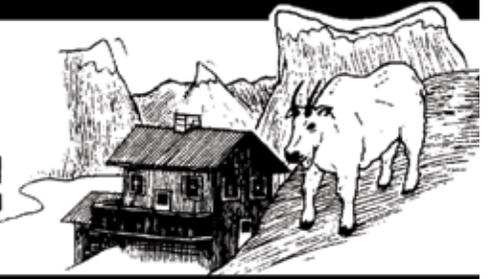


THE INSIDE TRAIL



Voice of the Glacier Park Foundation Winter 2013 Volume XXVIII, No. 1

Saving the Reds, *again...*



(Photo courtesy of Bret Bouda)

**The public rallies to prevent retirement of Glacier's historic bus fleet
– *probably the oldest in the world***

Also In this issue:

- *The Bear Attacks of 1967* • *Hiking Gunsight Pass* • *Tales of the Many Glacier Boat Dock* • *The Buying and Selling of Glacier Park* • *The Pending Long-Term Concession Contract* • *The GPL Reunion* • *In Memorium* • *Youth and Maturity in Glacier*

Editorial: The Importance of Public Involvement

The National Park Service generally does well-considered and admirable work in managing Glacier National Park. On rare occasions, however, it makes a major misjudgment, and the public has to call for a change of course.

A notable instance occurred in 1996. At that time, the Park Service released a draft General Management Plan for Glacier. It proposed removing longstanding visitor facilities, such as Avalanche Campground and Swiftcurrent Motor Inn.

The Hungry Horse News ran an editorial attacking the draft plan, which bluntly stated that “the public shouldn’t stand for it.” And the public didn’t. The Glacier Park Foundation and hundreds of citizens spoke out about the issue. A survey showed that more than 90% of the public opposed the plan. The Park Service withdrew it, held focus

groups and public meetings, and eventually issued a moderate plan that enjoyed almost universal support.

A similar episode just has transpired. (See “Saving the Reds,” p. 3) Prompt public objection and a change of course by the Park Service has resolved the situation. But it shows the importance of active consultation between park managers and users of the park.

The Park Service generally holds public comment periods before it makes significant decisions affecting

resources in the park. In the present case, however, it made a major decision without public input – and almost everyone now recognizes that the decision was wrong. We commend Acting Superintendent Kym Hall and her colleagues for promptly and graciously changing course.

The lesson of 1996, repeated here, is for the Park Service to solicit public comment. Consulting the experience, the perspective, and the common sense of park users is a safeguard against such very rare managerial misjudgments.

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The Glacier Park Foundation was formed by Glacier Park employees and visitors who have a deep love for this special place. The Foundation is committed both to the importance of wilderness preservation and to the importance of places like Glacier as classrooms where people can experience wilderness in intense meaningful ways, learning not only a love for the land, but also a respect that nurtures the skills necessary to preserve that land. The Foundation has a special interest in Glacier Park’s history, traditions and visitor facilities.

The Inside Trail takes its name from the famous old trail which connected Glacier Park Lodge with the vanished chalets at Two Medicine, Cut Bank, and St. Mary. The name thus emphasizes the publication’s focus on the lore and history of Glacier National Park. We invite submission of historical, scientific, or anecdotal articles, commentary, poetry, or artwork for publication in future issues.

SAVING THE REDS, *Again* . . .

By John Hagen (*Many Glacier 1970-80*)

Glacier National Park's storied red bus fleet almost certainly is the oldest operational fleet of buses in the world. The 33 vehicles, with their striking grills and canvas tops and running boards, were built by the White Motor Company between 1936 and 1939. For some sixty summers (with a brief hiatus during World War Two) the sturdy buses chugged over Glacier's mountain roads with their "gearjammer" drivers at the wheel.

In 1999, the buses had to be taken off the road because their chassis were wearing out. The National Park Service and the concessioner, Glacier Park, Inc. (GPI), proposed retiring the fleet and building new buses. Public opinion, however, very strongly favored finding a way to renovate the historic fleet. (See "Are They History?" in the Fall 1999 *Inside Trail*, online at www.glacierparkfoundation.org.)

The Glacier Park Foundation rallied support for the buses and helped organize a systematic inspection which showed that they could be preserved. (See "A Look Beneath the Hood" in the Fall 1999 issue.) The Ford Motor Company then generously invested \$6.5 million in renovating the fleet. The historic bodies were remounted on new chassis, with new power trains, braking systems, and other equipment.

The buses returned to service in 2002, with the expectation that they would operate for decades to come. In December 2012, however, a new crisis as to the buses' future suddenly arose.

The National Park Service solicited bids for a new long-term concession

contract, to run for 16 years. (See "Concession Contract Pending," p. 4.) A complex prospectus of terms and expectations was posted online in December. (See www.concessions.nps.gov/prospectuses.htm.)

Under the terms of the prospectus, more than half of the historic fleet was likely to be retired. The prospectus stated as follows (at pp. 21, 24 (emphasis added)):

"At the current use level ... the Red Bus fleet will begin to fail at some point during the term of the draft contract. ... The Concessioner will rehabilitate a minimum of 15 buses over the first twelve years of the Draft Contract term. *The Concessioner will replace the remaining 18 non-rehabilitated Red Buses* with alternative fuel vehicles ...

"The concessioner will undertake and complete the rehabilitation/replacement of the Red Bus fleet as follows:

"Rehabilitate a minimum of 15 Red Buses over the first twelve years of the Draft Contract term costing not less than \$4,110,000, per the following schedule:

- A minimum of five by the end of 2020
- A minimum of six more by the end of 2023
- The remainder (if any) by the end of 2025

"Replace the remaining 18 Red Buses with alternative fuel vehicles, costing not less than \$4,025,000, per the following schedule:

- A minimum of two in 2025
- A minimum of four per year, until the Concessioner has rehabilitated or replaced the entire Red Bus fleet by the beginning of the 2029 season."

A grassroots effort quickly was organized to preserve the historic fleet. Ray Djuff, a journalist and author of numerous books on Glacier's history, was one of the first to read the prospectus and recognize the threat to the fleet. Djuff contacted fellow directors of the Glacier Park Foundation, as well as Bruce Austin, an expert in historic buses who took part in the 1999 inspection.

The Foundation's Board of Directors sent a letter to the Park Service. The letter (which also was sent to members of Congress and to the media) stated in part:

"The unanimous view of our Board of Directors (and, we think, of virtually all of our members and of the general public) is that this action is unacceptable, barring the most compelling reasons. The red bus fleet is a unique historic resource, probably the oldest operational fleet in the world. Replacing half the buses when all could be renovated *at almost the same cost* is inappropriate on its face.

"We're astonished that this decision was made with no input whatsoever from the public. The Park Service properly establishes public comment periods for all sorts of minor infrastructure-related and environmental decisions. But here, on a major decision affecting a priceless historic and cultural resource, the public was not consulted at all!"

"We ask that the Park Service promptly release all data supporting its decision, and that public meetings be held to discuss the issue before the pending contract is signed. We ask that the Park Service address the following points:

(Continued on page 17)

New Glacier Concession Contract Pending

By Mac Willemssen (*Swiftcurrent 1967; Many Glacier 1968-70*)

The National Park Service (“NPS”) is now accepting bid proposals for the award of a new concession Contract to provide lodging, food, retail and other visitor services at Glacier National Park. The new Contract will begin January 1, 2014, and continue until December 31, 2029. The current concession contract, held by Glacier Park, Inc. (“GPI”) since 1981, will expire on December 31, 2013. GPI has been operating since December 31, 2005, on a series of annual continuations.

those locations, retail stores, transportation, public showers at Rising Sun and Swiftcurrent, the public laundry at Swiftcurrent and ATM and vending machines at the various locations.

The concessionaire can be authorized to provide lodging at the Stewart Motel at Lake McDonald, provide historic hotel tours, implement visitor entertainment programs and children’s educational programs, provide a “Step-On” guide service and private vehicle shuttle service throughout the Park. The Stewart Motel is a privately-owned motel

percentage). The new concessionaire will also be required to provide an annual maintenance fee of 2.35% of gross revenues to be used for the maintenance and improvement of facilities within the Park.

