed," Annett said.

Annett and her husband, Jeff, have been married 20 years and are raising two girls, Ashley, 11, and Tana, 16.

When asked about what she does for fun in her off time, Annett replied, "You don't get to have a hobby when you're a mother."

# SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER NEWS

## Lee and Paul Heading into Retirement



*Photo by Ann Bond*

**By Bob Sieger**

**DURANGO** – Paul Crook and Lee Durham are both retiring in December, after more than 30 years of working in Engineering for the USFS.

**Lee Durham** retires from his position as San Juan Civil Engineering Technician.

His first job with the agency was as a seasonal on the Gunnison NF in 1966. He also worked seasonally on the Routt and Shoshone NFs.

In 1979, Lee got his first permanent position on the White River NF, and in 1982, came to the San Juan NF. During his time here, he held engineering positions on the Dolores and Pagosa Ranger Districts, and in the

Durango Supervisor's Office.

Lee is an avid kayaker and bicyclist who also enjoys cross-country skiing and fishing. In his retirement, Lee plans on spending more time in the outdoors with his wife, Lisa, who will continue teaching at the Bob DeNier Youth Services Center. They hope to travel throughout the western states, kayaking the rivers and enjoying nature.

**Paul Crook** is retiring from his position as San Juan NF Civil Engineering Technician. After graduating from Durango High School, Paul spent time in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and in the National Guard in Durango.

Paul started permanently with the USFS in 1972. Before that, he worked seasonally on the San Juan NF in the late 1960s.

Paul held engineering positions in the Supervisor's Office in Durango, the Dolores and Mancos Ranger Districts, and then moved back to the Supervisor's Office in Durango.

He also has served for a number of years as the Air Patrol fire spotter on the San Juan. Paul knows the San Juan NF intimately.

Paul and his wife, Sharon, have two children, Karen, 18, and Andy, 16. Paul loves to bird hunt, and in his retirement will be running a commercial bird-hunting operation near Mancos, with a focus on pheasant hunting.

*(Bob Sieger is San Juan Engineering Staff Officer.)*



*Photo by Ann Bond*



*Photo by Ann Bond*

## Robert Rides In

**By Ann Bond**

**DURANGO** - Robert Garrigues, who was Natural Resource Specialist in the Dolores Office, is now working in the PLC on geologic reviews for the BLM.

His duties include work on applications for permits to drill, the Northern San Juan Basin Coalbed Methane EIS, drainage and diligence issues, coal-bed methane issues, and ground-water monitoring.

Before working on the San Juan, Robert was a research hydro-geologist for 13 years for the Washington State Department of Ecology.

He enjoys bicycling, hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, canoeing, and llama packing.

"I've been a road cyclist since 1977, often riding several thousand miles per year," Robert says.

He and wife, Judy, were llama guides and ranch hands for four months in 2001, leading trips into the Grand Staircase/Escalante National Monument.

Judy currently works at the Pinon Project in Cortez as a trainer. Daughter Alison, 26, was married this fall, and Rachel, 28, is engaged to be married this summer.

"Judy enjoys most of the same outdoor activities as I do, and is developing into a terrific quilter," Robert says. "She'd better be - she's promised queen-size quilts to both daughters for wedding presents."

## ADMIN NEWS IN THE PLC

### John Says 10-4

By Ron Duvall

**DURANGO** – After 34 years with the USFS, John Nolan, San Juan NF Telecom Specialist, is heading into retirement.

John started his USFS career as a temporary Engineering Aide on the Dolores Ranger District, then worked as laborer for the former Pine Ranger District.

John's permanent career started in 1974 as San Juan NF Civil Engineering Tech for the West Engineering Zone at Dolores. In 1981, he was detailed to Temporary Supervisory Civil Engineering Tech, then selected for a Civil Engineering Tech position in Dolores.

In 1982, John shifted to Construction Contract Administrator, working as a construction inspector, engineering representative, and contracting officers representative for roads, bridges, water crossings, and recreation sites.

In 1987, he began serving as Supervisory Facility Manager, handling fleet, road maintenance, and communication radio and telephone systems.

In 1993, John changed over to Telecommunication Specialist and has been managing our telecommunications systems ever since, including radio, telephone and network equipment for the BLM, USFS, and Southwest Colorado fire dispatch centers.

John graduated from Montezuma County High School in Cortez and went on to Fort Lewis College, where he started his engineering studies in 1968. He also studied Forestry at Colorado State University in the early '70s.

