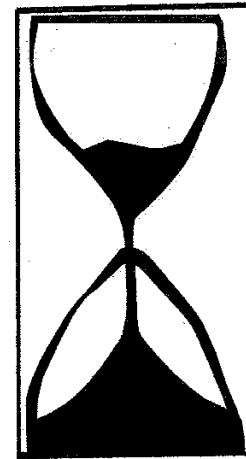
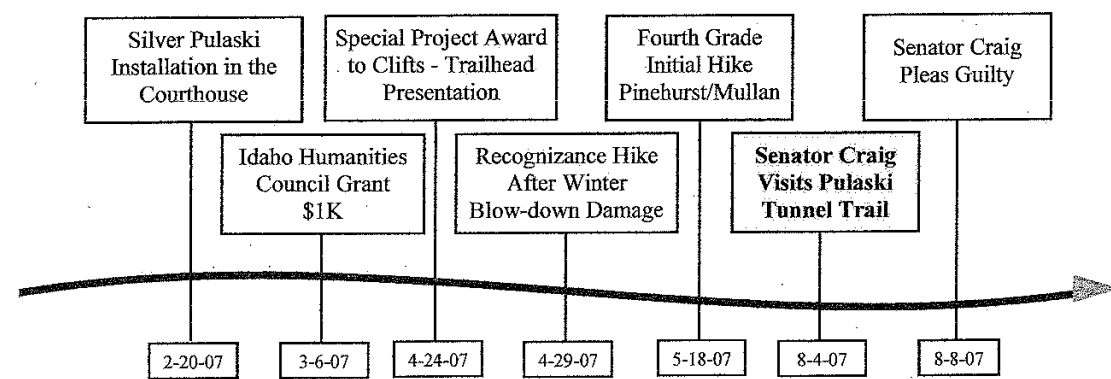
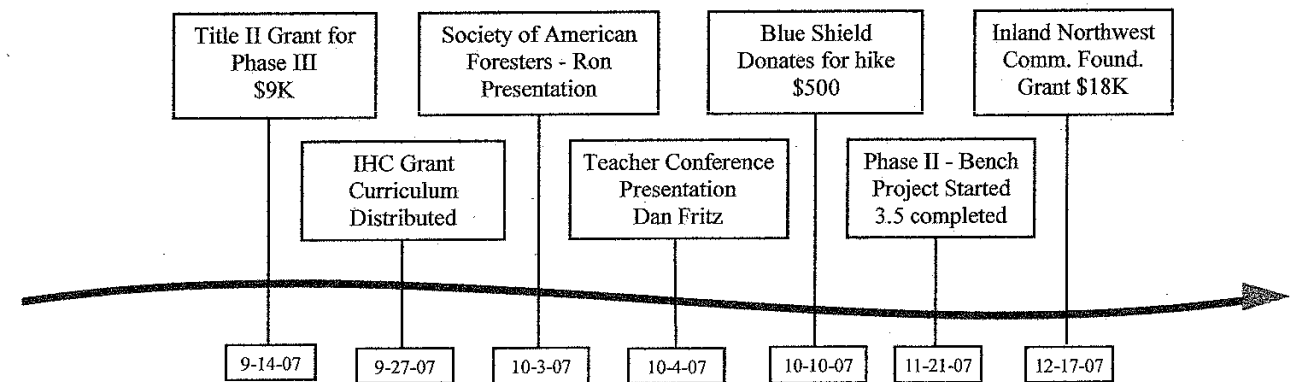


## Pulaski Project Accomplishments & Activities Timeline

2007



## and News & Media Coverage of the Great Fire of 1910



# SHOSHONE NEWS-PRESS

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## Facts unveiled for new Pulaski trail signs

### Research reveals sad story of the Nicholsons, son and father

*Editor's note: The following story was compiled by The Pulaski Project members and submitted by Ron Roizen.*

An additional set of historical signs is in the works for the Pulaski Tunnel Trail. The new signs will focus on the Silver Valley's mining history as it relates to the Big Burn.

Like the signs already in place on the trail, each sign will provide room for about three or four brief narrative topics or panels and their associated images. The Pulaski Project is currently collecting an array of possible new sign topics, from which final topics will be chosen.

At the moment, the project committee is in the process of developing a single panel for one of the new signs.

The story of young Val Nicholson and his father Charles Nicholson is a tragic instance in which the great 1910 fire took two lives from the same family. (Incidentally, the relationship of these Nicholsons with the Nicholson adit, AKA the

Pulaski Tunnel, is not yet known.)

Teenager Val perished with seven others in the Bullion mine, where a crew of about 60 firefighters took refuge on the night of August 20, 1910, much as Pulaski's crew also found refuge in a mine. Days later, the boy's father, Charles, retrieved his son's body and accompanied it back to Wallace. Two weeks later, according to the available secondary accounts, Charles himself died. It was said, "he died of a broken heart."

In a field of many stories, there is none more poignant in the record of the great 1910 fire.

Both are now buried in a simple gravesite at Nine Mile Cemetery just north of Wallace. They are located near the collective grave of five of the others who perished at the Bullion mine. The Bullion mine is located south of Mullan near the Hiawatha bike trail.

Of course, before etching this story into the porcelain of a new historical trail sign, the story elements had to be fact-checked. That process is always interesting and often illuminates new aspects of the Big Burn's history.

The first place to look was the Wallace Public Library.

Librarian Bernie Ludwick brought out the coroner's report, a large-format register in which many deaths resulting from the Big Burn were



— Photo courtesy of RON ROIZEN

### Assistant Librarian Betty Wise used the Wallace Public Library's new microfilm machine.

recorded by the coroner.

There, a single-line entry for Val Nicholson was found. Several columns of data were dutifully inscribed.

The boy's date of death was Aug. 20, the night of the Big Burn's worst flare-up. He is described as a male, age 17, slim, and tall. Under the heading of "complexion" is listed "Drk Hair." His residence is Gem. And his personal effects are listed as a "25 Cal Coits Revolver," and a "2.65 Diary." It is unclear what the "2.65 Diary" is.

Cause of death is "Forest Fire Suffocation." A notation is also entered that appears to be the location at the Bullion mine area from which the body was disinterred and brought to Wallace.

There is no entry for Charles Nicholson's passing in the coroner's report.

The next resource is the library's microfilm reading machine. There should be accounts of both Val's and Charles' deaths and funerals in Wallace's newspapers of the time.

Librarian Ludwick brings out four or five microfilm rolls for the summer of 1910 and assistant librarian, Betty Wise, demonstrates how to load microfilm rolls into the new microfilm-reading machine.

See PULASKI, Page 8

## PULASKI

Continued from Page 3

A single short item it turned up on the teen, Val. The article appeared in The Idaho Press, a Wallace newspaper, page 1, Aug. 25, 1910. The title reads, "DOUBLE FUNERAL FOR BOYS" and the subtitle, "Victims of Bullion Disaster Will Be Buried Friday."

The article's entire text is as follows:

"At 2 o'clock this morning the bodies of Larry Ryson, Leslie Zellars, and C. Val Nicholson, three of the victims of the Bullion disaster, were brought to Wallace. Men in the employ of the forestry officer, the parents of Zellars and Nicholson, who were not yet of age, accompanied the officers to the spot where the men had been buried temporarily. Soldiers and the army wagon went along beyond Mullan and from that point on the trip was made with pack horses. The bodies were packed out on horses until the army wagon was met when they were transferred to this and brought to Wallace.

"The funerals of the two youths, Zellars and Nicholson, will be a double on and will be held from the Methodist church, Friday, August 26, at 1:30 p.m. The boys had grown up in the canyon and had attended the schools there. Nicholson was only 16 years of age, while Zellars, was 19. They returned to the Bullion only a week ago Monday. They had been working out there before, but came home for a few days.