The main component of the almost \$33,000,000.00 initial investment will be payment to GPI of \$22,000,000.00, which is the amount of the Possessory Interest negotiated between GPI and the NPS for the value of GPI’s holdings in Glacier National Park.

The lodging operation provides the largest source of revenue for the concessionaire. The Contract will require the operation of 498 rooms across five locations and room types vary from luxury suites to standard lodge rooms to rustic cabins.

Food and beverage contributes to the second largest portion of the revenue. In addition to the existing dining rooms and food sales locations, the NPS is requiring the new concessionaire to upgrade and expand what it refers to as “quick service” food venues at Many Glacier Hotel and Two Medicine.

The new Contract anticipates a significant investment to upgrade rooms at each location. Many Glacier Hotel must have “upscale level upgrades” to 30 balcony and 30 other lake view rooms with what are referred to as “higher-quality personal property and refreshed finishes”. The lobby and other public areas must also be upgraded. The remaining rooms at Many Glacier will receive new “mid-scale level personal property and refreshed finishes”.

(Continued on page 18)

The new Contract will begin January 1, 2014, and continue until December 31, 2029.

For the years 2008 and 2009, GPI had gross annual concession revenue in excess of \$16,000,000.00. In 2010, gross revenue exceeded \$18,000,000.00.

The timing of the bid proposal is very tight: Any questions concerning the proposed concession contract had to be received by the NPS in writing no later than January 15, 2013; all bids must be received by the NPS on or before April 16, 2013.

The NPS issued a multi-paged Prospectus describing the bidding requirements and business opportunity for prospective concessionaires in Glacier National Park. The draft Contract is a part of the package.

Required visitor services under the new Contract include lodging at the various hotels and motels in the Park, food and beverage service at

with 30 rooms located on land owned by GPI within the boundary of Glacier National Park. Historically, it has been operated as part of the Lake McDonald Lodge, but it is not included in the basic bid proposal.

Prospective concessionaires submitting proposals for the concession contract face a significant estimated initial investment. The NPS has calculated that a successful bidder may expend almost \$33,000,000.00 in up-front costs. In addition, another \$1,057,000.00 will be required to “cure” what is referred to as “deferred maintenance” in 2015 and 2016. The NPS is requiring a minimum of one percent (1%) of gross revenues as the franchise fee. The NPS is prohibiting any creative approach to the franchise fee, stating that it must be in terms of an absolute percent on all revenues (instead of perhaps a graduated or progressive/regressive

THE BEAR ATTACKS OF 1967

Remembering Michele Koons and Julie Helgeson



By Chris Nunnally (West Glacier Merchantile, 2012)

On August 13th, 1967 two young women were killed by grizzly bears in Glacier National Park on the same night, sparking a tidal wave of controversy and bear-fueled paranoia (what some biologists call “bearanoia”) that lingers to this day. Julie Helgeson and Michele Koons were both 19 years old, beautiful, kind, and with the whole world waiting in front of them. I never knew Julie and Michele and never could have, yet I’ve long felt some kind of strange connection to them, as if I actually *did* know them.

I’ve been studying bears independently for years, writing about them online and in articles, devoted to educating people about their true nature, that they’re not the slaving monsters of horror stories. That writing gave me the opportunity to work with captive grizzlies in Alaska, allowing me to work up close with these giants and share my insights with others, while broadening my own education in the process. And throughout it all, the “night of the grizzlies” has remained with me, Julie and Michele frequently haunting my thoughts; not as statistics in a bear incident but as two real people with a genuine hold over me.

August 2012 would be the 45th anniversary of the attacks and, while I’m not sure what I expected to come of it, I couldn’t shake the feeling that I needed

to go to Glacier to visit the sites and pay my own respects. And judging by the emails I received from online readers, I wasn’t the only one who felt that way.

On Sunday August 12th, I arrived at Logan Pass, the highest drive-to point in Glacier National Park, on a clear and crisp sunny morning and started along the Highline Trail, a seven and a half mile trek to Granite Park Chalet where Julie Helgeson lost her life. It was my first time in Glacier and I was stunned by the spectacular beauty of the scenery and the wide diversity of wildlife that could be seen foraging unafraid right alongside the trail. As I walked, I thought about the enormity of what this trip would mean to me and reflected back on the events of that long ago night.

Julie and her partner Roy Ducat were sleeping under the stars in a makeshift campground when the attack occurred shortly after midnight on August 13th. Roy was injured and Julie was dragged screaming into the night. Bleeding, Roy ran back to the chalet for help. Acting on the limited amount of bear knowledge that was available at that time, seasonal ranger Joan Devereaux – who had led a group of hikers into the chalet earlier that day – felt that it was too risky venturing into the darkness to find the girl. It wasn’t until a helicopter arrived (carrying armed backup) to airlift Roy to a hospital, that a search party was formed.

In the most heartbreaking of the two attacks, Julie spent more than two hours lying alone in the dark, severely injured and wondering if the bear was going to come back for her. Standing outside the chalet 45 years later, I envision that place on a moonless night and I can only imagine the terror she must have felt.

Stepping inside the front door of the chalet, I’m struck by the fact that this is where Julie actually lost her life. When she was finally found and brought back, Julie was laid out on a dining table and examined by a surgeon who had hiked into Granite Park the evening before. He declared the situation grave. Too much time had passed and too much blood had been lost. Her veins were collapsing and her lungs punctured from where the bear had apparently picked her up in its mouth and carried her.

Shortly after 4 A.M., she drew her last breath and died. Sitting outside the chalet 45 years later, I’m overwhelmed with a sudden deep sense of peace. I lay a small white flower upon a rock and say a silent prayer for this girl I never knew and yet know so well.

“Rest in peace, Julie,” I whisper.

Starting my way down the Loop Trail, I look back and catch one last glimpse of Granite Park Chalet before it disappears behind the trees.

(Continued from previous page)

Only a matter of minutes after Julie's death, another attack occurred nine miles away on the shores of Trout Lake. Michele Koons was camping with friends when a bear entered their site. This same bear was well-known in the area. It had been harassing hikers and campers, was very malnourished, and behaved almost as if mentally ill. The bear had entered Michele's campsite earlier that night and when it returned, everyone scattered for the trees.

Everyone, that is, except Michele.

Stuck in her sleeping bag, she couldn't get the zipper down. She only called out twice. "He's got the zipper in his mouth," her friends heard her say. Then, after a silence, "He's got my arm off! Oh my God, I'm dead!" She never made another sound. Her death was more mercifully swift than Julie's, the attack clearly predatory.

The question that arose from this tragedy, and that is still debated in some circles today, is what caused this to happen? What caused two separate bears to kill in two separate attacks on the same night? The answer is just pure bad luck.

The attack on Julie and Roy seemed to fit the pattern of defensive behavior. The bear suspected of being the killer was a female with cubs who was also sporting a deep and painful injury on one foot. Walking with this wound no doubt kept the bear in a decidedly temperamental mood. It would seem that Roy and Julie simply found themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time when this bear approached their sleeping bag, no doubt on her way to feed at the garbage dump behind the chalet, which was being used to draw bears to nightly "feeding shows" for the guests. Certainly the kids posed no threat to the ursine family, but the unstable sow was likely startled by their movements and blindly attacked. The fact that no human remains were found in the stomach and that Julie was abandoned and left alone indicate that

the attack was not predatory, unlike the incident at Trout Lake.

When armed rangers went to the lake to find Michele's body, the bear confronted them aggressively and was killed. The stomach of the severely malnourished animal was cut open, revealing a ball of blonde hair. It was agreed that the bear was starving and may have been driven to the brink of madness by its hunger.

In the aftermath of the attacks, the Park Service established more stringent guidelines for managing bears, focused on keeping people and wildlife separated and ensuring bears did not have access to human food and garbage. As of this writing, there has not been a fatal bear attack in Glacier National Park in nearly 15 years! That, at least, brings some meaning to the loss of such bright, young lives.