His many achievements on the job include working through the configuration of the Southern Administrative Zone, repairing the old phone systems, progressing through radio replacement initiatives and moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with Voice Override Internet Protocol.

*(Ron Duvall is the San Juan NF Administrative Officer.)*

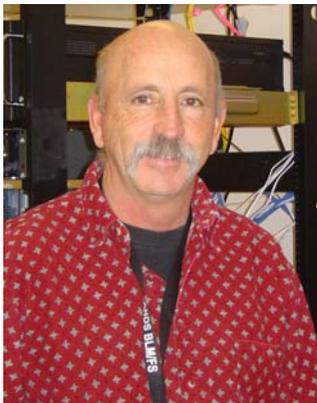


Photo by Vicki Duvall



Photo by Ann Bond

### Laurie Moves Over to HR

By Ann Bond

**DURANGO** – Laurie Ball is now Human Resources Assistant, responsible for personal benefits and staffing. She had been helping out in Finance and Human Resources on a detail.

"I'm looking forward to getting a handle on the many processes that make up Human Resources, so I can better answer people's questions," she says.

Laurie graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in Art Education. She has worked for the USFS 19 years, starting as a clerk for the Rocky Mountain Experiment Station in Fort Collins.

Next, she was Visitor Information Technician for the Arapaho and Roosevelt NFs. In 1987, she became the Forest Supervisor's Secretary for almost 12 years. After that, she cut back to part-time administrative work.

Laurie's husband, Mark, is the San Juan Wildlife Program Leader. Mark and Laurie enjoy camping, fishing, downhill skiing, antiques, traveling, and exploring new areas.

Daughter, Lindsay, 14, is a Durango High School cheerleader. Snickers, their long-haired dachshund, goes everywhere with them, even to Florida, where the rest of their families live.

### How's Kathy?

By Jeanie Harris

**DURANGO** - Kathy Jarussi, who left the San Juan this fall, is settled in at her new job as Human Resources Specialist with the Indian Health Services (IHS) in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

Kathy says she likes Aberdeen and the people she works with. However, the electronic processing systems are far less user-friendly than those used by the USFS.

Kathy has bought her very first house in Aberdeen and is hoping to get a dog (maybe from Annie's Orphans Animal Shelter in Durango) this spring.

Kathy is well known for her love of animals; she has three cats of her own and many "adopted" cats and dogs residing at Annie's Orphans, where she was a volunteer.

Kathy came to the San Juan in the spring of 2002 from the BLM Fire Center in Fairbanks, Alaska.

She had worked for the Forest Service in Montana. While working on the San Juan, Kathy progressed from a Human Resources Assistant to Specialist, with primary responsibility for Employee Benefits.

*Jeanie Harris is the San Juan Human Resources Director.*



Photo by Ann Bond

## MORE PLC NEWS



Photo by Ann Bond

### Peck Lands New Job

By Ann Bond

**DURANGO** - Paul Peck, San Juan Recreation Program Leader since 2000, will be the first Manager of the new 130,000-acre Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area in Grand Junction.

Paul will work with a staff of five to manage a 73,000-acre designated Wilderness, Colorado River rafting permits, off-road vehicle use, mountain biking, archeology, paleontology, and grazing.

"My efforts will focus on community relations, partnerships, developing a 'friends' group, supervision, and budget," Paul says.

Paul started with the USFS in 1972 under a work-study program on the Arapaho-Roosevelt NF, and went on to work seasonal jobs in recreation. He then had a string of jobs in timber, fire, and recreation on the Pike-San Isabel, White River, and Arapaho-Roosevelt NFs.

Paul landed on the San Juan NF in 1986 as District Ranger for the former Mancos District. He served there until 1994, when the District was dissolved. He then became San Juan Partnership Coordinator.

Paul enjoys hiking, cross-country skiing, camping, sightseeing, travel, pinochle, and, of course, his "honey-do list." He and his wife, Mary, a preschool teacher, have been married for 28 years.

"We grew up in rural Iowa and were childhood sweethearts," Paul says. "My first memory of her goes back to when we were six years old. She sat in front of me in school and her red pony tail kept brushing across my desk. I pulled her pony tail, and she turned around and gave me a big smile. The rest is history."

Daughter Rebecca, 25, is married and teaches in Greeley. Daughter Beth, 23, just graduated from the University of New Mexico, and is working with the USDA Rural Development Administration in Washington, D.C. Son Josh, 19, is a freshman at the University of Northern Colorado.