"The parents are Charles Zellars and Charles Nicholson."

So there were two local boys, not one, and two bereft fathers. Both boys grew up in Burke Canyon and they had previous (mining or firefighting) experience at the Bullion mine. Val was only 16 rather than 17.

Continued searching in the contemporary microfilm rolls turns up no mention of Charles Nicholson's death. This is especially puzzling because Wallace newspapers of that time reported all manner of local news and events — including, for example, chance encounters with bears and distinguished visitors to town. Why nothing about Charles Nicholson?

The Internet is consulted by going to the online list of graves at Nine Mile Cemetery (see [http://www.interment.net/data/us/id/shoshone/wallace/wallace\\_lq.htm](http://www.interment.net/data/us/id/shoshone/wallace/wallace_lq.htm)). There, we find listings for both father and son. Charles death is dated Sept. 22, 1910, at age 57.

So the father died about a month, not two weeks, after the son. Armed with this new and somewhat later death date for Charles, the microfilm machine is again utilized.

And here it is: A single brief notice turns up for Charles' funeral in The Daily Idaho Press, Second Edition, for Sept. 26, 1910. The title: "MANY AT FUNERAL OF CANYON MINER."

The text read, "The funeral of Charles Nicholson set for Sunday, was held this afternoon with services at Worstell's chapel. Scores of canyon people attended, while a large body of Masons turned out. About 30 Masons marched out to the cemetery escorting the remains."

But how did he die? The notice's title says he was a miner. Gene Hyde's book of mining deaths (From Hell to Heaven) is checked for an entry for Charles. There is none, so he probably did not die in a mine or a mining-

related accident.

Next a local historian is consulted. Bob Dunsmore, a Mason, checks Mason records and reports back that Charles is listed as dying of pneumonia.

Where does this fact-checking exploration leave our sign topic for the Nicholsons? We've confirmed the deaths of son and father, corrected the time between the two deaths, and established the correct ages at death for both.

But we've also enlarged and complicated the story. There was another local boy, Leslie Zellars, who died with Val and whose father also made the lonely journey to bring his son's remains home.

The next task is to compose the few words that will convey the story on one of the new sign panels and find a picture or create an illustration to accompany the story.

The stories of the great fire of 1910 enrich life in the Silver Valley. The Pulaski Project is dedicated to convey the most accurate information available when considering topics for signs. Detailed research provides both facts and new leads.

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

GUEST OPINION

## Should the Silver Valley become a National Heritage Area?

By Ron Roizen  
Special to the News-Press

When I joined the Pulaski Project in 2003 one of my chief tasks was to look for funding for a new interpretive center and museum that would be sited somewhere not too far from the Pulaski trailhead.

The new facility would complement the Pulaski Tunnel Trail.

As it turned out, however, it was not a good historical moment for finding that kind of funding. The then-new wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as a number of other factors made my search a frustrating experience.

But I did turn up one interesting, if somewhat indirect, prospect.

It was the National Heritage Areas program of the National Park Service.

The National Heritage Areas (NHA) program is based on the premise that we as a nation cannot put everything of significant historical interest into a museum.

Sometimes significant historical interest resides in battlefields, towns, or even identifiable regions of the country. In other words, they reside out-of-doors and in the nation's landscape.

The NHA program selects areas with national historical significance around the country and designates them as National Heritage Areas.

There are at present 37 such National Heritage Areas around the country - although not a single one is in the Northwest.

A map of NHA areas before ten new areas were added in 2006. No new area, however, was located in the Northwest.

What happens when a place becomes a National Heritage Area?

Well, new attention gets showered on that place's historical character and identity. New efforts are launched to develop its historical resources, both at the local level and in partnership with historical specialists at the National Park Service.

Up to one million dollars per year may be awarded to National Heritage Areas for strengthening their historical presentation.

How does it work?

A local nonprofit is organized and designated as the key agency for NHA planning and distribution of funds.

Once funded, the local agency will call for requests for support from local museums, organizations, and other entities.

The annual pot of NHA funds is distributed to applicants in much the same way that the Morbeck Foundation distributes its grants.

The NHA program might bring a lot of new attention and fresh resources to the Silver Valley and to our presentation of its history.

But — and of course — there are risks to a community that pursues a National Heritage Area designation too.

New funds can for example create competition among local institutions, which in turn may at times give rise to hurt feelings and resentments.

A program focused on local history may also risk the development of a kind of "boutiquification" of the area's aesthetic.

At least one source has told me that designation as a NHA tends to stifle natural resources enterprises such as logging and mining.

Moreover, applying for National Heritage Area status is a long and complicated process that will require support from both the public and our congressional representatives.

Most of us will agree, I think, that the Silver Valley has played a significant role in the nation's history in several respects - including as the nation's chief sources of silver, lead, and zinc; as a significant venue in the history of labor-management relations; because of the Great 1910 Fire; and as an outpost of the culture and character of the American West.

But do we want such a designation? I propose that it would be good to investigate that question thoroughly before doing anything else.

I'd like to suggest that the Silver Valley community forms a committee to carry out such an investigation. If you're interested in participating in it, the place to start is by examining the National Heritage Areas web page, at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/>.

Then please email (at [ron@roizen.com](mailto:ron@roizen.com)) or telephone (at 556-1707) me about setting up a new group's initial meeting.

For my part, I don't want to participate in something that tends to distort or limit our area's potentials.

But I also believe that it's high time the nation got a better understanding of the ethic of the American West and natural resources enterprises. A NHA designation for the Silver Valley may serve that goal.

What do you think?



— Photo by ERIKA KIRSCH

Mark Bren, of Kellogg, checks out the new display of the Silver Pulaski tool display Tuesday afternoon at the Shoshone County Courthouse in Wallace. The new display was unveiled by the Pulaski Group, which has been instrumental in building the Pulaski Tunnel Trail and interpretive information about the 1910 fire that swept through Wallace. The display includes a silver Pulaski tool received by the Pulaski Group from the USFS and interpretive signs explaining the fire and aftermath. The display case was built by Denny Morley.

## Silver Pulaski

— Photo by ERIKA KIRSCH

Jim See, left, and Robin Stanley unveil the Silver Pulaski display on Tuesday afternoon at the Shoshone County Courthouse in Wallace. The display commemorates the 1910 fire sweeping through Wallace and the heroic acts of USFS Ranger Ed Pulaski, who saved his 45-man crew from perishing in the fire. The display includes a silver Pulaski tool received by the Pulaski Group from the USFS and interpretive signs explaining the fire and aftermath. The display case was built by Denny Morley.



THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2007

# SHOSHONE NEWS-PRESS

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## Humanities Council awards 22 grants

**MULLAN** — The Idaho Humanities Council, the nonprofit, state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, awarded \$66,381 in grants to organizations and individuals at its recent board meeting in Post Falls.

The grant awards will support 19 public humanities projects, and curriculum projects by three public school teachers.

Eight projects focus on topics exploring Idaho and American history and culture and are funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities "We the People" program, and three focus on the Lewis and Clark legacy and are funded through a grant from the Idaho Governor's Lewis and Clark Trail Committee.

The following North Idaho projects were funded:

■ James See, Mullan High School (Mullan), received \$1,000 to develop curriculum and an activity kit focused on the Great Fire of 1910

and the story of firefighter Edward Pulaski. The 1910 fire was one of the largest forest fires in U.S. history, and Pulaski was credited with saving a number of firefighters by taking refuge in a mine until a firestorm passed. The kit will include suggested classroom activities, copies of interpretive Pulaski trail signs, videos of the trail, lesson plans, and the book *Flames and Courage: Saga of the 1910 Fires*.

