



PLENTY OF TIME — Denise Wilson finds enough time to watch for fires and knit afghan. Her aerial, Bull of the Woods lookout, provides impressive view.



MOUNTAIN PENTHOUSE — A three-mile trail is only access to Ms. Wilson's lookout, one of last still staffed in Mount Hood National Forest. Photos by PATRICK ROSENKRANZ

Forest lookout can watch for fires, knit afghan at same time

By PATRICK ROSENKRANZ
Correspondent, The Oregonian

Few people try to knit an afghan and make a quilt all at once. But Denise Wilson has a lot of time.

The 21-year-old Oregon State University student is a forest guard at Bull of the Woods lookout in Mount Hood National Forest.

To the north rise Mount Rainier, Mount St. Helens and Mount Hood. To the southeast stretch the range of snow-capped mountains from the Three Sisters. And nearer at hand are a myriad of twisting canyons, high mountain lakes and rocky slopes dotted with abandoned gold and copper mines and numerous peaks and ridges with names

like Big Slide Mountain, Knob Peak and Pinhead Buttes.

"On a clear day you can see the whole Cascade Range from up here," said Ms. Wilson. "Sometimes the valleys below me are filled with clouds in the early morning, and it's like I'm on an island. Then the clouds rise and surround me, and I'm completely isolated in the fog. Then they rise up and disappear."

Five days a week, Ms. Wilson rises with the dawn, spending her time scanning the surrounding forest for signs of smoke.

At 7:45 a.m. she makes her first radio call into headquarters, then checks the weather with an instrument kit

During the day she calls in regularly with reports of smoke or any unusual sighting.

Of the more than 100 lookouts that made up the Mount Hood fire-watch network in the 1930s, only eight remain, and, for the past decade, surveillance planes have replaced traditional lookouts. But rising fuel costs have caused the agency to re-examine the value of lookout towers.

Only three of the lookouts have been staffed consistently in the summer since the '30s. This year, budget cuts have caused the U.S. Forest Service to try new methods. Two lookouts are staffed by contractors who supply their own food, stove wood and water. Bull

of the Woods is staffed on a volunteer basis, and Ms. Wilson had to obtain a grant through the Comprehensive Education and Training Act to pay her salary. Her expenses come out of that.

Part of her job is greeting visitors to the back country. "Sometimes someone comes along wet and freezing cold so I take them in and warm them up with a cup of tea," she said.

At 5,500 feet above sea level, the tower endures extreme weather conditions. A snowbank was still under the tower when Ms. Wilson started work July 1. Even in summer, nights are cold and crisp. In a thunderstorm, the tower-sitter said she often feels like a target for lightning bolts.

Ms. Wilson has spent the last three summers working in the Estacada Ranger District. During the summer of 1978 she worked for the Young Adult Conservation Corps on trail maintenance and fire control. The following summer she worked in a roadless area in the southern part of the district near Clackamas and Marion county lines.

Besides the two sewing projects, she has been catching up on her reading. "There's lots of time to look and watch and think," she said.

One afternoon she saw an airplane stocking Big Slide Lake with trout, swooping down a canyon at treetop level far below her. It dumped its load of fish, banked into a steep U-turn and

went back out the canyon.

In the evenings she likes to hike to nearby lakes for exercise and to fish for dinner. At night she trains her binoculars on the sky where her view is unobscured by smog.

Friends sometimes come to visit her. "I tell them to bring food. I have a hard time carrying in enough food for myself," she said. Supplies for the lookout must be brought in on foot or by horse.

One day a friend brought steaks. The sun was setting in the west as Ms. Wilson and friend grilled meat over a briquette fire and they watched as the moon rose over Mount Jefferson. "It was perfect," she said.

Horses still have use Visitors, equipment packed into back country

By PATRICK ROSENKRANZ
Correspondent, The Oregonian

ESTACADA — Being an anachronism in the internal combustion age doesn't bother Bruce Reed a bit. There's nothing he'd rather be doing than taking his pack horse string up into the mountains.

For the past eight years he's been in charge of the last pack horse string in the Mount Hood National Forest. His six horses are housed in a barn built around the turn of the century near the Oak Grove Ranger Station. During the summer they carry visitors and equipment into the roadless areas, and during the winter they graze on a 300-acre ranch near Madras.

In 1908, when the national forest was created, there was a flurry of activity in trail making, mapping and building ranger stations, Reed said. Horses were used extensively for hauling supplies and for transportation.

Today, half the barn houses horses and the rest is used to store the tools that replaced them. Still, during July and August, Reed and his team are called on to do jobs in all the ranger districts of the forest, even though they have bases in the Estacada district.