Julie Helgeson's father described her as a "beautiful, bubbling girl", all blue eyes and brown hair, full of energy and life, who loved hiking and the outdoors. The short two months she spent in Glacier Park, the last two months of her life, were also no doubt two of the best months of her life. Her parents had traveled from Minnesota to Montana to spend two days in the mountains with her and unknowingly said their last goodbye six days before she died. Michele Koons was equally well-loved and highly regarded by everyone she met. Voted "Most Likely to Succeed" at her high school in San Diego, her death has left a void in the lives of those who knew her...and has deeply touched the lives of many who never did.

Making my way over Howe Ridge to Trout Lake on Monday August 13th, I was hyper alert as the merciless sun pounded down. Most of the Lake McDonald side of the ridge was burnt off in the 2003 Roberts Fire and offered little cover from the blazing heat. This was also prime grizzly and mountain lion habitat. I clapped my hands and called out every few minutes, particularly near the many blind corners and berry patch-

es I encountered along the trail. Occasionally I snapped a large stick, sending small animals scattering for cover.

Cresting Howe Ridge, I dropped into thicker forest virtually untouched by the fire and made my way to the shore of Trout Lake and the famous logjam. Although the campsite is long gone, it was very near this spot that Michele lost her life. I'm only able to guess where the site was actually located, but that feels irrelevant compared to just being there. I sit on the shore, gazing out over the turquoise waters, Heaven's Peak looming high above. The few other hikers that I had seen ahead of me have disappeared, probably moving further up the trail to Arrow Lake, and I'm left alone in this peaceful place. There are no man-made memorials for Julie and Michele at the locations of their deaths and I don't think there need to be; the beauty of the country and the silence that hangs over it like a blanket is the best memorial anyone could have and ensures that their lives will not be forgotten. I pay my respects in a similar fashion here: a flower on a rock, a brief prayer, and a soft "Rest in peace, Michele."

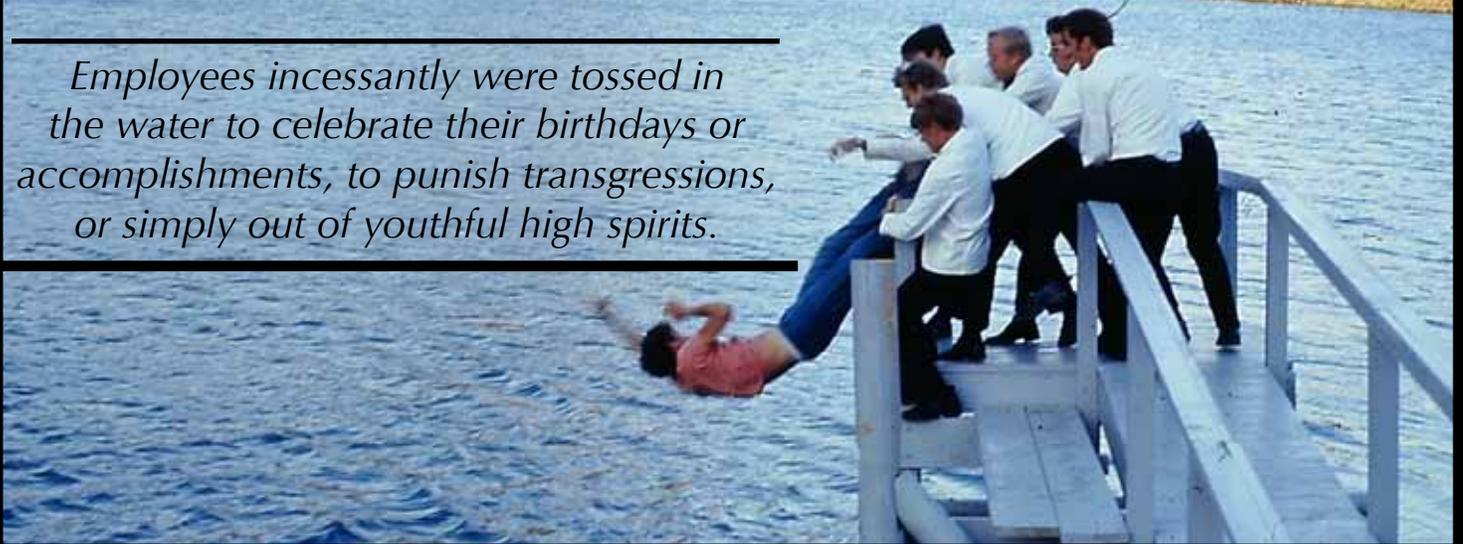
Like Granite Park Chalet, I'm sad to leave Trout Lake but I know I'll return here one day. That night I'm sore and tired from two arduous trips in as many days, but the sense of peace it's left me with is so deep and tangible that I can't stop smiling. There is a very strong spirit in those places and it's ready to touch anyone who goes in search of it.

But I still think of Julie and Michele. I wonder what they would think if they could see all that has happened in the wake of that terrible night; how a species was saved from extinction, how new management practices have made Glacier Park a much safer place to camp and recreate, how their memories live on through the lives and efforts of those who feel the same unearthly connection. I wonder, if they could see, would they feel their deaths were worth it? I don't know. But I do hope they would at least understand that they did not die in vain.

IN THE LAKE!

Famous Dunkings and Other Tales of the Many Glacier Boat Dock

Employees incessantly were tossed in the water to celebrate their birthdays or accomplishments, to punish transgressions, or simply out of youthful high spirits.



*Photo by Paul Meierding
(Many Glacier, 1970-1976)*

By John Hagen (Many Glacier 1970-80)

Near the back doors of Many Glacier Hotel, the motor launch *Chief Two Guns* docks between its frequent trips across Swiftcurrent Lake. The venerable dock, with its little ticket house, is prominent in Many Glacier lore.

Here old Ray Kinley, who worked at Many from 1922 to 1977, engaged in a famous rowboat race. One summer, a young employee bragged that he had been a sculling champion at a prominent Eastern school. Ray promptly challenged him to a race.

The braggart had no fear of losing to Ray, because Ray had lost one hand in an accident. However, he failed to anticipate Ray's ingenuity and guile. Ray and his friends combed the lakeshore and found an enormous, stone-heavy sunken log. They dragged the

log to the dock and wired it to the bottom of one of the rowboats on the night before the race.

Next morning, Ray and the boastful employee took their seats in the boats, the gun sounded, and Ray sped off across the lake, taking alternate strokes on the oars with his hand. The boastful employee took terrific strokes, but his boat sat dead in the water. Ray used to say, when telling this story: "Paul Bunyan couldn't have rowed that boat! And that was the end of the fellow's bragging."

The dock was the site of other races during the Many Glacier Olympics celebrated in various years. A frequent event was the "Can-U Paddle," in which teams of four competed in paddling canoes around the boat dock using only their bare hands. The weight of the paddlers and the

ungainly technique could cause canoes to swamp. One summer, a team of rangers imprudently put their heaviest man in the bow, and when he dug his hands into the water the craft went down like a submarine.

The liveliest memories of the dock for Many Glacier employees, however, mostly involve the ceremonial dunkings which frequently took place there. Employees incessantly were tossed in the water to celebrate their birthdays, to celebrate accomplishments, to punish transgressions, or simply out of youthful high spirits. Occasionally edicts would be issued against the practice, but it always would be revived the following season.

In 1972, the dining room crew decided to throw a very large waiter, Fred DiGiovanni, into the lake on

(Continued from previous page)

his birthday. Fred was unwilling, but offered only passive resistance to the plan. He was carried down to the dock horizontally by a half dozen husky waiters, groaning and staggering under the load. The rest of the dining room staff (which had just finished serving lunch) came along in their uniforms -- starched white waiter jackets and black bow ties, and candy-striped waitress dresses.