■ The Coeur d'Alene Tribe (Plummer) received \$1,984 to support a Cultural Conference for Native American men, focusing on a number of cultural sustainability issues, including wellness, traditional arts and crafts, music and dance, language preservation, spiritual values, and justice. The conference will include native craftsmen, spiritual leaders, tribal historians and elders. Jon Skwanqhqn is the project director.

## GRANTS

Continued from Page 1

■ Priest Lake State Park (Coolin) received \$1,500 to develop an interpretive exhibit and record oral histories to help preserve the history of logging in north Idaho. The park constructed a replica of an early-20th century log flume, and plans to use artifacts preserved from the original log flume in the interpretive exhibit. They also will collect oral histories from the aging loggers in the area.

Volunteer guides will help park visitors understand the history of logging as they view the log flume, exhibit and oral histories. Faith Berry is the project director.

The next deadline for Idaho Humanities Council grant proposals is Sept. 15; however, IHC staff strongly recommends that prospective applicants contact staff to discuss their project ideas before writing their grants. Applicants are also encouraged to submit a rough draft of their proposals for staff critique by mid-August.

IHC grant guidelines and application forms are available on IHC's Web site — [www.idahohumanities.org](http://www.idahohumanities.org) — or by calling (208) 345-5346.

THE NEWS-PRESS Thursday, March 29, 2007 3

## Teachers awarded grant for Pulaski



—Courtesy photo

Pinehurst Elementary School teacher Dan Fritz, left, and Mullan High School guidance counselor Jim See stand at the trailhead of the Pulaski Trail. They were recently awarded a \$1,000 Teacher Incentive Grant through the Idaho Humanities Council. The duo is also working to produce a resource kit for fourth-grade teachers who might consider providing their students with a field trip to the Pulaski Tunnel Trail.

## Educators working together to produce teachers' kit for fourth-grade tours

By JIM SEE  
Special to the News-Press

**WALLACE** — The Idaho Humanities Council, the state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, has awarded a \$1,000 Teacher Incentive Grant, "Great Fire of 1910 and Edward Pulaski: A Fourth Grade Idaho History Resource," to Pinehurst fourth-grade teacher Dan Fritz and Mullan educator Jim See.

The two educators will collaborate to produce a resource kit for fourth-grade teachers who might consider providing their students with an extraordinary field trip to the Pulaski Tunnel Trail. In 2005, there were 2,737 fourth-grade students registered in northern Idaho. That translates into approximately 138 fourth-grade classrooms in 44 schools.

The Idaho State Board of Education has established that Idaho history is taught to elementary students in the fourth grade. The Great Fire of 1910 and the heroism of Edward Pulaski

See PULASKI, Page 3

## PULASKI

Continued from Page 1

are important topics to study in Idaho history and the history of the United States.

"The story of Ed Pulaski and the Great Fire of 1910 is a very important part of our local history, as well as Idaho history," Fritz said. "It is wonderful that we have a resource like this right in our own backyard. The Pulaski Tunnel Trail experience will provide a culminating activity to this fascinating story."

Pulaski Tunnel Trail, 1 mile south of Wallace, has been restored and interpreted for use by the general public. Both the mine site where Pulaski led his crew for refuge during the Big Blowup and the escape route his crew took are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The interpretive trail with twelve historically oriented signs along the way will provide a valuable learning experience for regional fourth-grade students. Students will be able to witness first-hand the locations where these history making events took

place. Fritz and See will organize activities and lesson plans into a "Great Fire of 1910 and Edward Pulaski" curriculum kit for teachers. Both paper copies and electronic copies of the materials will be provided. Resources will also be posted on the Internet.

The kit will furnish the teacher with resources to prepare the students for the field trip experience as the capstone activity. Though hiking the trail would not have to be experienced by all classes, the kit would complement other Idaho history materials the teacher may be using. By providing a variety of resources, fourth-grade teachers can choose to utilize what activities fit the Idaho history lessons appropriate to their particular class.

"From the beginning, the Pulaski Project has envisioned the use of the trail by students of history of all ages," said See. "We would like to see bus loads of Idaho students experiencing this special trail and learning of its place in Idaho history."

The Pulaski Tunnel Trail is an excellent resource to make Idaho history authentic and accessible for northern Idaho students. To visit the site where historical events occurred adds a realism students will long remember."

SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 2007

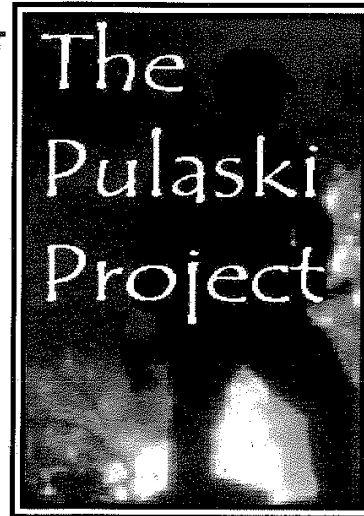
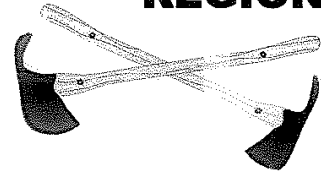