Reed hauls the horses in a truck to the end of the road. From there the animals carry the load. They carry fireplaces and outhouses to back country campgrounds. They pack in cement and lumber for building bridges, and food and supplies for work crews and lookouts.

Reed said that once he hauled a cement mixer into the Bagby Hot Springs trail with a single horse. They also haul out garbage left behind by sloppy campers.

"The neatest part of my job is taking people into the back country who have never been there," Reed said. He often leads groups doing wilderness research or trail inspection. New personnel to the district get a tour to familiarize themselves with the lay of the land.

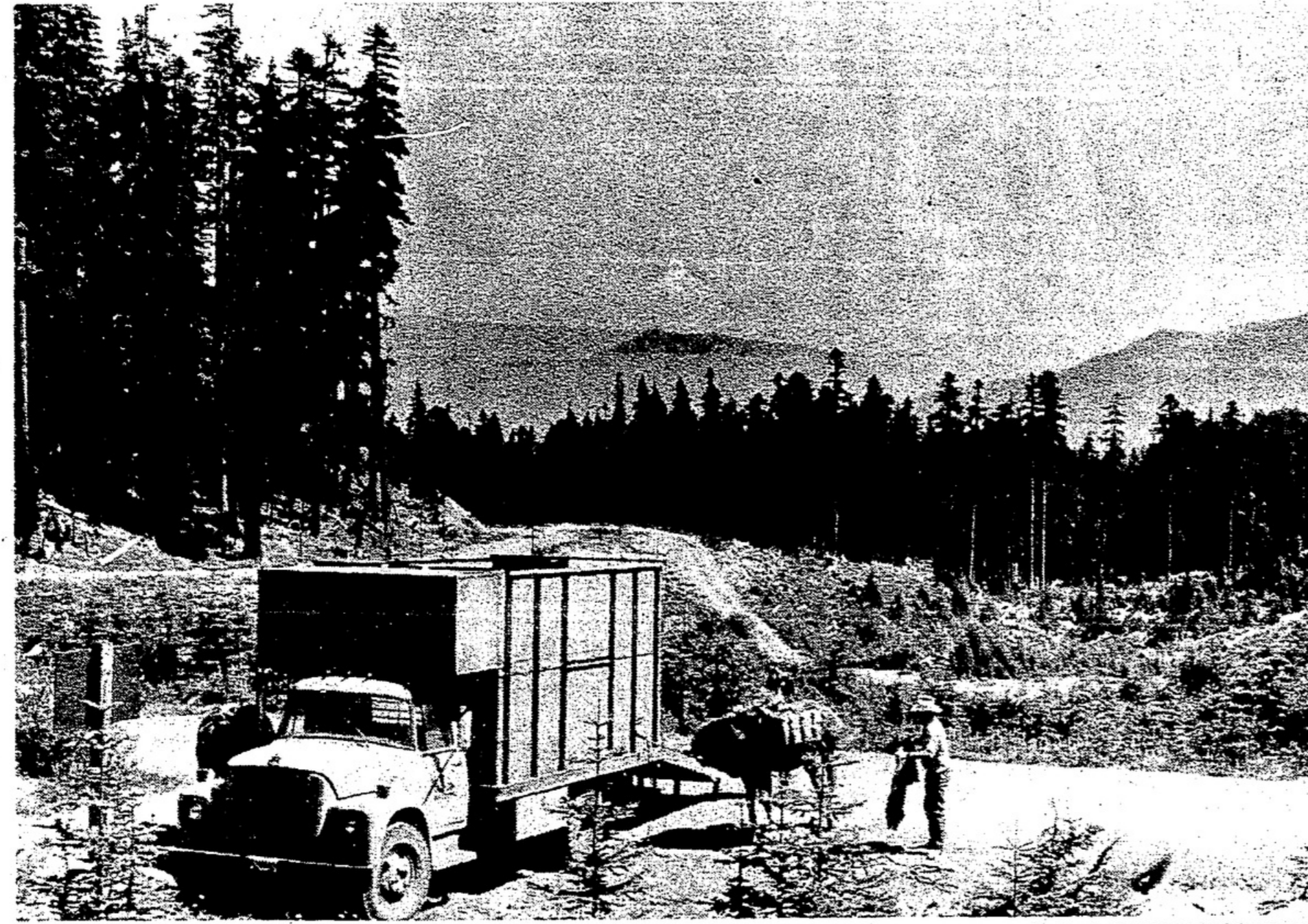
Reed's family always had horses on the farm where he grew up near Mulino. His grandfather farmed and logged with horses. He learned to pack while hunting in the Wallowa Mountains. "At one time I aspired to be a rodeo rider," he said, "but every time I got on a bronc I got bucked off."