In those days, the boat dock included a gangway fixed to the bottom of the lake, and a free-floating section in deeper water. The parade of waiters and waitresses went out onto this section and carried Fred to the edge of the dock. Then the section suddenly tilted beneath their weight like a dump truck, and the whole crowd went sliding into the water with a wild yell of surprise!

In 1976, I was tossed into the lake to celebrate receiving my law degree. I had skipped commencement to work at Many, and so the diploma came in the mail. My roommate Chip Smith (a 300 lb. lineman for the University of Nebraska) saw the package. Chip promptly instigated a gang of our fellow bellmen to tackle me, drag me to the dock, and toss me in.

As I sank into the blue-green depths, I heard a THWHOOSH! close overhead. A tremendous shock wave went through the water, as if a depth charge had gone off. I knew that Chip had been pushed in behind me, for no one else could produce such a splash. (One bellman later confided to me, "As we were dragging you out on the dock, a little voice in my ear said, 'Chip, too!'")

Later that summer came the most memorable of the boat dock episodes. Ian Tippet, the illustrious manager of Many Glacier, was tossed into the lake on his birthday. This was an audacious business, which no one would have dreamed of undertaking, had it not been for Colonel Booth.

Colonel Booth and his wife ran the Many Glacier gift shop that summer of 1976. He was an impressive figure, a former Air Force officer, tall and authoritative, always dressed in a coat and tie. He took it into his head that Mr. Tippet should go in the lake on his birthday, just like everybody else.

At the colonel's direction, the entire hotel staff gathered in the lobby at 3 PM on July 27. The air was electric with apprehension. When Mr. Tip-

pet walked in, the colonel cordially greeted him and asked if he'd like a birthday dip in the lake. To the amazement of the employees, Mr. Tippet gave his consent.

The colonel had masterfully planned the event in a way that preserved managerial authority and decorum. The staff escorted Mr. Tippet onto the portico, where a brass band saluted him (a British citizen) by playing "God Save the Queen." A jammer bus, festooned with decorations, was waiting to carry him to the dock. The employees paraded alongside.

At the dock, Mr. Tippet removed his wallet, coat, tie, and glasses, and then manfully proceeded down the gangway. The bellmen took his hands and feet and ceremoniously tossed him in. Then they jumped in, too (lederhosen and all) like a line of paratroopers. Everybody then donned dry clothes, and birthday cake was served in the lobby.

Mr. Tippet's good nature in taking the birthday dip was characteristic of almost everyone involved in such events. The celebratory dunkings reflected the camaraderie and the youthful high spirits which prevailed at the hotel.



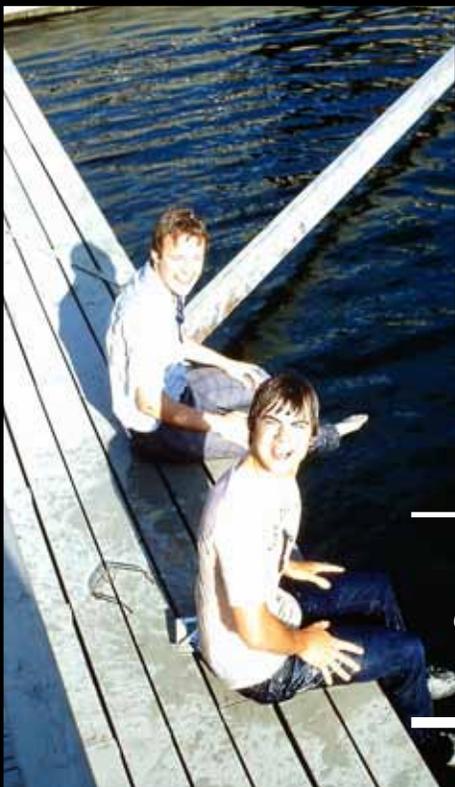
Gearjammers compel their transport agent to 'walk the plank' on the Many Glacier boat dock in the late 1970s.



Occasionally edicts would be issued against the practice, only to be revived the following season.



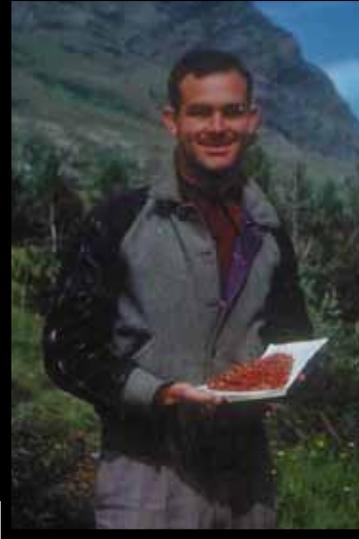
(Photos courtesy of Paul Meierding)



The celebratory dunkings reflected the camaraderie and the youthful high spirits which prevailed at the hotel.

One Trail, Two Hikes

Leroy Lott and Carol (That Blond) partake of the treasures of Glacier's backcountry trails in 1950.



By Leroy Lott (Gearjammer 1949-50)

Our summer day started out with a typical Glacier Park azure blue sky. Carol, a Lake McDonald waitress, and I were passengers on one of the red buses travelling over Logan Pass and on down Going-to-the-Sun Highway to the Gunsight Pass trail. The trailhead is near the west end of Lake St. Mary.

Our 21-mile hike took us across Reynolds Creek to Deadwood Falls and along the St. Mary River. We enjoyed panoramic views from Gunsight Pass (6946'), including two silvered mirrors, Gunsight Lake and Lake Ellen Wilson. Then we went on to Sperry Chalets and Lake McDonald.

Every step we took revealed more of God's magnificent glacial sculpturing. Had I been picked up at the University of Texas campus and placed where we stopped for our first photo, I wouldn't have believed such incomparable beauty existed. Wild and rugged grandeur was everywhere we looked. Fortunately, I had driven the red buses the year before (1949) and had fallen in love with everything beautiful about Glacier.

Carol and I had met at Lake McDonald Lodge after the middle of the 1949 season. Some of the gearjammers had girlfriends at most hotels ("a girl in every port"). But once I had met and dated this attractive, statuesque blond at McDee, I sought trips over Logan to the west side at every opportunity. (Some drivers were favorites of the Transportation Agents and were the first to get their requested destination. Unfortunately, I was not one of them, but neither was I crosswise with the agents so I did get to Lake McDonald my fair share of time and was I grateful!)

This courtship was the idyllic "boy meets girl" in a magic setting for the remainder of 1949. Before heading home to our respective states of Minnesota and Texas, we agreed the seriousness of our romance dictated we return to Glacier the summer of 1950. I would have my BBA and she would become a senior after our second summer together.

During Easter week of my senior year Carol flew to Austin for our special time on the campus of the University of Texas, and then on over to Lufkin (my birthplace and

home town) to meet and share time with members of my family.

Let's return to our 1950 hike. We took pictures at Deadwood Falls with an Argus C-3 camera. We wore jackets to offset the cool early morning Glacier temperature. Our first picture was of Carol with a scarf covering her blond hair holding open our Trail Guide with wild strawberries we had picked.

Carol also took a photo of me in my 1943 State Finalist football jacket. The next picture was of Carol facing the camera with Deadwood Falls cascading into a pool of smooth carved arcs in the colorful red and green argillite.

The camera we used produced unusually brilliant Kodachrome color slides. These slides remain virtually the same as on the day that they were processed by Kodak. (The Gearjammer website for the 2002 *Reunion Celebration of the Return of the Reds* contained these and most of my 1949 and 1950 Glacier slides.)

As we ascended to higher elevations, we removed our jackets and Carol, wearing her yellow bathing suit top, shed her shirt to absorb the tanning sun.

(Continued from previous page)

Periodically we would turn around and compare the vistas behind with those unparalleled views ahead. We reached a spectacular spot to view Gunsight Lake from high above just in time to encounter one of the brief afternoon mountain thunderstorms. To avoid being struck by lightning and getting soaked, we found a projecting ledge beside the trail under which we sought shelter. It was enjoyable and memorable to see the lightning strikes and experience the awesome thunder echoing throughout the valley.

