

Conservation Education & Interpretive Services

A Natural Connection

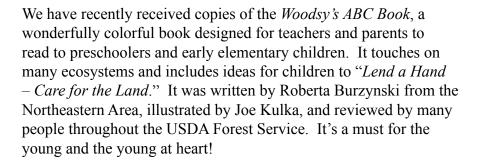


WHAT'S NEWS

National Conference March 2004









"Look! There's Woodsy Owl by the tree. Open your eyes, and you will see his alphabet from A to Z."



Administration of Children and Families

An MOU between the USDA Forest Service and Head Start was signed on May 27, 2003, and an implementation meeting was held December 16 and 17, 2003. It was an energetic and fun meeting attended by Washington Office and field personnel from both agencies. We began creating a fanciful story of how Woodsy came to Head Start and ended with a discussion of what Woodsy Owl products we want to concentrate on developing for Head Start classrooms.

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NEW CENTURY OF SERVICE

The Forest Service Centennial away. Thanks to

wonderful support all around the country, the New Century of Service team has a number of projects underway to commemorate the USDA Forest Service's 100th anniversary in 2005. We've highlighted some of those projects in this issue. For a complete list of New Century accomplishments and works in progress, please visit www.fs.fed.us/newcentury/.





The Forest Service and Smithsonian Institution's Folklife Festival

Imagine a museum without walls on The Mall in Washington, DC. The Smithsonian Institution's Folklife Festival is a living cultural exhibition that generally includes musical performances, craft demonstrations, illustrations of work lore, community heritage and celebrations, discussions of traditional and grassroots culture, even foodways – a wonderful opportunity to show off the skills and work traditions of the USDA Forest Service to a million visitors

The Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution has invited the Forest Service to partner with them "to produce a program on the occupational culture of forest management in the United States at the 39th Annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival" June 25 through July 6, 2005. The 39th Folklife Festival coincides with the Forest Service's 100th anniversary on July 1, 2005. This invitation is quite an honor because the Forest Service is the third Federal agency to be invited to participate in the Folklife Festival (the White House and Smithsonian being the first two).

Interviewers and storytellers have been selected for the festival. Interviewers attended training provided by the Smithsonian in March 2003. These individuals are conducting 10 to 20 interviews between the spring of 2003 and the spring of 2004 with current and past Forest Service employees, volunteers, community members, academicians, partners, and other interesting people who have compelling stories to tell about the Forest Service. For further information about the Smithsonian Institution's Folklife Festival, visit www.folklife.si.edu.

Centennial Quilt

is now just a year

USDA Forest Service employee Joy Berg is leading an effort to create a quilt, which will interpret the history and culture of the Forest Service. Many employees, retirees, and spouses have volunteered to help make the quilt. Once made, the quilt can be displayed at a number of events, including centennial congresses and new employee orientations.



Centennial Congress

In January 2005, the USDA Forest Service will host an American Forest Centennial Congress in Washington, DC, to commemorate the establishment of the Forest Service as an agency within USDA in 1905. The Centennial Congress will provide a national forum to discuss issues relevant to forest management across the country and contribute to a conservation strategy for the next century. The event will be preceded by regional centennial forums that will frame issues and draft solutions to bring forward at the national meeting. Planning for the Centennial Congress is progressing in earnest.

A Record of Accomplishment

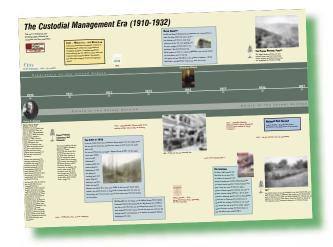
"Then and Now" is a compilation of significant USDA Forest Service accomplishments over the last century. For example, did you know that parachutes were invented by a Forest Service employee as a way to drop supplies to firefighters? The technology was so successful, it was adopted as a way to drop firefighters to the scene of the incident and then adopted by the military for paratroopers.

Commemorative Book

The International Institute of Tropical Forestry is planning a commemorative book for the Forest Service Centennial. The book will include a timeline section juxtaposing Forest Service achievements in Puerto Rico with achievements on the island and around the world, interviews with historical figures, and a section devoted to historical and current photographs.