# REGIONAL OFFICE TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

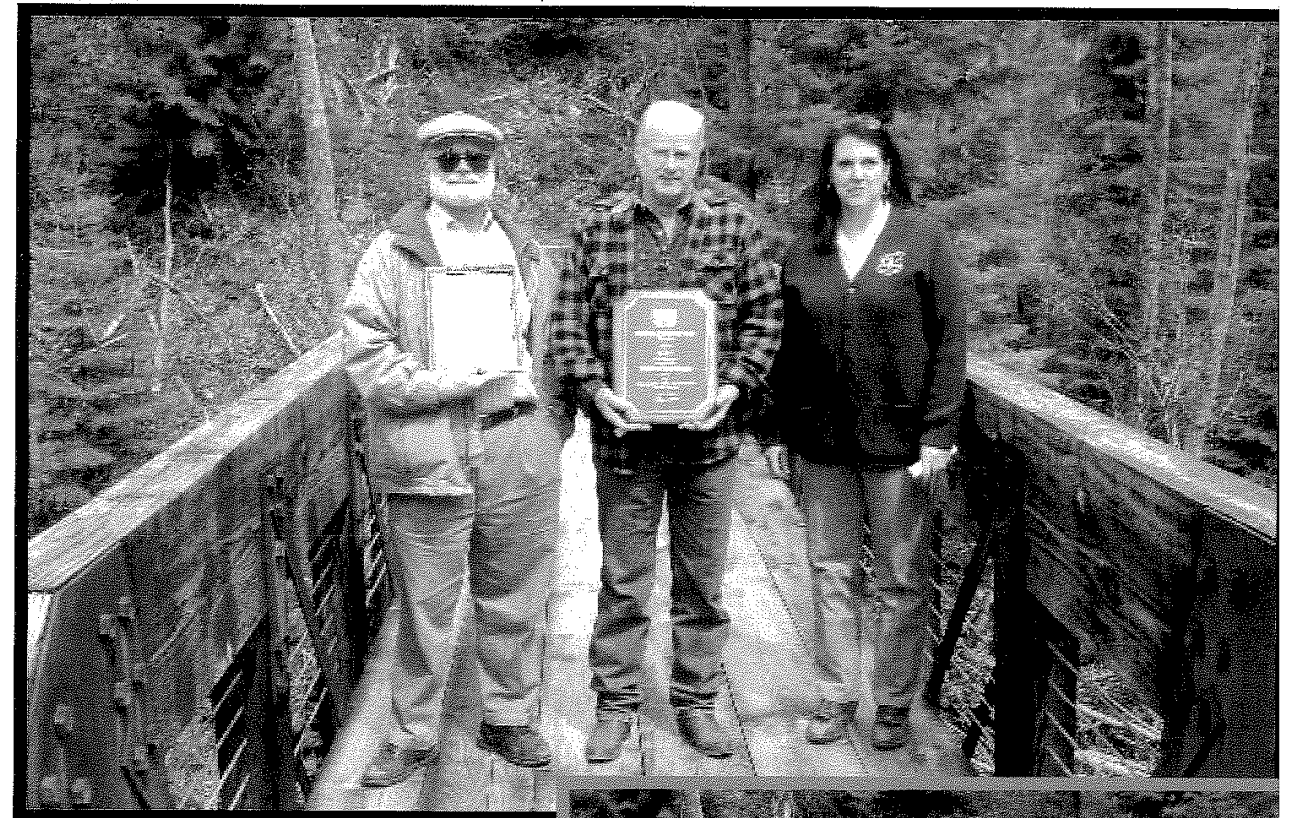
## SPECIAL AWARD

PULASKI TUNNEL TRAIL PROJECT  
KD CONSTRUCTION - DWIGHT CLIFT

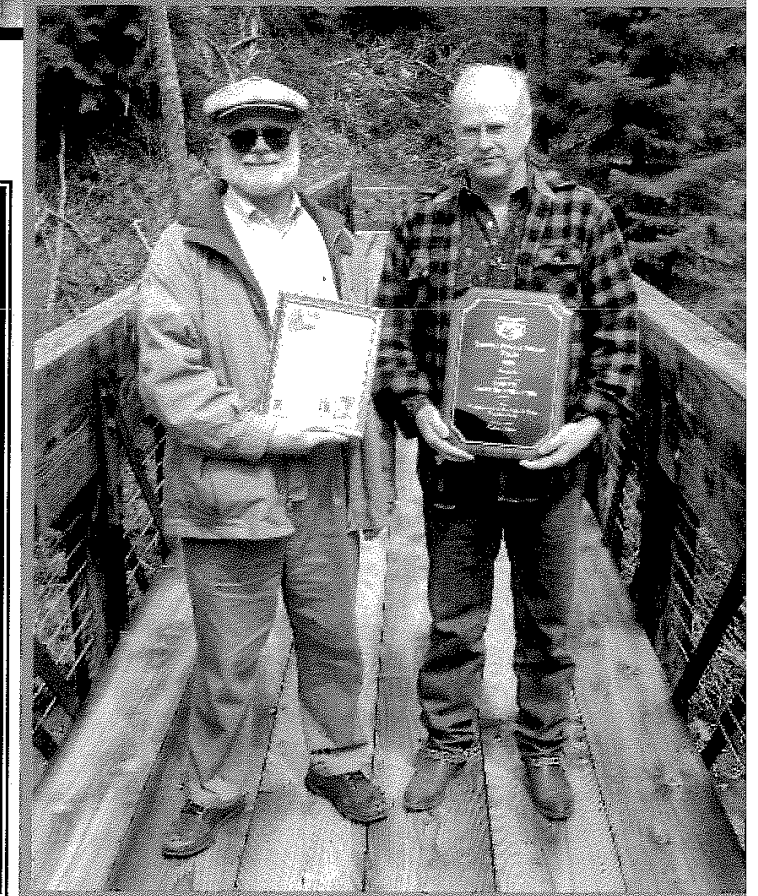
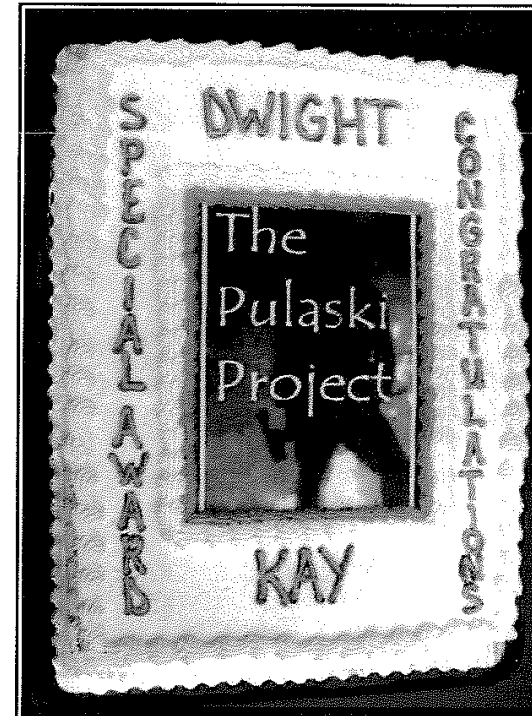
April 24, 2007

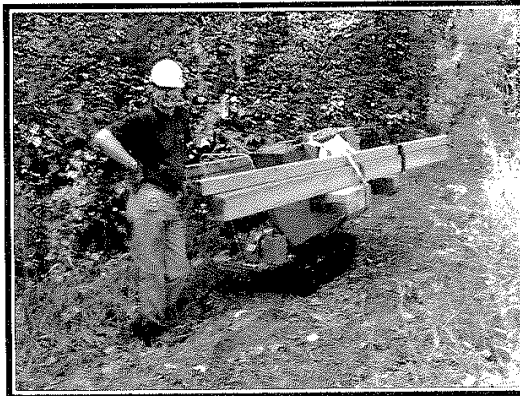


Linda McFaddan and Jim See (Pulaski Committee)  
Making Presentations to  
Dwight Clift (KD Construction)



Cake (Pictured Below) and Punch  
was Enjoyed by the Approximately  
20 Individuals in Attendance





*PULASKI PROJECT PRESENTATION*  
to  
*Dwight & Kay Clift*

April, 2007

Dwight Clift and his company, KD Construction, have been selected to receive a special award for trails construction from Region I of the U.S. Forest Service. The award cites Clift's and KD Construction's work on the Pulaski Tunnel Trail. Kay

Clift, Dwight's spouse, is president of KD Construction and worked with Dwight as a partner on the trail's construction. A letter from Kathleen A. McAllister, Acting Regional Forester, commends Clift and KD Construction for "innovative methods of trail construction" that "played a major role" in the trail project. "Construction of these facilities," McAllister wrote, "was difficult and required many innovative techniques including construction of four bridge structures, many feet of retaining wall and twelve porcelain interpretive signs."

McAllister's letter also noted that Clift "...worked hand-in-hand with the local community, this Agency, and local property owners to create a show case trailhead and trail that we expect will bring over 3,000 visitors a year to the community of Wallace, Idaho." A plaque was presented to Clift by Idaho Panhandle National Forest personnel on April 24, 2007.

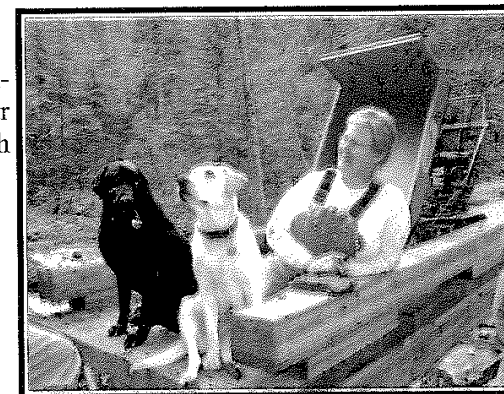
It may be noted that there is a pleasant irony associated with the award. Dwight Clift worked for the Forest Service for 34 years. He was an engineer and responsible for the trails program in the Wallace District. In the mid-1990s he proposed a project to rescue the Pulaski trail from overgrowth, decay, and oblivion. His project was initially approved and funded by the Forest Service to the tune of \$35K. Before long, however, problems associated with obtaining easements, rights-of-way, and the like proved too difficult to start work and the project's funds were diverted to other enterprises. Hence Clift was not only responsible for the more recent Pulaski Tunnel Trail project's completion but was also one of the earlier voices on behalf of reopening the route to the Pulaski Tunnel.