This storm and our “tourist-like” enjoyment of God’s magnificent creation, including mountain goats, delayed our arrival at Sperry Chalets. We still had 6.4 downhill miles to hike before reaching Lake McDonald Lodge, and the sun was about to set. The last four to five miles of this descent is heavily timbered and would be pitch black. We knew it was impossible to reach Lake McDonald Lodge until long after dark, so we borrowed a flashlight at Sperry.

We discovered just how ink black it can be at night under the heavy forest canopy. We heard sounds and lots of them. Most were of “other animals” roaming in the same darkness in search of food (or foolish hikers). If we let them, our imaginations would conjure up all kinds of scary scenarios.

After long, long hiking through the dark, we welcomed the sound of an occasional vehicle traversing the McDonald Valley section of the Sun Road. It seemed like an hour later when the parked red buses (including my number 105) came into view. What a welcome sight for two tired and weary but happy hikers.

Nearing the end of our second summer, wanting to prolong our romance, we joined Ed and Barb in Ed’s car on a Canadian expedition. After telling Johnny Connaroe and other Lake McDee hikers

good bye at the international boundary, we proceeded to Banff where we spent bathing suit time in the sun at their swimming pool with an expansive view of their famous golf course. Our next stop was the incomparable Chateau Lake Louise where many idyllic honeymoons are enjoyed.

Driving up the Columbian Ice Fields Parkway, we arrived at the gigantic Athabasca Glacier. There all of us encountered our first snowmobile, in which we traversed numerous crevasses on the centuries-old ice. The large vehicle was equipped with snow skis on the front and tracks on the rear that were perfect for traction on the slick, uneven, surface.

We proceeded on north on the Parkway to view numerous glaciers and gorgeous Canadian mountains, one named after our President Eisenhower. We reached our destination at Jasper National Park. The Columbian Ice Fields Parkway rivals our Going-to-the-Sun Road in mind-blowing mountain scenery, but without Glacier’s valleys.

Our journey reversed directions to Minneapolis, Minnesota, home of Carol’s father and mother. There I was treated as if I were already a member of the family.

I had a job, which was most difficult to get in 1950, waiting for me in San Angelo, Texas. A monumental decision confronted me. Obviously, I didn’t want us to be separated for nine months while Carol finished her senior school year. To avoid the separation, I interviewed with the Minneapolis/St. Paul IBM office for a sales position. Unfortunately there were no openings.

While together in downtown Minneapolis, we stopped to view engagement rings in a jewelry store window. As tempting as this was, I couldn’t saddle Carol with an engagement with her senior year about to start. It was of para-

mount importance to me that Carol not have a binding tie that would interfere with her social life her senior year. In any event, my assets consisted of about \$300. Most or all of this would be spent for transportation to San Angelo and room rent.

Within 30 or so days after starting my management training job in San Angelo, I got a devastating “Dear John” letter.

FAST FORWARD to early retirement in 1982, fifty-two years later. My wife Billie and I had just purchased a 32’ Holiday Rambler Alupalite RV. After a “shakedown cruise” to Waco, we left our hometown of Denton, Texas for Glacier Park.

Within a few days of our arrival, we relocated to Johnson’s Campground at St. Mary. It overlooks magnificent Lake St. Mary with a backdrop of Little Chief, Red Eagle, Matotopah and my favorite of all mountains, Citadel. Billie, being an excellent artist, captured this view in water colors. We spent the better part of 10 weeks playing Scrabble and discovering areas of Glacier we had not viewed with our daughter and three sons on an earlier trip.

Every late afternoon our entertainment was devoted to new RV arrivals in Johnson’s large campground. The most interesting part was when the husband and wife would coordinate their efforts at positioning their trailer or motor home. Perhaps ‘*coordinating*’ didn’t reflect the real world of the tone of their voices, words and gestures. We had to stay inside our RV or our laughter would have exacerbated their diatribes.

On one occasion, a wrecker pulled an RV trailer into our campground and parked it. The vehicle obviously had encountered mechanical difficulties. We noted the Ohio license plate.

In 1946, I had served in the Navy Bureau of Supplies and Accounts in

downtown Cleveland. There were no Navy quarters in Cleveland, so I was living on per diem in a bedroom I rented in a private home. Then Moms and Pops Greenwood, a couple whom I met in church, generously offered me a free room, free delicious home cooking, and transportation to my Navy job.

The forlorn couple in Johnson's campground gave me the opportunity to "pay forward" the Greenwoods' hospitality. They were stranded for at least three days, awaiting repairs to their vehicle. We told them how wonderfully I had been treated by an Ohio couple and offered them transportation and jammer-guide service for a thorough tour of Glacier. After the stranded couple returned to their home, we received one of the most gracious expressions of appreciation that could be put into words.

Later that summer, we took the Gunsight Trail. Having traversed it in 1950 from north to south, I concluded that Billie and I should reverse the route and depart from Lake McDonald Lodge. We got the manager of the Johnson Campground to drive us over the pass to the Lodge early on the morning of August 12, 1982, Billie's birthday! This date gained more significance when she later told the story of this infamous hike. Family, friends and all others were told I tried to kill her on her 52nd birthday. Fortunately, for me, we didn't carry a camera.

The arduous ascent is 3432 feet to Sperry Chalets. The trail starts *up* from the get-go. It was cool early in the day in the shade of the heavily-timbered switchbacks -- red cedars, hemlocks, larches, and further on Douglas-firs, spruces and lodgepole pines. However, when we climbed above the timber line it had warmed up *considerably*.

The trek was strenuous, exceedingly so for Billie. Every trickle of water we encountered oozing from the sedimentary rocks was a time for refueling her red

bandana for her face and head. She was totally exhausted when we reached the compound cirque where Sperry Chalets is located.

Our plan was to spend two nights at the Chalets and take the short trip to Sperry Glacier the first morning. Glacier plans have a way of being altered. I climbed the ladder to the glacier the next morning and Billie rested on the antique spring bed. It was questionable whether she would be ready to tackle the northern portion of our hike the following morning to meet with our driver and car.

Fortunately, Billie drew on her reserves and we started our brief climb to Lincoln Pass before descending to Lake Ellen Wilson. The weather was fine for this segment, but as we climbed to Gunsight Pass it turned cold, then even colder with blowing snow. By the time we reached the shelter at the pass the snow, mixed with rain and sleet, was being blown parallel with the ground.

There were several hikers that shared this small stone hut with us and a mountain goat envied the fact that we arrived before he did. Finally the weather improved to just rain. This we could tolerate, and as we became warm, then hot, we welcomed an afternoon drizzle.

Progress slowed down considerably, but we were driven by the fact we had set a time to be picked up on Going-To-The-Sun Road. We were late arriving but we were elated to get in our car and head to our RV for R & R (Rest and Recovery).

Billie and I celebrated 59 mostly fantastic years (with 4 children, 2 daughters-in-law, 5 grandchildren and 5 great

grandchildren) on June 20, 2012. I met Billie in our Sunday school singles class at the Austin Avenue Methodist Church in Waco. She was an accomplished pianist and excellent oil painting artist when we married, and became an outstanding water color artist later on.

Billie also proved to be a great mother. I once had occasion to send my marriage evaluations to a friend. She replied that any wife would be thrilled to have such praise written about her by her husband.

After 10 years with IBM, I became a consultant with Bank Building Corporation of America. There were two of us covering Texas and Oklahoma. Both of us were pilots, so we used planes to cover this vast territory. Our home was by the local airport.

When I arrived home from a business flight, I would do a change of throttle setting to let the family know it was me. They would drive two cars to the end of the airstrip where the windsock told them I should touch down. They would then park the cars to the side of the strip with lights crossing at the point where I should land. There were no landing lights for the runway, so all I had was the light on the nose gear when I made these landings as late as 11:00 at night. This system enabled me to be back with the family almost every night.

Was tackling the Gunsight Trail in the opposite direction meant to serve a purpose? The entire family has seen pictures of the 1950 hike plus others of Carol. All of the children refer to her as **THAT BLOND!**

The entire family has seen pictures of the 1950 hike plus others of Carol. All of the children refer to her as THAT BLOND!