Retirees Reunion in 2005

The Pacific Northwest Region, Pacific Northwest Station, and their retirees are working with a New Century of Service team member to plan and coordinate the next national retiree reunion in Portland, Oregon.



Forest Service Timeline

The Rocky Mountain Region created a USDA Forest Service timeline that documents important agency milestones and accomplishments within a historical context. The timeline is on display at Forest Service headquarters in Washington, DC. For more information on the timelines and to order one for your region/station, contact Dave Steinke at dsteinke@fs.fed.us or Judy Dersch at jdersch@fs.fed.us.

Documentary Film

USDA Forest Service audiovisual specialists are creating a PBS-quality documentary of the Forest Service called "The Greatest Good." The film is a look back at the agency's past 100 years that will offer information and commentary about present and anticipated issues.

Chief's Award

The New Century of Service team is the proud sponsor of a Chief's Award. Four individuals and four groups will be honored with the New Century Chief's Award before it is retired in 2005. The 2002 Chief's Award winners were **Dr. Frank Wadsworth** from the International Institute of Tropical Forestry in Puerto Rico and the **Midewin Tallgrass Prairie** employees. The awards are based on distinguished service and exemplary Forest Service traditions and core values.

Fiddlin' Foresters Flex Their Bows

Thanks to New Century of Service sponsorship, the Fiddlin' Foresters have been getting a lot more exposure at agency and public events around the country. This bluegrass band, composed of USDA Forest Service employees, retirees, and a volunteer, can barely handle all the engagements offered them. They are tireless ambassadors of Forest Service core values and conservation messages.

Lecture Series by Dr. Char Miller

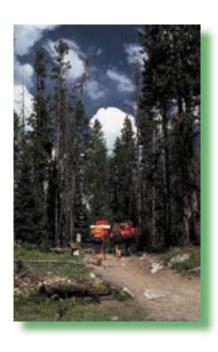
Dr. Char Miller, history professor at Trinity University in Texas, will give a series of lectures around the country about the environmental and political history that developed and shaped the USDA Forest Service. The lecture series is supported by the Gifford Pinchot Institute and New Century of Service. Dr. Miller's lecture has been captured on a DVD by Sight and Sound Services in Welches, Oregon.

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

Secret to Success?

Start Young! Start with National Trails Day 2004...

The key to being a lifelong outdoor participant is to start at an early age. Outdoor recreation is an ingrained behavior. Research shows that 90 percent of current outdoor enthusiasts have been involved in outdoor recreation since they were young. Starting early teaches children to love and appreciate the outdoors. and the personal challenge and health benefits are what keeps them participating throughout their lives.



In a recent speech, USDA Forest Service Chief Bosworth noted that people keep coming back to the national forests because of their early memories. They remember catching their first fish, making their first climb, or seeing their first bear. They come for memories of splendid scenery and natural landscapes, and also for outdoor adventure and wilderness.

On June 5th, you can use National Trails Day to create some lasting memories for children, families, and adults. **This year's theme is "Trails and Health....a Natural Connection" with a special focus on youth.** Think about creating an event that will involve youth and youth organizations, such as a nature walk, gear demonstration, race or ride, music, and animals. Use your creativity and explore some new ways your National Trails Day event can help Americans lead healthier, more active lives.

Lewis and Clark

Bicentennial...

A Teachable Moment of History

The Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1803-1806 was a significant journey that documented the flora, fauna, and geography encountered, along with the trade and culture of Native American tribes. The expedition contributed knowledge in support of the geographic and economic expansion of the West, and forever changed the lives and cultures of Native Americans. The Lewis and Clark Bicentennial provides the USDA Forest Service with the opportunity to link the public to our Nation's forests and grasslands in the spirit of exploration, while promoting cultural awareness and stewardship of the land. The bicentennial commemorates a historic event important to the development of our Nation and provides the Forest Service with an opportunity to highlight the relevance of their expedition to the public today.

Key Messages from the Communication Plan...

- Just as Lewis and Clark's expedition symbolizes the spirit of exploration, America's national forests and grasslands provide wonderful opportunities for public exploration.
- Just as the members of the Lewis and Clark expedition lived off the land to sustain themselves, the Forest Service uses effective land stewardship to ensure the use and sustainability of our Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the public's needs.
- Just as Lewis and Clark forged important relationships to achieve success, citizen participation and partnerships based on respect and meaningful cooperation are essential to conserve national forests and grasslands for the future.