"Kay and I have gotten great satisfaction from the Pulaski trail project coming together," said Clift. "We've resurrected some history and also, in a small way, put ourselves into that history. It'll be something to tell the grandkids about."

The Pulaski Project sends it warm thanks and congratulations to Dwight and Kay! As a token of our appreciation we present Dwight and Kay each with a Pulaski silver round and this document.



*Thanks for all  
your work!*





# SHOSHONE NEWS-PRESS

*Pulaski award presented*



— Photo by ERIKA KIRSCH

Dwight Clift, center, was presented with a Special Project Award for the construction of the Pulaski Tunnel Trail on Tuesday. Jim See, left, of the Pulaski Committee and Deputy District Ranger on the Coeur d'Alene Ranger District Linda McFadden presented Clift with the award. Clift and his wife, Kay, owners of KD Construction, were recognized for their work on the trail. The regional office (John Favro) recognized Dwight, KD Construction and the Idaho Panhandle National Forest high profile trail project leading to the Pulaski Tunnel; it's also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

# SHOSHONE

GUEST OPINION

## Six pulaskis beheaded at trailhead

### Two others missing

This is an open letter to the citizens of the Silver Valley.

My first reaction was anger. Then dismay. And finally sadness. On Sunday morning, April 29, a couple of friends and I arrived at the Pulaski Tunnel Trailhead to go on a hike to record the damage done by the windstorm of last November. We discovered damage we were not expecting. Pulaski tools were used to decorate log displays along the trail and at each sign. We discovered that six pulaski heads were broken off and gone. Two additional pulaskis were completely gone.

At the sight of the first severed head, my shock gave way to anger. Who could possibly do such a thing? Why would they do it? My anger grew as I discovered the additional five missing heads broken off of the handle at the location of the "tamper resistant" screws. Why? Who? When?

Slowly, the dismay took over. Does a tribute to fallen forest fire fighters and Ed Pulaski not command a respect that would eliminate even the thought of vandalism? Must we place security cameras even in our most honored places? What was the perpetrator thinking when this crime was committed? What hurt or message was being communicated?

Then I arrived at sadness: We hoped that the value of this trail and the appropriateness of the pulaskis as a symbol might deter any thought of vandalism. Apparently we were wrong. I began to feel sorry for the petty individual who would willfully destroy such a beautiful display.

And for what? A trophy? Six trophies? Eight trophies? Without the handles, the heads are useless. Even the two pulaskis that were taken with the handles intact were useless with two holes in the handle. You can buy a useable pulaski for under \$40 without the extreme difficulty of trying to replace the handle.

How could we solve the mystery? It takes a community. I need your help. I dare to surmise that the perpetrator(s) will talk. May brag. May show an acquaintance his trophies. In order to provide the needed help this individual(s) needs, he(they) need to be caught. If appropriate consequences are administered, maybe something can be learned from this obvious mistake in judgment and atonement can be attained.

Therefore, I am asking the community in general and each of you individually to talk about this incident. Ask questions. But more importantly, listen for clues. If you learn anything that may help solve this crime, please call the sheriff's department. The pulaski were whole and present on Tuesday, April 24th. They were gone by Sunday morning at 8:30. Hopefully we

that will provide a restoration of our beautiful display.

Finally, to the person(s) who committed this incomprehensible act, I ask you, to consider turning yourself in. Do what is right. Admit your crime, pay your debt and learn from your mistake. You will feel better when you right this wrong and go on with your life.

A Shoshone County sheriff's deputy has evaluated the crime scene. And options have been discussed with the Shoshone County Sheriff. My hope is that we will be able to solve this crime and apprehend the perpetrator. With the help of the community, I am sure we will solve this mystery.

By the way, Mother Nature's damage, though extensive, was a lot less disturbing to record. Over twenty-five blown-down trees of various sizes were across the trail. Two of the associated root-balls had taken out part of the trail. Forest Service crews plan to repair the damage within a couple of weeks.

Please help repair the greater damage that occurred.

Jim See  
Pulaski Project President  
Wallace

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2007

# SHOSHONE NEWS-PRESS

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50 CENTS

## UP FRONT

You wouldn't believe who won The Way-Cool Straw Fishing Hat contest held Saturday morning in the parking lot at Mark's Marine, Mayden. No, the winner wasn't Gilbert Brown.

## Pulaski Tunnel Mine destination of about 45 third- and fourth-graders

Do you remember your fourth-grade field trip?

About 45 third- and fourth-graders and roughly half as many accompanying adults will be hiking two miles up the Pulaski Tunnel Trail to the Pulaski Tunnel Mine where, Aug. 20, 1910, forest ranger "Big Ed" Pulaski rescued 39 of his 45-man crew in the midst of the most important forest fire in the history of the U.S. Forest Service.

Then the students and their adult monitors hike back, with a stop for boxed lunches.

The youngsters will come from Pinehurst Elementary and John Mullan Elementary.

Their participation in the field trip is part of their grade-required focus on Idaho's history.

The expedition's members will first gather and meet at the trailhead one mile south of Wallace on Moon Pass Road at

9:00 am on Friday, May 18.

Jim See, a counselor and teacher at Mullan High School, and Dan Fritz, a new fourth grade teacher at Pinehurst Elementary School, will serve as guides and docents for the hike into Idaho's history. See is also the president and founder of the Pulaski Project.

The group will stop and examine each of the 12 large-format porcelain educational signs along the trail.

A significant fraction of the narrative provided in this signage was written by Pulaski himself in an article about his experience of the fire published in 1923.

The Forest Service is planning to provide a uniformed officer and a firefighter in full gear.

Depending on availability, a fire truck may also be on display at the trailhead.

The event will mark the

first hike of the Pulaski Tunnel Trail conducted under the auspices of a recently received Teacher Incentive Grant from the Idaho Humanities Council.

A successful grant application, put together by See and Fritz, developed a curriculum covering the Great 1910 Fire and the Pulaski story, the capstone of which is the Pulaski hike experience.

Also helping with the hike event will be Pat Alf, fourth

grade teacher at Pinehurst Elementary; John Fritz, Dan Fritz's father and third and fourth grade teacher at John Mullan Elementary; and Sue Fritz, John's wife and Dan's mother, as well as an elementary teacher at Sunnyside Elementary School in the Kellogg School District.

We hope and trust this will be a memorable educational experience for all.



# Mining district offers history

## Resident shoots for national historical designation

By SUZANNE JACOBSON  
Staff writer

### SHOSHONE COUNTY

Silver Valley's history runs as deep as its veins of silver, and the legacy here of a source-fueled economy has much to teach those in the country unfamiliar with the valley's culture.

Such is the idea fueling area resident Ron Roizen's launching the "big process" with the "big reward" of the Coeur d'Alene Mining District being named a National Heritage Area. The designation emanates from the National Park Service, and along with the distinction would come an infusion of cash that averages \$700,000 per year, all for developing modes of cultural preservation and explanation.

Thirty-seven areas across the country have been named National Heritage Areas, none of them in the Northwest.

"Look at the map," Roizen said, referring to the diagram found on the National Park Service's Website with colored areas showing current designation locations. The vast majority are found east of the Mississippi River.

But, this area could become "an instrument in changing national attitudes" and help create "a rational policy" regarding the historically "stigmatized" natural resource development, Roizen went on.

See ROIZEN, Page 4

SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 2007

# SHOSHONE NEWS-PRESS

## ROIZEN

Continued from Page 1

Roizen would like to change all that. He set up a Website with sections outlining each of the culturally significant facets of the Silver Valley, including descriptions of mining resources, the 1910 fire, and the Superfund site as a story of pollution and subsequent reclamation.

The illusion of many — especially in urban areas — that resource development leads to nothing but pollution and destruction could be debunked by education the Silver Valley has to offer, Roizen said.