GLACIER MEMORIALS. . .*commemorate a special life*

By Jane Ratzlaff (Executive Director of Outreach and Philanthropy for the Glacier National Park Conservancy)

A call comes in on a weekend to my voicemail. My father, my mother, my child has passed away and we want to learn more about your memorial programs. I return the call to find trembling voices and forced back tears. I listen to the story; fight back my own tears and work to find something that will commemorate this special life.

buckets and planting materials and drive to the planting site where I am greeted by the family. We dig, we cry, we celebrate, we take lots of pictures, we reflect on his life and we know that he is now watching over us. We picture him flying to his favorite peaks and finding peace in the place that he found so special. I don't know how he came to be there, I only know how much he enjoyed Glacier and the special memories that he gave to his family. The bond

to the birds and even smiled when a chipmunk raced up a tree. I thought to myself that bringing a chair wasn't such a bad idea because it could make many of our young hikers, who sometimes fail to even see the sites, slow down to see what is happening. We made it and it is hard to describe the emotion at the bridge on this day. It will never be just another bridge to cross but a place that brings me back to a wedding proposal and a father. Someone I never knew but will hug when I reach heaven. Later, that same woman who shared so much of herself with me that day joined her husband in that spot. Her son read the most beautiful poem as he planted a tree for his Mother to join her husband. The words still run through my head as I hike that first section of the trail. Today we have a memorial endowment for this special couple.

I now have many trails and spots like this one in memory of infants, brothers, mothers and fathers. When I look at the beauty of these trails, watch for animals and marvel at the flowers, I see far more than anyone else sees on these trails. I see a shadow of protection, of love and of joy. I imagine these folks making it to the peaks I long to climb, the valleys I haven't seen yet and joining the eagles in flight way above the trees. When I sit on a bench, I smile and feel like I am sitting with a friend.

I listen to the story; fight back my own tears and work to find something that will commemorate this special life.

Our memorial trees, trails and benches seem to be favorites, although occasionally someone wants to create a memorial endowment. So I explain the programs and we establish that gifts will come in from family and friends and then we will decide where the funding goes; but that is just the beginning of my story. Since we cannot put up signs, we have created a way to take the family to the spot and take pictures, sit and reflect on the life of their loved one and later create a certificate for the family. The deep meaning of these trips has captured my heart and I selfishly take each trip myself. One day it will be me joining these guardians of Glacier.

This particular day it is a memorial tree grove for a young man. I get up early and go to the native plant nursery. This nursery is amazing and a treat for any visitor! Plants and trees are grown here that are native to the different areas of the park. I carefully gather the trees, shovels,

that was created with his family that day will last forever. To this day, I drive by the entrance station and say hi to Ryan.

Another day I drive to Cabin 6 where I am greeted by a different family. As we drive to the planting site, I listen to stories about the husband and father and the memories of Glacier that were made over the years. Today we are going up the Loop Trail to the bridge with an extra piece of equipment -- a folding chair. We assure Mom that with this chair, we can make it to the bridge together. It was the best trip I have ever taken to the Loop Trail bridge. That day I noticed how stunning Heaven's Peak looked, stared at the starkness of the burnt trees, listened

Since we cannot put up signs, we have created a way to take the family to the spot and take pictures, sit and reflect on the life of their loved one and later create a certificate for the family.

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE – The Buying and Selling of Glacier Park

By Tessie Bundick (*Many Glacier . . . never left. . .*)

An agreement was entered into on September 26, 1895, with the people of the Blackfoot nation in Montana and the United States government. This treaty concerned land that now constitutes the eastern half of what is now Glacier National Park, then owned by the Blackfeet.

Yellow Wolf, Little Bear Chief and many more.

The land in question was said, by the government, to be of no use to this Indian nation, as there could be no agricultural activities where there were jagged peaks and the raising of herds impossible. In fact, most of the Blackfoot reservation (which bordered this region) was

Congress, the boundary lines were to be surveyed by two engineers, one selected by the Secretary of the Interior and one by the Blackfeet.

The U.S. commission reached the Montana reservation on August 30, 1895 and called for a council of Blackfeet on Monday, September 2. Several meetings took place after this initial one as negotiations ensued. The commission was careful to make certain that the natives understood everything that was said and employed interpreters for both sides.

As the talks went on, Little Dog rightly pointed out that the Indians did not ask the government to buy their land, so they were all very interested in what the officials had to propose. It was Little Dog who named the asking price of \$3,000,000.

The government wished to purchase this vast mountainous area (about 800,000 acres) for several reasons, the most prominent one being the exploitation of the perceived mineral and oil wealth thought to be within these borders.

The government wished to purchase this vast mountainous area (about 800,000 acres) for several reasons, the most prominent one being the exploitation of the perceived mineral and oil wealth thought to be within these borders. Indeed, as soon as a deal was reached, miners and prospectors flooded the wilderness.

The negotiations were headed on the one side by George Bird Grinnell, William C. Pollock and Walter M. Clements, appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. Grinnell had been a good friend to the Indians. In the past, he had tried to protect their rights and help them improve their conditions. He was also a very early promoter of the wonders of this most beautiful part of the United States. The Blackfeet especially asked for his participation.

The other side consisted of respected men of the Blackfoot tribe, including Little Dog, White Calf, Little Plume, Three Suns, Tearing Lodge,

also deemed bad for planting. The natives had been advised to raise

Prospectors and miners poured into the ceded strip. Much strenuous effort was made because the working conditions were harsh in this unforgiving wild land. Gold, silver, copper and oil were much sought after and a small amount was found. But after 1902, all claims had been abandoned.

horned animals for their daily living.

The government was willing to allow the Indians their hunting, fishing and timber rights even after the ceded strip was handed over. If roads, railroads, telegraph and telephone lines were to be required through any part of the property, however, the buying party retained the rights to build them, after compensating the original owners for the right of way.

As soon as the treaty was agreed upon, and received the approval of

Grinnell stated that the government offer of \$1,000,000 should be accepted, "Otherwise", he said, "if you stick to your propositions, we will have to return to the East and you will have gained nothing."

The government wanted the mountains and forests to exploit them for monetary gain. The Blackfeet looked at the subject differently. They had been placed upon the reservation that bordered this desired region. They had been pushed into

a confined space, where once they were free to roam at will. As Chief White Calf claimed, concerning one of the most prominent peaks to be sold, "Chief Mountain is my head. Now my head is cut off. The mountains have been my last refuge. We have been driven here and now we are settled."

The Blackfeet knew about the supposed mineral wealth thought to be hidden in this rugged wilderness. They also realized that the miners would overrun the land whether they sold it or not. Their asking price was \$3,000,000. The money would

be used to sustain their families and educate their children.

Negotiations continued until September 26, when an agreement was reached. The amount of \$1,500,000 was offered and the Blackfeet finally accepted this.

As expected, prospectors and miners poured into the ceded strip. Much strenuous effort was made because the working conditions were harsh in this unforgiving wild land. Gold, silver, copper and oil were much sought after and a small amount was found. But after 1902, all claims had been abandoned. The real

worth of this vast real estate purchase was not to be found in minerals and gushers. The great value of this fabulous place was in its serene beauty. In 1910, these amazing acres, along with an area west of the continental divide was made into a national park by Congress, finally recognizing this vast wonderland for the paradise that we enjoy so much today.

We have the Blackfoot nation to thank for so fiercely protecting this magical place and keeping it pristine long after other parts of the nation had been severely exploited and ruined.

As Little Dog, so eloquently said during the negotiations, "Those mountains will never disappear. We will see them as long as we live, our children will see them all their lives, and when we are all dead they will still be there."

The real worth of this vast real estate purchase was not to be found in minerals and gushers. The great value of this fabulous place was in its serene beauty.

Glacier Park Lodge Alumni Centennial Reunion Update

Registration Forms to be E-Mailed Soon!

Complete information and registration forms will be e-mailed (and some mailed) in mid-March to 642 Glacier Park "alums" for the GPL Employee Centennial Reunion to be held July 16-19, 2013.