Quality Interpretation:

A profession requiring lifelong learning...

Doctors and teachers do it! They participate in lifelong learning to maintain their professional competencies. Interpretation is a specialized field of communication that requires academic education, training, and practice to perfect. As research and field studies continually test our known theories and practices, we need to stay abreast of emerging information.

Here are several professional resources to keep you in the know and using the best interpretive methods for planning, programming, and designing wayside and exhibit media.

National Association for Interpretation... www.interpnet.org

National Park Service's Harper's Ferry Design Center... http://www.nps.gov/hfc

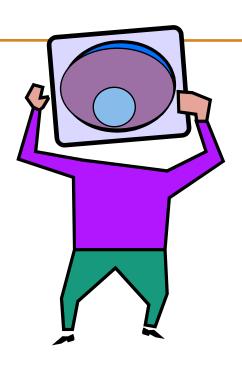
Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center...http://training.fws.gov/ **Got** a question? Create your personalized Fingertip Directory of Who's Who in the Forest Service...

- Know your Social Scientists and National Visitor Use Monitoring Coordinator...Jim Absher, Debbie Chavez, Ken Cordell, and Don English
- Know your national Exhibit Manager, Audiovisual Manager, and Printing and Publishing Manager...Marion Lostrom, Karl Perry, and MaryJane Senter
- Know your Regional Interpretive Specialist Keith Thurlkill, Northern Region Linda Hecker, Rocky Mountain Region Kendra Bougart, Southwest Region Gordon Williams, Intermountain Region Bob Loudon, Pacific Southwest Region Bonnie Lippitt, Pacific Northwest Region Greg Lussier, Southern Region Sandi Forney, Eastern Region Kristi Kantola, Alaska Chuck Croston, Grey Towers, Northeastern Area

Ramping up Technology

The "Next Generation"

is being raised on computers, game boys, MP3 players, cell phones, and the like. Surfing the Internet, playing computer games, and enjoying other electronic activities can compete with traditional outdoor recreation for available time and funds. However, we can use these same technologies to enhance recreation experiences and to improve recreation management efforts. USDA Forest Service employees in Alaska and the Caribbean are looking at how to incorporate computer and satellite broadcast technologies to provide students with virtual field trips for learning about America's rain forests.



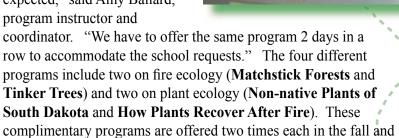
Video-Teleconferencing

Technology Expands The Black Hills National Forest Ecology Programs

South Dakota's middle school science students need to go no further than the school TV to learn about fire and plant ecology from the Black Hills National Forest. Since the fall of 2002, the forest has been offering four different fire and plant ecology programs via video-teleconferencing equipment over the Dakota

Digital Network. The programs, broadcast live from the conference room of the Mystic Ranger District Office in Rapid City, have reached 20 schools and over 1,000 students in 2 school years.

"The programs have been more popular than we expected," said Amy Ballard,

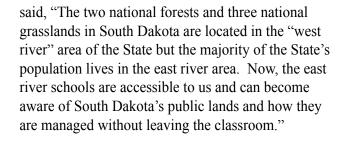


Thanks to a South Dakota Department of Education Star School Grant, the Black Hills National Forest acquired \$20,000 worth of video-teleconferencing equipment and \$6,500 for 2 years of line fees. A high-power "T-1" computer line bridges the forest with the schools. Ballard said, "We are able to stay in our office in Rapid City and talk to up to 10 schools at one time, although five classrooms is best. Because the technology allows

then in the spring, totaling 16 programs per school year.

two-way communication between the instructor and students, it is like physically being in five classrooms at once."

"These programs have expanded the outreach ability of the forest in ways we never could have imagined," said Ballard. Once limited to an approximately 50-mile radius of the forest in western South Dakota before the technology arrived, the forest now reaches the corners of the State. Ballard



The fire and plant ecology programs are based on the USDA Forest Service Fireworks curriculum program (The Fire Box, RMRS-GTR-65, 9/00) developed at the Missoula Technology and Development Center in Montana. Local forest video footage of prescribed burns, biological and chemical control of noxious weeds, and wildfires are added to help students apply the lessons to South Dakota situations.