Some worry that the very resources contributing to the culture here would be threatened should the area become a National Heritage one. But, "I couldn't find a single person, and believe me I tried," who said resource development rights would be impeded upon, Roizen said.

He called some of the existing areas, including a National Coal Heritage Area in West Virginia, to examine the effects of the program — one he said some wearily describe as a "free lunch. A lot of people don't want more federal involvement" here, he said.

Ultimately, Roizen said, it's not his call whether the program is established. "My job is to lay out the stuff," Roizen said. "If the community is not interested, then I'm not going to be too sad."

That is a major motivation — besides, of course, the money.

"I hate to sound crass," Roizen said, but the cash would be a "wonderful transfusion."

Roizen, who was hired for the Pulaski Project in 2003 to raise money for the Pulaski Trail and an accompanying interpretive center, found the opportunities available by becoming a National Heritage Area while searching for stones to step on in reaching fundraising goals.

Since not much interest had swirled around the interpretive center, Roizen said he approached the "problem crabwise instead of directly. The moment I found [the program], I locked onto it like a missile locks onto an airplane."

Right now, he said, there lacks the "ground swell of interest" needed to get this "great place with a lot of his-

tory" onto the radar of intrepid travelers careening down Interstate 90 through the valley.

"The moment I started talking about the trail, I knew we were going to get it," Roizen said. "People's eyes lit up. I have the same feeling about this project."

He mentioned an article he'd written on his current endeavor, an article that was released only to fall in a "big, loud thud."

But, this area could become "an instrument in changing national attitudes" and help create "a rational policy" regarding the historically "stigmatized" natural resource development, Roizen went on.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2007

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# Craig visits Wallace for Pulaski update

Senator checks in on trail project's progress

By TY HAMPTON  
Staff writer

**WALLACE** — Sen. Larry Craig flew into the state from Washington, D.C., Saturday morning stopping in Wallace for an update on the progress of the Pulaski Project.

"There is a great project underway here that is yet to be completed," Craig said. "This valley obviously has a lot of history and is transforming with the tourism industry. Additions that not only portray history but transcend it are very valuable because it isn't just Idaho history we are dealing with, it's National Forest history," Craig said.

The senator has been one of the primary drivers behind the project for years, getting nearly \$300,000 appropriated by Congress enabling the Forest Service to take on the mission of restoring, realigning and marking the trail and tunnel entrance.

The project is a national historic site, in tribute to the heroic Wallace Forest Service Ranger Ed Pulaski and all forest firefighters who have battled the wilderness fires.



— Photo by TY HAMPTON

Sen. Larry Craig flew in from Washington, D.C., Saturday making a stop at the Pulaski trailhead outside of Wallace. Craig (left) met with Pulaski Project President Jim See (right) to get an update on the progress of the trail's ongoing maintenance efforts.

Pulaski Project President Jim See said that the Forest Service does not have the money to fund projects such as the ongoing work on the trailhead, due to budgets being stretched thin paying to fight forest fires. See said that Craig has been an incredible appropriator providing funding for the cause.

"Essentially we're in phase II of the trail improvements installing benches, informational maps and signs, and a

lookout deck at the site of the tunnel," See said.

See added that there are five phases planned. Phase III entails transforming the tunnel back to its natural form before the fire of 1910. Phase IV includes a Pulaski statue to be erected as a monument. According to See, the final stage is to create a foundation for funding future maintenance of the historic trail.

See CRAIG, Page 5

## CRAIG

Continued from Page 1

On his way through the area, Craig had a meeting Sunday in Coeur d'Alene on the topic of his DVD project that he has been working on for the past four years. The informational DVD is called, "Facets," and it is a historical look at the state and the sto-

ries behind our culture.

Craig said filming is finished, and that the DVD is in the editing stages with the senator reading voice over narration during segments.

"I love history and especially Idaho history and I was trying to figure out how to share this knowledge on a large scale. Now when students sit down to learn a local history lesson, their teacher can pop in this DVD and go," Craig said.

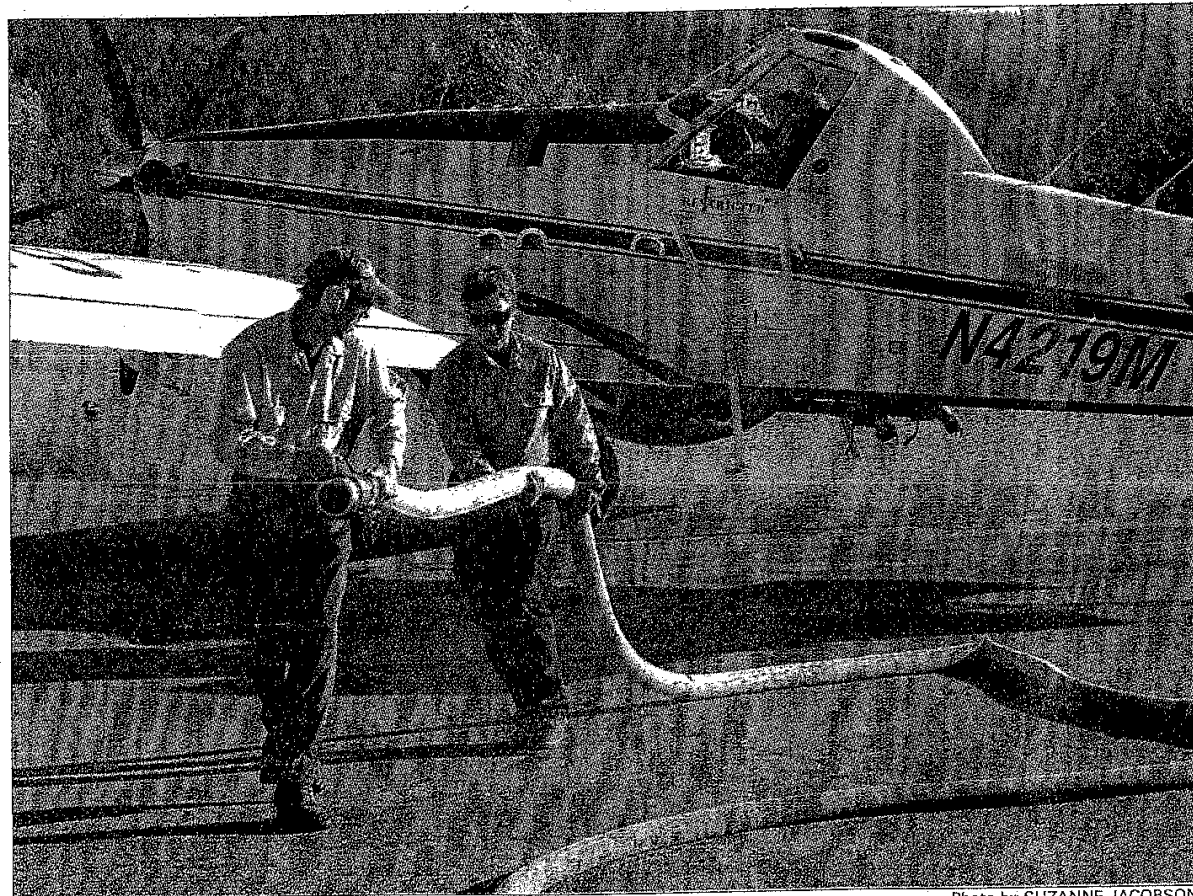
SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 2007

# HOSHONE NEWS-PRESS

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50 CENT

## Dry conditions break record



— Photo by SUZANNE JACOBSON

Bob Burke, aviation program manager for Idaho Department of Lands, helps Whitney Mann carry a hose away from an airplane Tuesday during safety training at the Shoshone County Airport. The hose runs from a 3,000 gallon water tank to the airplane, filling it with water to drop down on burning forest.

