

September 8 Retirees celebrate the people of the Forest Service

September 8, 2005 – Portland, Oregon – Over 1100 Forest Service retirees attended the Centennial Celebration Reunion in Portland, Oregon September 4 – 9. The Forest Service National Leadership team, the Office of Communication, and the New Century of Service committee had concurrent meetings and joined the retirees for a Fiddlin’ Foresters performance at a huge banquet on Thursday evening.

“It was a great event,” said fiddler and Forest Service retiree **Lynn Young**. “I knew so many of the audience, and I felt like I was playing for a thousand of my own family. It was a highlight of our Centennial tour.” Retiree and reunion committee member, **Fred Cooper** hosted the Fiddlin’ Foresters.

The Fiddlin’ Foresters have performed over 40 programs in 2005, the Centennial year. Most of the performances were for Forest, Regional or National Centennial events. “The tour has been exhausting and sometimes stressful,” said Young. “But it has been wonderful to see so many public celebrations of our great public lands. Best of all was meeting so many new people and renewing old friendships. That’s what the 2005 Retirees Reunion was all about.”

The Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association hosted the successful five-day event. It included several tours, a huge silent auction, receptions, banquets, exhibits and vendors, and, of course, ample opportunity to visit with old friends and make new ones. Featured presentations included author and Forest Service family member **Susan Greffenius Butruille**, historian and scholar **Char Miller**, programs by the **Riders in the Dirt** and, of course, the Fiddlin’ Foresters.

During the Fiddlin’ Forester’s performance, **Jane Leche**, presented a special tribute to the wives of the early forest rangers. “The Forest Service wives and families were such a big part of the history of our agency,” said Jane. “I wanted to recognize the significant role that they played in the community, the agency and in helping to manage our national forests. They were part of the team that has left our Forest Service legacy.”

The Fiddlin’ Foresters performed two special songs as a tribute to the wives of the Forest Service – “I Want To Be a Cowboy’s Sweetheart” and “My Own Heart’s Delight.” “There were so many of my heroes in the audience. I wanted to recognize them,” said Jane.

Denny Bschor, Alaska Regional Forester and original Fiddlin’ Forester, performed with the Fiddlin’ Foresters.

There is a lot of musical talent in the Forest Service. At the buffet send-off breakfast on the last day of the reunion, the audience was entertained by retiree **Larry Seekins and the Four Get Ables**. “I don’t know when I have been so entertained,” said **Lynn Young**. “I had tears running down my cheeks from laughter.” The Four Get Ables, a five-person group of employees and retirees from R-6, used song and stories to relate

significant events in their careers. Words to their hilarious songs and information about the 2005 Retirees Reunion can be found on the [Old Smokeys](#) web site.





Photo by Paul Enberg

Fiddlin' Foresters perform for Forest Service retirees and employees at the Centennial Retirees Reunion in Portland, OR.



Photo by Paul Enberg

The hilarious Four Get Ables entertain at a retiree's breakfast.



Photo by Paul Enberg

R-10 Regional Forester **Denny Bschor**, the original Fiddlin' Forester, lends his talent to the performance



Photo by Paul Enberg

The Fiddlin' Foresters performing a special song, "I Want To Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," as a tribute to the wives of the Forest Service