"Science-based research

and experiments are the basis for the program curriculum," Ballard said. "It is important that the students learn that forest management decisions are based on past and ongoing research. The students need to know how plants grow and interact with their surroundings, including human influences, in order to provide sound management decisions that will ensure sustainable public lands for future generations. Our programs are a great way to help the teachers fulfill curriculum standards with hands-on activities and concepts that apply directly to the environments where the students live. It is a unique and interesting way for the students to learn basic biology and life science concepts," she added.

The outreach opportunities that lie ahead with this

technology are infinite. Ballard hopes to expand the school programs to other States and provide lessons for not only middle school students but grades K-12 and adults as well. "We also need to strengthen what we have started by forming partnerships with national, local, private, and public societies and organizations," she added.

To learn more about these videoteleconferencing programs, please call

Amy Ballard at the Black Hills National Forest at 605-343-1567 or E-mail her at aballard@fs.fed.us.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Training — Eastern/Southern Regions University

For over a decade, the Eastern and Southern Regions University (ESRU) has committed itself to the professional, technical, and personal development of regional employees. It is held the first 2 weeks of March. During the second week, there are many CE/IS courses.

Three courses – Developing a Unit CE/ Interpretation Strategy, Creating Exhibits that Expand the Imagination, and Training Tools for Non-Formal Educators – are offered in response to a survey of training needs of practitioners in the Eastern and Southern Regions.

Developing a Unit CE/Interpretation Strategy

is a 1-day course for those with conservation education and interpretive services program responsibilities, conservation education and interpretive services practitioners, and line officers who oversee these programs.

Creating Exhibits that Expand the

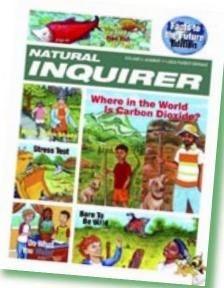
Imagination is an introductory course on designing exhibits and displays. It includes a discussion of the technical approval process and a basic introduction to interpretation, with topics such as planning and message development, targeting your audience, meeting conceptual visions and objectives, contracting, fabrication, and evaluation. A combination of lectures, hands-on/interactive exercises, role playing, and student participation promises to keep the course lively.

Training Tools for Non-Formal Educators is designed to help non-formal educators (people who conduct conservation education activities) to better understand the culture of formal education. The course will help non-formal educators understand the needs, background, language, and priorities of classroom instructors. "Tools" learned at the workshop will help make your environmental education activities and programs more attractive to formal teachers.

Natural Inquirer

New Issue – Due Out This Spring

This issue is a presentation of the 2000 Resources Planning Act Assessment (RPA). The assessment describes the status of the Nation's renewable natural resources and their projected future up to the year 2040. The RPA is a congressionally mandated research project that the USDA



Forest Service produces every

10 years, with a 5-year update. The articles in the upcoming Natural Inquirer include:

One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, No Fish?
Current Situation and Possible Future of Aquatic Animals
Made In the Shade:

Current Situation and Possible Future of U.S. Urban Forests
Born To Be Wild:

Current Situation and Possible Future of Wildlife Stress Test:

Current and Probable Future of Forests and Rangelands
Where In the World is Carbon Dioxide?
Impact of Rising Levels of Carbon Dioxide
Do What You Water:

Current and Possible Future of Fresh Water in the U.S.

This issue is different from previous issues in that the scale of the research is national and projections are made 40 years into the future. Educators will appreciate the large-scale perspective. The issue includes many U.S. maps, which can be used by educators to compare the status and potential future of their own geographic areas with other areas across the United States. For more information and to order copies, contact Babs McDonald at 706-559-4224, bmcdonald@fs.fed.us, or barmac@bigfoot.com.

The estimated distribution date is April 15, 2004.

2004 Garden Club Poster Contest

The USDA Forest Service, through the National Symbols Program and the National Garden Clubs, Inc., sponsors the annual Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster Contest. The Nation's fire prevention and environmental icons promote wildfire prevention education and conservation, emphasizing everyone's role of self-responsibility for our environment.