## Current conditions compared to those that spurred the 1910 fire

By SUZANNE JACOBSON  
Staff writer

**SHOSHONE COUNTY** — Fire condition records were broken in the Silver Valley.

"We had to change our y-axis," said Len Young, fire warden of Idaho Department of Lands, Kingston office.

The axis refers to a graph created by compiling sensor taken measurements of factors like humidity and wind. The previous all-time high was 89 on Sept. 6, 2003, according to an e-mail from Sarah Jerome, fuel planner with the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District. Ninety is the new record, as of Wednesday, Aug. 15.

Those measurements are used to decide what the Smokey signs say, the e-mail read. "We are about 15 points higher than we have ever been during this time of the year."

Young said campers still come to his office requesting permits for campfires.

"We tell them no," he said, also noting that this time of the year through Labor Day is when the winds tend to blow. Wind can turn a small fire into a big problem.

Hurricane force winds are what coagulated a lot of little fires into one of the most destructive burns in history, said Pulaski Project Director Jim See. The 1910 fire started as scattered, smaller blazes, he went on. It eventually spread to 3 million acres.

Some were ignited by lightening, and others were started by firefighters looking to keep their jobs, See said. Aug. 20 and 21, 1910 was the "blow up," he continued.

The U.S. Forest Service was in it's infancy in those days, and the fire went on to fundamentally shape Forest Service policies and practices, See said. Several firefighters in 1910 went on to become heads of the U.S. Forest Service.

The forest fuel load is heavier now than it was then. See said if the same conditions were to reconvene — small, spread-out fires along with hurricane force winds — the resulting fire would not be permeable to modern technology. Such winds as were experienced during that year are rare, See said, much like the late August snow that finally squelched the blaze for good.

But, the possibility of a reoccurrence is one of the advocating reasons the fuel reduction outside Wallace is necessary, he said.

Idaho Department of Lands patrols frequent remote places to enforce current Stage II fire restrictions. No fires are allowed at all.

Young said he hasn't written any citations, adding that he's educating tourists who aren't aware. Locals have been receptive, he said.

According to [weather.com](http://weather.com), there is a 30 percent chance of rain on Monday and Tuesday of next week.

# NORTHWEST

IDAHO  
EDITION

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SUNDAY  
AUGUST 19, 2007

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

## Fighting fire with history

With a devastating 1910 blaze as a reminder, officials look to keep tragedy from repeating itself in Wallace

BY JAMES HAGENGRUBER  
Staff writer

New Orleans had Katrina. Wallace had 1910.

Ninety-seven years ago tomorrow, much of this Idaho Panhandle town was wiped out by a hurricane-force wildfire.

Although charred cedar stumps can still be spotted near Wallace, little evidence remains of the fire, which killed at least 85 firefighters — some were never accounted for — and torched 2.5 million acres in just over a day's time.

The mountains around Wallace are again

carpeted by forest. Thick forest. Perhaps thicker than any other time in modern history, according to Ron Roizen, a resident of Wallace and an organizer of the Pulaski Project, a nonprofit group that aims to raise awareness of the fires and honor the men who battled the blazes.

"There's a lot more fuel around Wallace now than in 1910," Roizen said.

Although North Idaho was a much wilder place back then, the forests had been substantially thinned to supply lumber for houses and timbers for the region's booming mining industry, Roizen said. Forest fires were also more common then, thanks

to hot embers tossed out by steam locomotives, no summertime fire restrictions and relatively primitive firefighting technology.

New Orleans had the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers overseeing the flood-protection dikes around the city. Wallace has the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management in charge of thousands of acres of surrounding forest. The agencies are now planning to thin portions of the Placer Creek drainage south of Wallace, which served as the pathway into town for the

See **FIRE, B8**

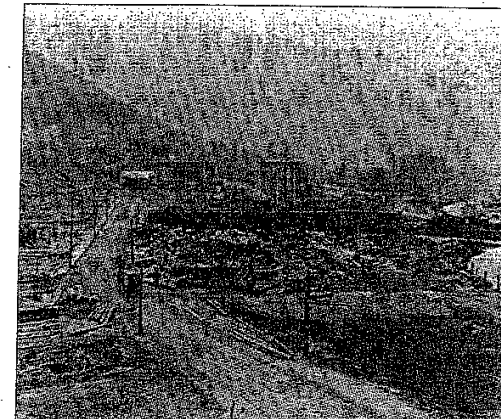


Photo courtesy of the United States Forest Service

Wallace was severely damaged by a 1910 fire that burned millions of acres.

The Spokesman-Review

## NORTHWEST

### FIRE

Continued from B1

1910 blowup.

Using a computer model to study prevailing weather patterns and forest fuel conditions, the Forest Service determined the Placer Creek drainage again poses a major fire risk for Wallace. The drainage "is shaped like a funnel, with Wallace right at the bottom," said Sarah Jerome, a fuels planner with the agency's Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District.

The Forest Service is looking at a combination of tree thinning and prescribed burning on portions of 7,000 acres in the drain-

age. The work includes widening existing fuel breaks, removing aging lodgepole pine and controlled burns, according to agency documents. The project is aimed at creating "multiple lines of defense" against fire, Jerome said.

"I don't know if we could prevent another 1910. That was such a huge event," she said. "But even a fire on a much smaller scale could have huge consequences for Wallace."

Forest Service officials expect to award a multiyear contract for the project next month. Work could begin as early as this winter, though the exact timetable has not yet been determined, said

Randy Swick, ranger for the agency's Coeur d'Alene River district.

The Bureau of Land Management is also looking to thin portions of the 1,790 acres it controls along the southern edge of town. Shoshone County Commissioner Jon Cantamessa said local residents are anxious for the so-called Placer Project to get under way.

"We've been very supportive of any kind of thinning they can do," Cantamessa said. "It's so thick you can't even walk through it. ... The conditions of the forest right now pretty much parallel 1910."

Although the forests are again thick and dry, the ability to fight

wildfires has much improved in the last century. In the days leading up to the 1910 blowup, firefighters had little more than hand tools and horses to battle the numerous, smaller fires burning in the backcountry. Their maps were often unreliable, and no meteorologists were around to predict the onslaught of gale force winds beginning the afternoon of Aug. 20. The weather prompted the fires to combine and explode in size. They "swept with the roar of a thousand freight trains," according to Ranger Ed Pulaski's account of the fire.

Today, firefighters are helped by weather satellites, air tankers

and portable laptops, which can help predict the path and intensity of fires. But even with these tools, the lightning and wind could again produce fierce fires that would be tough to stop, said Roizen, with the Pulaski Project. "If we run into another hurricane wind situation, we're toast," he said.

Swick, the district ranger, said the project should help boost Wallace's odds of survival. "Certainly it would be better-buffered."

James Hagengruber can be reached at (208) 765-7126 or by e-mail at [jamesh@spokesman.com](mailto:jamesh@spokesman.com).



NEWS-PRESS Tuesday, August 21, 2007

## 1910 fire 97th anniversary gone by

Paper trail found on George R. Trask and the War Eagle

By RON ROIZEN and JIM SEE  
Special to the News-Press

Yesterday was the 97th anniversary of the Big Blowup. The Pulaski Project

continues to collect material on the great fire's history and contemporary life and times in Wallace and its environs.

Recently, for instance, the committee has been looking for sources on the War Eagle mine, one of the mines along the West Fork of Placer Creek and the place Ed Pulaski tried to reach in order to save his beleaguered crew on Saturday, Aug. 20, 1910. Ed had to retreat to the Nicholson mine because fire blocked the way to the War Eagle.

A number of historical accounts, however, still erroneously put Pulaski and men in the War Eagle over the harrowing night.

The man who originally staked the War Eagle claim in 1903 was George R. Trask.