A few rooms are still available at Glacier Park Lodge for this event. To reserve yours, contact Glacier Park, Inc. through Amber Green (Saturday through Wednesday at 406-892-6729, or by e-mail at agreen@glacierparkinc.com) or through Justin (Thursday and Friday at 406-892-6722).

The Group Code for the alumni reunion is: 1186QT. Be sure to give this code number when reserving your room in order to get the special group rate.

Red Bus Tours are being offered on a first-come, first-served basis for the coming Glacier Park season. If you are interested in a Red Bus Tour during the Glacier Park Lodge Employee Centennial Reunion, we suggest making your reservations now.

For information on Glacier Park Red Bus Tours, go to glacierparkinc.com.

To make your reservations call 406-892-2525 or go to info@glacierparkinc.com

To help in your planning, there will be early (5:00 p.m.) and late (7:00 p.m.) dinner seatings on Wednesday and Thursday (July 17 and 18) at Glacier Park Lodge in the Moccasin Room. Evening programs are scheduled to begin at 9:00 p.m. in the Lobby.

For additional information about the GPL Employee Centennial Reunion contact John Dobbertin, Jr. by e-mail at: gplodge2013@gmail.com

The planning committee for this event held its third annual meeting on January 25 in Orlando, Florida. Committee members attending were Joe and Carol Blair, Jack Barry, and John and Barbara Dobbertin.

Youth and Maturity in Glacier

by Dan Manka (*Many Glacier 1975*)

I love Glacier National Park. I love Many Glacier Hotel. As our theme song indicates, Many Glacier will always be a part of me. I love to read one issue after another of *The Inside Trail*. I will never “get over” working at Many Glacier Hotel in 1975 and visiting there numerous times, but I always come to the same conclusions for all of us in our elite group of former employees. That is why I write today, not to take away from anyone’s pleasure and fond memories of living and working in Glacier, but to help to bring us as a group to see our lives in proper perspective.

Glacier is a fairyland - a dreamland. It is a marvelous and beautiful dream that we all shared, and some continue to share through return visits, reunions, and through this wonderful magazine. (A big thanks to all who contribute and publish this magazine for all of us to enjoy!)

We, the former employees of Glacier National Park, are a special club of people who have experienced something that no one else can really fully experience. We are the envy of hundreds of thousands of others who learn of our privilege and experiences as former employees of the park facilities. But our group from bygone decades is growing ever smaller. One can go to reunions and get re-acquainted. One can reminisce for days at a time, but we can never bring back those from our ranks who are gone forever. Likewise, we can never really bring back those days of being young,

young, foolish, and immature. We have to wake up and accept responsibility. Some of us did that while we were in Glacier. For others that maturity came when we had our own children and knew we had to keep them safe and we had to take care of ourselves so that we would “always be there for our kids.” Some of us came to grips with the fact that we are not invincible while our life passed before our eyes when we were hanging onto that tree on the edge of the mountain or twenty years later when we stood at the casket of a friend or a loved one. Alas, some of us may have gray hair now and still lack that sense of reality that someday we will not be here any longer -- someday we will no longer be here for our kids or our grandkids.

We were young then. We were invincible. It was us against the mountain, or us against the weather. Quite often we were victorious. We reached the pass, the top of the ridge, or the summit. We won, and for now the mountain was conquered, and for now that was enough -- that was all that mattered. We have spent decades reliving those experiences and telling fascinated individuals about our accomplishments in those never-to-be-forgotten mountains.

We were foolish. We thought we could do the impossible. Some of us thought we could do remarkable things and never have to suffer for it. We burned the candle at both ends. (Reporting for duty as a cook at 5:30 a.m. came hard after a long hike the day before.) One story after another in *The Inside Trail* tells of our fellow employees sliding down Mt. Wilbur in the dark; hanging onto a tree on Mount Allen with feet dangling over the abyss below; riding on the Going-to-the-Sun Road while hanging onto the roof of a car too small to hold everyone; or dropping in the dark from a ledge on Grinnell Point without knowing how far one would fall.

But all of us someday must come to grips with the fact that the mountains will win in the end -- and the mountains WILL win in the end. Mount Gould, Mount Wilbur, and the Garden Wall all will “outlive” us. We are not invincible. We cannot always remain

young, foolish, and immature. We have to wake up and accept responsibility. Some of us did that while we were in Glacier. For others that maturity came when we had our own children and knew we had to keep them safe and we had to take care of ourselves so that we would “always be there for our kids.” Some of us came to grips with the fact that we are not invincible while our life passed before our eyes when we were hanging onto that tree on the edge of the mountain or twenty years later when we stood at the casket of a friend or a loved one. Alas, some of us may have gray hair now and still lack that sense of reality that someday we will not be here any longer -- someday we will no longer be here for our kids or our grandkids.

My late mother-in-law traveled to Zermatt, Switzerland, and stood in awe looking up at the Matterhorn, but she was very moved by her visit to the little cemetery in that beautiful Swiss village where all the mountain climbers are buried. All those graves of all those people who lost their lives trying to climb that mountain. It’s a compulsion that pushes people to the edge and sometimes over the edge.

I love to visit the Alps and our own beautiful “Matterhorns” in the Swiftcurrent Valley, but let us enjoy the lofty heights and at the same time keep our feet firmly on the solid ground of prudence and responsibility to ourselves, our loved ones, and our God. Let us acknowledge that though we at times acted with our foolish, youthful zeal, we are now mature enough to take on our down-to-earth and also our heavenly necessities for now and for the future. Let us not simply frolic in the beauty of the mountains, but let us realize that one day we will stand before the One Who made those mountains.

[L]et us enjoy the lofty heights and at the same time keep our feet firmly on the solid ground of prudence and responsibility to ourselves, our loved ones, and our God.

Saving the Reds (Continued from page 3)

“(1) On what basis do you project that the buses will fail over the next 16 years? Has there been a systematic inspection of structural components in the buses? Have the Ford engineers who renovated the buses in 2000-2002 been consulted?”

“(2) On what basis do you project the figures of \$4.11 million to rehabilitate 15 buses and of \$4.025 million to replace the 18 others? Given that the figures per bus are comparable, *why* should historic buses be replaced rather than refitted?”

“(3) On what basis did you decide on the 15:18 ratio of renovated buses and replacements? Again, since the price per bus is comparable, *why* should so many new buses be substituted for historic buses?”

“(4) Has Ford, which paid the cost of the renovation a decade ago, been consulted as to whether it would support ongoing renovation of the fleet?”

“(5) What policies exist to extend the life of the red buses? E.g., are the buses restricted to runs within the park, with other vehicles required for runs to Whitefish, Kalispell and other destinations outside Glacier?”

“(6) What does the Park Service plan to do with 18 retired historic buses? Why would anyone pay to restore them in the future, when all the new buses would make them superfluous? Will they be warehoused? Will they be sold?”

“(7) Have you studied the potential effect of removing most of the historic buses from service on Montana tourism?”

Montana newspapers ran front-page articles about the red bus crisis. The story was picked up by the Associated Press, and soon ran in *The Washington*

Post and many other newspapers.

Meanwhile, a network of former gearjammers vigorously advocated for the buses. Foundation director Leroy Lott contacted more than 200 fellow drivers, using a list from the great gearjammer reunion held in 2010.

The drivers, supported by other citizens, sent a flood of e-mail to Congress, to the Park Service, and to the press, urging preservation of the fleet.

Glacier’s Acting Superintendent, Kym Hall (who had taken office at the first of the year, with the bidding already in progress) responded decisively to the protest. On January 30, the Park Service issued a press release stating its intention “to retain the operation of the entire fleet of red buses.”

Hall stated: “We love the red buses

The Glacier Park Foundation commends Hall, her staff, and the Park Service for this very prompt and positive response to the public’s concerns.

and our intent has been to retain this iconic symbol of the park ... We appreciate the advocacy for the red buses by the Glacier Park Foundation and others, and their dedication to preserving the fleet of 33 iconic and historic buses.”