Teachers and students can increase their environmental awareness by participating in this contest. Each year we invite first through fifth grade students to submit fun, original posters of Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl depicting their themes of "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!" and "Lend a Hand - Care For The Land." This year, in honor of Smokey Bear's 60th Birthday, we asked that the students design and submit posters only for Smokey Bear and his fire prevention message.

All poster entries were submitted through local garden clubs in January. The finalists in each grade level will be selected by a committee of teachers, Forest Service employees, and garden club members in March. This year's national winner will be selected on March 19th by participants at the national flower show.

The national winner will win a free trip to Washington, DC, including round trip airfare and accommodations for four, to participate in a presentation ceremony. Additionally, a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond will be awarded to the first place winner for each of the five grade levels. More information about this contest can be found on www.symbols.gov.

Fundamentals in Environmental Education

The Washington Office Conservation
Education Program sponsored 16
people to take the online workshop entitled
"Fundamentals of Environmental Education" in
the fall of 2003 and will sponsor another 10 in
the spring 2004 course.

The course is offered via the Internet by the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. It can be taken as a workshop for those that are not interested in obtaining credit, or it can be taken for two undergraduate or graduate level credits.

The course was developed in collaboration with national EE experts, using materials produced by organizations such as the North American Association for Environmental Education, World Wildlife Fund, Project Learning Tree, Project WILD, and Project WET.

We received great feedback from the fall 2003 participants. Several thanked us for sponsoring them and let us know that it was a "fabulous course ... also intense and fast paced." Another wrote back to say that it is "a very good learning tool."

Hands on the Land

provides a national network of field classrooms to enhance kindergarten through high school student learning. This interagency program has a growing number of sites across the country. The USDA Forest Service started with The Children's Forest on the San Bernardino National Forest and Diamond Fork Youth Ranch on the Uinta National Forest. Within the last year, we have added the Clear Lake Educational Center on the Hiawatha National Forest and The Cradle of Forestry on the Pisgah National Forest. Close to getting up and running is the Land Between the Lakes, a Forest Service administered National Recreation Site, with more in the wings. For more information, visit http://www.handsontheland.org/.

NEW STASH AT THE CACHE

Forest Connections - Coming SOON

We all love the Smokey Bear educational posters featuring trees, flowers, bugs, etc. We all know that creative people have been using them in lesson plans. We know that teachers and those planning presentations for children don't always have time to create something new. Scholastic, Inc., has come to the rescue again. We have asked them to help create a teaching guide with four activities on habitat, interconnectivity of species, forest health using indicator species, and, of course, fire prevention. These activities have the national science benchmarks and standards of learning figured out for the teacher or presenter. They will be distributed in Junior Scholastic and Science World in 2004. and we will have some available to distribute. We will look to those who use the activities to help us critique them to decide whether any changes need to be made before we have them reprinted.

 $Smokey\ Bear\ {\it turns\ 60\ this\ year\ and}\ {\it the\ National\ Symbols}$

Cache has a product line of items available with the 60th logo. New items added are: lanyards, vinyl stickers, water bottles, and shoelaces. We have also changed some of the current products – rulers, buttons, stickers, note pads, and erasers – to include the 60th logo. The Smokey Bear sticker and Wendelin Artwork key chain are also new.

Native Grasses

Poster - Coming March 2004

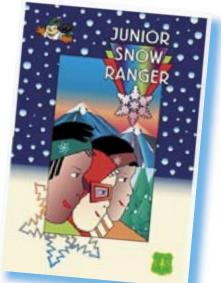
A poster about native grasses, conceived by Charon Geigle with watercolor illustrations by Courtney Couch, will finally be produced. We have contracted with Scholastic, Inc., to produce this poster and distribute it with their mailings to grassland States on March 24th. We will also receive a shipment to distribute. Not only are there beautiful illustrations, but the poster will have activities on the reverse side for teachers and others to share with children.

New Products at the National Symbols Cache

Pin the Hat

on Smokey Bear will be a new cache product. Originally designed by the State of Wisconsin, we have decided to test this popular item. It will be great to use during Fire Prevention Week in October.

We are also working on Woodsy stickers using artwork from the **Woodsy's ABC Book**. Another item being updated is Woodsy's Recreation Tips. A first draft was made by Tinathan Lewis of the Northeastern Area, and we hope to have it done by the end of the calendar year.