According to contemporary newspaper accounts, he was well known in Wallace and the Coeur d'Alene Mining District as an engineer, surveyor and miner.

Assembling a picture of Trask's life is like gathering small shards at an archeological dig. To date there have only been mere scraps of information and one good (if tangential) anecdote.

By RON ROIZEN and JIM SEE  
Special to the News-Press

*Editor's note: This is the second part of a story about George R. Trask, who staked the claim for War Eagle mine in 1903, in relation to the 97th anniversary of the 1910 fire. Pulaski and his men tried unsuccessfully to reach the mine shaft for cover during the fire.*

*The first part was published in the Tuesday, Aug. 21 edition of the News-Press.*

A Rootsweb page lists Trask and his wife, Estelle, in the 1910 U.S. Census. They resided in Wallace. George was described as born "abt 1856" in Massachusetts. Estelle was born "abt 1865" in New York.

The Northwest History Database ([http://content.wsu-libs.wsu.edu/pncc/NW\\_history/index.php](http://content.wsu-libs.wsu.edu/pncc/NW_history/index.php)) yielded two articles that noted George Trask's role in relation to the Belle of the West mine up Nine Mile.

Some Wallace residents still remember Trask or his wife, or stories about them.

"Duke" Little recalled that Trask's surveying work was not always free of controversy and also that his life ended in suicide.

Dr. Joe Grismer recalled delivering groceries to Mrs. Trask as a boy, and how small her orders often were.

Judge and historian Richard Magnuson pointed out the anecdote mentioned above, which Magnuson recounted in his book, Coeur d'Alene Diary, in the chapter on the news of July 1892:

"Frank Reed, the owner of several gold properties, became embroiled in an argument over a property line with George Trask, a surveyor. The argument got hot, and Reed took a shot at Trask, but the bullet missed its target and struck Robert Stevens, who was read-

ing across the saloon with his back to the fracas. ... Lynching was talked, and 80 men so inclined were in front of the jail on the next morning, but they did not have a leader. A troop of soldiers went to Murray to protect the prisoner and they returned him to Wallace.

"At a later date Reed was convicted of the crime and appealed the decision to the Idaho Supreme Court. One of the grounds for his appeal concerned the fact that the jury which heard his case was furnished liquor during the trial by the bailiff. The Idaho Supreme Court held that the mere fact that the jury was furnished with a quart of whiskey each morning, under the direction of the district judge, and that beer was served them, did not in itself constitute grounds for a new trial, unless there was some reason to suppose that the liquor was drunk in such quantity as to unfit the jurors for duty.

"At the same time we must express our decided disapproval of the practice of allowing jurors to indulge in intoxicating liquors while in the performance of their duties, except in cases of actual necessity."

"The court never saw fit to spell out," wrote Magnuson wryly, "what might constitute 'cases of actual necessity.'"

A little searching at the microfilm machine in the Wallace Public Library unearthed an article on Trask's death. Trask did indeed take his own life, which event was reported by the Wallace Press Times on Aug. 10, 1932. At 2:20 p.m., he sat down on a bench in the Wallace Library park and fired a 32-caliber pistol into his throat. The coroner cited Trask's "despondency over ill health and financial reverses.

"He was a pioneer resident of the Coeur d'Alenes..." stated the article.

His widow survived him by almost a quarter-century.

Both George and Estelle are buried in Pines Cemetery in Spokane, Wash., where they share a gravestone.

## EDUCATION

### Regence Blue Shield donates to schools

Sen. Broadsword 'Moves It' for fundraiser

By TY HAMPTON  
Staff writer

**SILVER VALLEY**— During the 2007 Idaho Legislative Session, Sen. Joyce Broadsword (R-Cocolalla) walked 162 miles in the Regence BlueShield "Move It" program to raise \$500 for the Kellogg, Mullan, and Wallace school districts.

BlueShield of Idaho's third annual "Move It" program pitted legislators from each of the state's 35 districts against each other in a competition to walk the farthest distance over a six-week period during the session. The event is designed to motivate lawmakers to be active in their everyday activities.

Each of the 105 legislators were supplied with a pedometer to record their daily steps and make reports at each week's end. According to Regence BlueShield, 20 of 25 new legislators participated in the program during the 2007 session. A total of 65 legislators participated in all this year.

Broadsword was awarded the "Golden Sneaker" award for greatest improvement from year to year. In the 2006 session the senator walked 197,955 or 99 miles. In 2007 she walked 324,482 steps improving by about 60 percent.

"And I did that in heels," Broadsword said of her improved step count.

Broadsword said that with daily meals and luncheon meetings it is hard for legislators to not gain weight during the session. She added that through "Move It" she gained no weight this spring.

All the prize money awarded to winning lawmakers went directly to



— Photo by TY HAMPTON

Sen. Joyce Broadsword gives the \$500 she earned from Regence Blue Shield's "Move It" program to school officials from Kellogg, Mullan, and Wallace Monday. The donation will fund a valley-wide school field trip to the Pulaski Trail later this month. From Left: Steve Shephard, Tim Olson with Regence BlueShield, Broadsword, Robin Stanley, and Bob Ranells.

schools from their district. The money is approved for health-related activities. With the \$500 awarded, fifth-graders from Kellogg, Mullan, and Wallace are going to take a group field-trip hike up the Pulaski Trail later this month.

Mullan Superintendent Robin Stanley said that Jim See, with the Pulaski Project, has coordinated with Broadsword to put together the 2-mile historic/educational hike.

"The last quarter mile is real steep up there by the tunnel so it should make for quite the hike for these kids," Stanley said.

"Plus, the experience of getting exercise and education at the same time like this seems to be an ideal way to marry those two ideas and the committed efforts the Regence and Sen. Broadsword have made here."

Broadsword said the \$500 will cover transportation and supervision for the kids to get up the trail and back.

"We want the money we put up to go to schools for one sole purpose — health promotion," Blue Shield Public Affairs Director Tim Olson said, "and having all those kids going up the Pulaski is definitely a great health challenge."

# SHOSHONE NEWS-PRESS

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## INCF gives grant to Pulaski Project

**WALLACE** — The Pulaski Tunnel Trail has received an \$18,000 grant from the Inland Northwest Community Foundation. The grant award comes from the foundation's Community Strategies grant program.

The INCF grant will be used to help support both an archeological survey of the Pulaski Tunnel portal area, the outlook across the creek from the mine portal, and the trail loop at the trail's destination and an historical recreation of the appearance of the mine portal after the Great Fire of 1910.

The archeological survey, beyond its own inherent interest, is a necessary first step toward creating a suitable and memorable venue at the trail's destination.

"We want to complete the job at the Pulaski Tunnel end of the trail in the same great way that the job at the trailhead has already been completed," said Jim See, the Pulaski Project's founder and president.

The Inland Northwest Community Foundation, formerly Foundation Northwest, serves 20 counties throughout eastern Washington and northern Idaho. Founded in 1974, its mission is to foster vibrant and sustainable communities in the Inland Northwest. The foundation manages nearly 250 funds, valued at approximately \$63 million at June 30, 2007, which have been established by individuals, families, and businesses.

In partnership with the donors it serves, INCF has awarded \$31.5 million in grants and scholarships throughout the region since its inception. These awards have served many important purposes and needs: they've enriched education, promoted arts and culture, provided critical human services, supported community and economic

development, and ultimately impacted thousands of lives in the Inland Northwest. The foundation's Web address is [www.inwcomfound.org](http://www.inwcomfound.org).

"We're very grateful to the Inland Northwest Community Foundation for their support and for their confidence in our project," said See.

— Submitted by Ron Roizen, of Wallace

Spring Progress  
March, 2008  
Reprint

Aug. 8, 2007

## Craig visits Wallace for Pulaski update

### Senator checks in on trail project's progress

By TY HAMPTON  
Staff writer

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