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## COLUMBINE NEWS



Photo by Stan Sparks

### Vicki's Settling In

By Stan Sparks

**BAYFIELD** - Vicki Switzer, who worked as Financial Assistant in the Supervisor's Office is now Administrative Support Assistant for Columbine. She

worked at the PLC for three years before moving over to Bayfield.

Before coming to the San Juan, Vicki worked for the National Park Service at Zion NP, then for the Bureau of Reclamation in Farmington, New Mexico, as a budget technician. She has two daughters, and a granddaughter in Utah. She and her husband raise horses and dogs.

*(Stan Sparks is Columbine Visitor Information Specialist.)*

### Mike's Back on the San Juan



Photo by Stan Sparks

By Stan Sparks

**Bayfield** - Mike Herin is Columbine's new Assistant Engine Foreman. Mike comes from the Dixie NF, where he worked for one year as Squad Boss on the Cedar City Hot Shots.

Before working for the Dixie NF, Mike worked for the San Juan's Dolores Ranger District from 2002 to 2003 as Assistant Engine Foreman.

Mike started his USFS career on the Tonto NF, where he worked from 1995 to 2000 on the Payson Hot Shot Crew.

Mike is pleased to be back on the San Juan and looks forward to hunting, fishing, and hiking in the public lands that surround his new home.

## DOLORES NEWS



Photo by Toni Kelly

### Building Construction Underway

By Toni Kelly

**DOLORES** - After a dual-agency planning process and complex land exchange, construction began this fall on a brand new Dolores Public Lands Office. The building site is on Highway 184, within a quarter-mile of the junction with Highway 145. Another big challenge has been avoiding archeological sites.

"Of the 57 acres included in the building site, 32 acres contain archaeological sites from the Basket maker III to Pueblo I and II periods," says Elaine Sherman, District Archeologist. "There are 10 sites, eight of which have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places."

The \$5.5 million project will include an 18,500-square-foot office for 81 BLM and USFS employees, warehouse, four parking lots, and internal road system. Triad Western Constructors, Inc., was awarded the contract. Project Coordinator Van Chanay says the project also includes a bunkhouse, hay/tack barn, corral, and graveled ware-yard. The complex is expected to be completed by late 2006.

*(Toni Kelly is the Dolores Visitor Information Specialist.)*

### Lucas New in Natural Resources



Photo by Ann Bond

By Toni Kelly

**DOLORES** - Lucas Vargo is the new Natural Resource Specialist in Dolores, placed through SCEP (Student Career Experience Program).

A native New Mexican, Lucas claims Cuba as home, but actually has spent most of his life in Albuquerque. His father, Dennis, who holds a PhD in Mathematics, and mother, Sylvia, a Physician's Assistant, live in Albuquerque.

Lucas holds an associate's degree in Environmental Safety and Health from Technical Vocation Institute and a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from the College of Santa Fe.

While in school, he worked through SCEP as a Petroleum Engineer Technician at the BLM Casper, Wyoming Field Office and BLM Cuba Field Station/Albuquerque Field Office. Lucas loves fishing and other outdoor activities.

## PAGOSA NEWS

### Glen Does It All

By Ann Bond

**PAGOSA SPRINGS** - Glen Raby, who handled Lands for the Pagosa Ranger District 14 years ago, has taken those duties back, following Sonja Hoie's move to Missouri.

Glen will continue to serve as Minerals Staff for the District, Paleontology Coordinator for the Forest, and Site Manager for Chimney Rock Archaeological Area, and Minerals Staff for the District.

Sonja, former Lands Staff, transferred this fall to the Mark Twain NF to work as Recreation Specialist for the Ava/Cassville/Willow Springs Ranger District.

Glen began his San Juan career in Durango in 1980 as a trainee geologist assigned to Forest Planning. He started in Lands at the SO, then headed to Pagosa. He's been helping with management of Chimney Rock since 1983. Over the years, he's also helped out in Public Affairs, NEPA, and Landscape Management.

Glen grew up in New Orleans, where his family lives. He spent three years in the early 1970s with the U.S. Army Security Agency. He holds a Geology degree from Louisiana State University.

Glen held seasonal jobs with USGS in Oregon and Colorado, then earned his graduate degree in Geology from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology.

"My hobbies are rock collecting (duh...) and growing tropical plants - a relic of a short stint growing bromeliads commercially in New Orleans," he says.