When he went to work for the Forest Service in Estacada in 1970 he was interested in timber sales, but when he was offered the job as horse handler two years later he gave it serious thought.

"The fellow gave me the keys and directions to the barn so I went up to look at it. It was like a real neat dream come true. I took the job," he said.

Some people might say he has an easy job, but Reed doesn't see it that way.

"People think it's lots of fun riding horses, but they don't see all the work packing saddles, feeding and cleaning horses and all that," he said. "There's a lot of manual labor. The first four hours of the day is nothing but work. Then you get to enjoy yourself."



AT TRAILHEAD — Bruce Reed, who operates last string of pack horses in Mount Hood National Forest, unloads horses from truck at Bull of the Woods trailhead. Mount Hood floats above ridge line of hills in background. Photos by PATRICK ROSENKRANZ



EN ROUTE — Riding Babe, Reed heads out on trail. Tony follows with load. Reed's been at it for eight years. Photos by PATRICK ROSENKRANZ

Workshop scheduled for volunteer groups

OREGON CITY — A one-day workshop, designed to help members of voluntary citizens organizations improve their recruiting, meeting skills and planning, will be held Saturday, Sept. 27, at Clackamas Community College.

State Rep. Joyce Cohen, D-Lake Oswego, and Ron Wyden, a former Gray Panthers organizer and candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, will be the featured speakers at the "Community Leadership Workshop 1980."

Following registration, which starts at 8:30 a.m., Mark Millemann, a management consultant for Tektronix Inc., will discuss meeting structure, decision-making and parliamentary vs. consensus procedure.

Ardie Stevenson, administrative assistant for Clackamas County Environmental Services, will conduct a session on volunteer recruitment, orientation and retention.

Ralph Groener, Clackamas County commissioner and Clackamas Community College board member, will discuss the county government structure.

The afternoon session will divide into three discussion groups of advisory, governing and advocacy organizations.

Millemann, Ms. Stevenson and Jim Tomlin, minister with the Milwaukee Congregational United Church of Christ, will talk on the purpose and role of advisory groups, how they can be more effective and better ways to collect information and present it to decision makers.

Rich Acres, Clackamas County planning commissioner; Marilyn Lunner, Clackamas County Extension Service; and Warren Oliver, Lake Oswego planning commissioner and school board member, will discuss governing organizations.

Rich Rohde, Oregon Fair Share, and Milwaukee Mayor Allen Manuel will explore advocacy organizations, how to organize around an issue, spreading the word, lobby decision-making and working with decision makers and governing bodies.

Pre-registration fee is \$5 (\$7 at the door). Participants interested in earning credit through Clackamas Community College or University of Oregon Continuing Education must pay \$35. Enrollment is limited to the first 200 persons. Additional information is available from the Clackamas Community College Community Education Office.

Aurora votes to accept smaller growth limits

AURORA — The City Council has voted unanimously to accept the smaller urban growth boundary set for the city last August by Marion County, and to ask a consulting firm to prepare a cost estimate for needed revisions to the city's comprehensive plan.

The firm, Cogan and Associates, had proposed a \$19,800 work program to revise the plan and attempt to justify a larger urban growth boundary. However, immediate plans to pursue that program died when landowners in the area under dispute failed to lend financial support, and the city was unable to raise the funds from other sources.

"I told (the council) that wasn't my choice, but I felt it was necessary to get the thing done by the deadline, which is Jan. 31," Mayor Fred Saxton said.

The city had secured an extension for submittal of its comprehensive plan to the state Land Conservation and Development Commission. The original deadline was July 1.

Aurora has been struggling to get an urban growth boundary more than twice the size of the boundary adopted by the county. The main area of contention has been the land surrounding the Aurora State Airport, which city officials say Aurora needs to expand its tax base.

Even with the smaller boundary, the city's comprehensive plan still requires revisions to meet state rules. However, these revisions will be less extensive

than the program to justify the larger boundary, Saxton said.

Saxton said he expects the city to return to the boundary question at some later time.

"I don't think the property owners can (develop) out there without being in an urban growth boundary," Saxton said, adding however that "apparently at this time they feel they don't need us."

Dean Nichols, who owns land near the airport, said local landowners plan to develop the area for industrial uses related to the airport. He said the landowners may choose to develop outside the city growth boundary by putting in septic fields or a private sewer system.

The landowners also have discussed forming a port district in conjunction with the Port of Portland, but that idea apparently has been dropped since the Port chose Mulino as the site for a reliever airport, Nichols said.

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