Hall and her staff then met with staff for the Montana Congressional delegation (Senators Max Baucus and John Tester, and Rep. Steve Daines), all of whom supported preservation of the fleet. After several weeks of work, the Park Service released a revised prospectus on February 25.

The revised prospectus changed the plan for bus transportation in Glacier. The concept of adding 18 new buses was abandoned. Instead, the concessioner must add just two new

wheelchair-accessible buses, one for each side of the Park.

The prospectus now states that “to the greatest extent possible, the Concessionaire must ensure a fleet of thirty-three Red Buses.” To ensure this, a trust fund will be established for ongoing renovation of the fleet.

The concessioner will be required to deposit 2.5% of its net gross revenues into this fund (called the Red Bus Rehabilitation Reserve) every month. At current revenue levels, these deposits should amount to more than \$400,000 per year.

At five-year intervals, the concessioner must have a third party contractor assess the buses’ condition. It then must submit a rehabilitation plan for the Park Service’s approval. In

addition (independently of the trust fund), it must carry out ordinary maintenance and repair of the red buses from its own funds.

The Glacier Park Foundation commends Hall, her staff, and the Park Service for this very prompt and positive response to the public’s concerns. The proposed new concession contract incorporates strong and detailed terms for the preservation of the historic fleet.

The Glacier National Park Conservancy (formerly the Glacier National Park Fund) has established an endowment to assist in renovating the historic buses. Questions concerning this endowment can be addressed to Jane Ratzlaff at jane@gnpconservancy.org.

New Glacier Concession Contract (Continued from page 4)

At Lake McDonald Lodge the concessionaire must complete “upscale level upgrades” to twelve large cabin rooms and fifteen lodge rooms. In addition, public spaces must be refreshed or upgraded. The remaining rooms at Lake McDonald Lodge will

for the replacement of the remaining eighteen Red Buses. The NPS has changed its bid specifications and now requires the new concessionaire to attempt to maintain the entire fleet of thirty-three Red Buses. In addition, the NPS now requires

rehabilitation projects which will increase the amount of the LSI during the term of the new Contract. Only LSI-eligible fixture replacements may be added and those will also be depreciated on the forty-year schedule. Excepting any new fixtures, this means the \$22,000,000.00 paid by the new concessionaire to GPI for the purchase of GPI’s possessory interest will be reduced to approximately \$13,200,000.00 at the end of the sixteen-year Contract period. This will avoid the need (such as was done with the current concession contract) for the NPS and the concessionaire to negotiate the amount of the concessionaire’s possessory interest.

The Prospectus and draft Contract also address the issue of the historic Red Buses.

receive new “mid-scale level personal property and refreshed finishes”.

The Village Inn at Apgar must have all thirty-six rooms receiving new “basic-level personal property and refreshed finishes.”

At Rising Sun Motor Inn and Cabins, all seventy-two rooms will receive new “basic-level personal property and refreshed finishes”.

At Swiftcurrent Motor Inn and Cabins, sixty-two rooms will receive new “basic-level personal property and refreshed finishes” and thirty-two cabins will receive new “rustic-level personal property and refreshed finishes”.

Interestingly, the NPS refrained from defining what these quoted descriptions actually mean. It will be up to the prospective bidders to give a narrative concerning what they will do to meet the NPS’ requirements.

The Prospectus and draft Contract also address the issue of the historic Red Buses. As discussed elsewhere in this issue, the NPS originally required the maintenance and rehabilitation of a minimum of fifteen of the Red Buses. Controversially, the NPS also proposed allowing the new concessionaire to provide a plan

a Red Bus Rehabilitation Reserve which will be funded by using 2.5 percent of the new concessionaire’s annual gross receipts. In addition to the required up-grades and maintenance of the lodging facilities, the NPS (if it can obtain funding) may continue the rehabilitation and stabilization of Many Glacier Hotel. The prospective concessionaires must be aware of the fact the NPS may, during the term of the new Contract, continue the massive rehabilitation project for the lobby and south half of the Hotel. This would be a project similar to what has been completed for the dining room and the northern portion of the main building. Accordingly, there could be a time when close to one-half of Many Glacier Hotel’s 214 rooms might be affected by this project.

The new concessionaire will receive a Leasehold Surrender Interest (“LSI”) for its possessory interest in the facilities property which is the subject of the Contract. The LSI will depreciate on a straight-line basis on a forty-year schedule, so that during the sixteen-year term of the Contract, the concessionaire’s initial LSI will be reduced by approximately 40%.

The NPS does not intend to approve construction projects or any major

All proposals submitted in response to the request for bids may be disclosed by the NPS as authorized by the Freedom of Information Act. All proposals will be evaluated on principal selection factors and secondary selection factors. Interestingly, consideration of revenue to the NPS in this determination and scoring is subordinate to the objectives of protecting, conserving and preserving Glacier National Park and providing necessary and appropriate visitor services to the public at reasonable rates.

There are five principal selection factors: (1) the responsiveness of the proposal to the objectives of protecting, conserving and preserving Glacier National Park; (2) the responsiveness of the proposal to the objectives of providing necessary and appropriate visitor services at reasonable rates; (3) the experience and related background of the bidder; (4) the financial capability of the bidder to carry out its proposal; and (5) the amount of the proposed minimum franchise fee.

Principal selection factors 1-4 are scored on a zero to five point basis; principal selection factor 5 is scored on a zero to four point basis.

Secondary selection factors are: (1) the quality of the bidder's proposal to conduct its operations in a manner that furthers the protection, conservation and preservation of Glacier National Park through environmental management programs and activities, including energy conservation, waste reduction and recycling; and (2) the bidder's plans related to the historic Red Bus fleet.

The secondary selection factors are scored on a zero to three point basis. The NPS will select the responsive bid with the highest cumulative point score as the best proposal. If two or more responsive proposals tie with the highest point score, then the NPS must break the tie.

The NPS will select the best narrative explanation of how the bidder will best achieve the purposes set forth in the selection factors. In addition to the NPS' determination of the best responsive bid, the new concession contract will be submitted to Congress for sixty days before it may be officially awarded to the successful concessionaire.

There are no preferred bidders in this process. With that said, GPI may have a distinct advantage because of its facilities in East Glacier. The successful bidder must establish out-of-park facilities for laundry, additional employee housing and the maintenance and storage of the Red Buses. These factors are already in existence for GPI. Any other bidders will need to build these facilities at additional cost or negotiate with GPI for the use of the existing facilities.

Among all the details of the draft Contract are a couple of somewhat humorous provisions. As might be expected with a Federal contract, the concessionaire must be non-discriminatory and exhibit complete impartiality as to rates and services for the public. With that said, the draft Contract specifically provides that "the concessionaire will provide Federal employees conducting official business reduced rates for lodging, essential transportation and other specified services...."

The other provision is the requirement that the concessionaire must provide "appropriate employee recreational activities". While this requirement explains the rec rooms at the various locations, what happened to the quaint idea of considering Glacier National Park itself as the major "recreational activity" for the employees?



Controversially, the NPS proposed allowing the concessionaire to provide a plan for replacement of the remaining eighteen Red Buses by the end of the Contract term.

Photo by Paul Meierding (Many Glacier, 1970-1976)



(Photo courtesy of Bret Bouda)

This unique symbol of tourism in Glacier will be preserved, thanks to citizens' initiative and a timely change in course by the National Park Service.

JOIN THE GLACIER PARK FOUNDATION

All friends of Glacier Park are invited to join the Glacier Park Foundation. Membership includes a subscription to The Inside Trail and the right to vote for directors. Please download a membership form from our Web Site (www.glacier-parkfoundation.org) or send your name, address, phone number, and park experience to Glacier Park Foundation, Box 15641, Minneapolis, MN 55415.

An annual membership in the Foundation costs \$10. A "Friend of the Park" membership costs \$25 annually, cumulating to a Lifetime membership in five installments. A Lifetime membership paid in one installment costs \$100.

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(Panorama
by Christine
Baker)