Photo by Brian Bachtel

## ANASAZI HERITAGE CENTER NEWS



Photo Courtesy Take Pride in America

## Congrats, LouAnn

By Marissa Karchut

**DOLORES** - LouAnn Jacobson, Manager for the Anasazi Heritage Center and Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, was selected to receive a *Take Pride in America* award this year. She was recognized for consistently involving volunteers and partners in multiple projects.

"This award is not just for me, but for all of us who work together to make these partnerships and projects a success," Jacobson said.

LouAnn attended a ceremony in Washington D.C. this fall to honor individuals and groups from across the country for their outstanding contributions to public lands.

At the ceremony, Secretary of Interior Gale Norton commended the award recipients for their efforts toward "cooperative conservation" and "long-term vitality of our nation's most prized treasure – our public lands."



## Aloha, Laura

By Marissa Karchut

**DOLORES** - Laura Kochanski, Supervisory Archaeologist for Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, is trading her backdrop of pines for palms.

Laura is leaving to become Resource Manager for Pu'uuhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park, on the big island of Hawaii, south of Kona. While we wish her well (and are making plans to visit), she will be greatly missed in Colorado, where she has worked for the last 15 years.

Laura, a native of Arizona, received her degree in anthropology from Northern Arizona University in 1978, and moved to Colorado in 1988. The next year, she began working for the San Juan NF as an archaeologist in the Supervisor's Office in Durango.

She was later reassigned to the position of Zone Archaeologist for the Mancos and Dolores Ranger Districts in 1992. In 2001, she switched over from the USFS to BLM to work at the Anasazi Heritage Center as Archaeologist for Canyons of the Ancients National Monument.

In her new National Park Service job, she will work amidst the remains of *Pu'uuhonua* (meaning "place of refuge") and a complex of other Hawaiian archaeological sites, including temple mounds, royal fishponds, a royal canoe landing, a lava sledding track, and several coastal villages.

Her primary duty will be to manage cultural resources in the park, but she will also assist in managing other resources like vegetation, freshwater ponds, and ocean shoreline.

Laura leaves in January, but her husband, Tom, will stay through March to cover the quarantine waiting period for their dog, Koa. Tom also worked on the San Juan NF for nearly five years as part of the Integrated Resources Inventory team. Since leaving in 1996, he has been GIS coordinator for the City of Cortez.

Laura completed several large projects for Canyons of the Ancients. She oversaw roof construction at Lowry Pueblo and completed the required consultations. She ensured the mitigation of impacts associated with installing interpretive signs at Lowry and Sand Canyon Pueblos.

Laura wrote a successful grant proposal for the Historic American Building Survey to backfill parts of Cannonball Pueblo and was the project lead for reducing visual impacts of the fence at the site.

She provided assistance rerouting spur trails to protect sites in Sand Canyon, and helped organize and participate in Public Lands Day events held in the Monument. She was in charge of stabilization projects at Lowry, Kiva in the Sky, and Painted Hand Pueblo, in addition to overseeing a 10,000-acre Monument inventory, completing the Monument Landscape Scale Overview, and participating in the Monument planning process.

"Moving will be a huge change, and I'll certainly miss everyone," Laura says. "But I'm also looking forward to new challenges, the warmer climate, and being closer to my brother, James, who also lives on the big island."

*(Marissa Karchut is AHC Visitor Services and Volunteer Coordinator)*



Photo by Marissa Karchut

# SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION



SAN JUAN  
MOUNTAINS  
ASSOCIATION

## Africans Visit

By Kathe Hayes

**DURANGO** - The San Juan Mountains Association sponsored four Maasai representatives from the Kenyan-based, nongovernmental organization, Simba Maasai Outreach Organization.

Their visit to Durango included several community presentations highlighting traditional song and dance with discussions of cross-cultural perspectives on land management.

The Maasai presented to the San Juan Leadership Team, visited several schools, and spoke, sang and danced to a standing-room-only crowd at Fort Lewis College.

The Maasai are semi-nomadic pastoralists who primarily live off the products of their livestock herds. They live in semi-arid environments in East Africa. In recent years, the restriction of their grazing lands has reduced their reliance on cattle raising, and some now engage in limited cultivation growing maize for food and some vegetables.

The two men and two women are founding members of their outreach program, which works to provide clean water systems, dependable medical supplies, education, and environmental management to their tribes. They have successfully renovated a dam project to provide a water supply for cattle and goats. They also run an educational center that educates visitors on Maasai culture and indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants.

*(Kathe Hayes is SJMA Volunteer Coordinator.)*



*Photo by Kathe Hayes*

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