Snow
Ranger Program

We have updated the items that a Snow Ranger receives after they complete the booklet and obtained the required adult signatures. The child will receive a neckerchief, ID card, certificate, and pledge card. We are also working with ski areas to send them supplies ahead of time so that they can do an instant recognition if they want to. We had one ski area interested in ordering 1,200 for this season.

WOODSY - AN OWL ON THE PROWL

Woodsy Owl

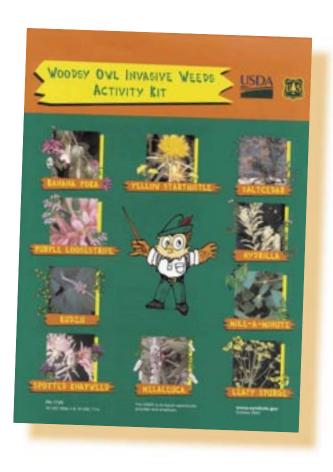
Invasive Weeds Activity Kit

is completed. The package includes a letter to adults explaining how they can use the materials with children, full color activity pages on 10 invasive weed species from across the country, an answer key, and black and white copies of the activity pages. A personal letter from Woodsy to the youngsters is also included.

The Woodsy Owl Invasive Weeds Activity Kit was showcased at the Invasive Weeds Fun Day, February 22, 2004, at the U.S. Botanical Gardens in Washington, DC. This event was sponsored by the United States Botanical Gardens, USDA Forest Service, and the Invasive Weed Awareness Coalition.

These kits can be purchased by agency offices from the National Symbols Cache for \$2.00 each. The purchase price will go directly towards the cost of printing more activity kits. To purchase kits visit **www.symbols.gov**.





Woodsy

Owl Licensing Program

As of the end of December 2003, we have signed three new licensees for Woodsy Owl products, with several waiting to be forwarded shortly. We have seen electronic examples and hope to have some samples rolling into the office. So far the licensees wish to market t-shirts and sweatshirts, infant rompers, buttons, stickers, patches, hats, tote bags, and air fresheners. Our licensing contractor, Lisboa, Inc., is trying to interest one of the big toy companies in offering Woodsy merchandise to retail markets.

CE Reporting System

The Network for Information on Conservation Education, aka the NICE system, is currently in its final development phases. NICE is used for both mandatory and voluntary reporting of conservation education programs and activities

for field and national purposes.

We launched the

798 Partnerships Reported

Individual Volunteers

6%

Private for profit
12%

State or Local Government 23%

Cither Federal Government 8%

NICE system in FY 2003. It is capable of in-time reporting, a product feature that Regions 3 and 9 are taking full advantage of. As of February 2004, we have received information on 491 unique and innovative programs conducted in FY 2003. Forty-seven programs reaching an audience of approximately 215,000 have already been reported for FY 2004

It has been an absolute pleasure working collaboratively with the field to design and develop the system over the past years. We are energized and motivated to complete the fourth and fifth phases of development, which will bring this truly useful system to fruition. As always,

there are monthly training sessions available. For more information about the system, please contact your Conservation Education Coordinator or Katrina Krause at kkrause@fs.fed.us.

To learn about the 1,300-plus conservation education programs and activities entered into the system, please visit: www.na.fs.fed.us/con_reports/search, or to become a new user visit: www.na.fs.fed.us/con_reports.

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Pacific Southwest

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Pacific Northwest Region

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Becky Bittner

Southern Region

Rod Kindlund and Gerald Helton

Eastern Region & Northeastern Area

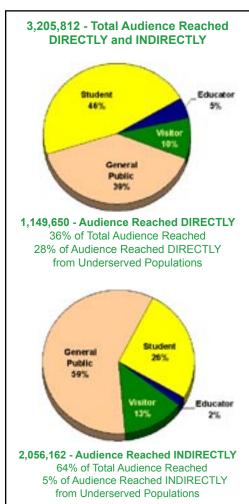
Don Howlett and Theresa Heyer

Tim Sweberg, Rebecca Hoene, and

Jane Gamal-Eldin

Alaska

Kristi Kantola



HEADHUNTERS ARE LOOKING FOR YOU!



We're looking for a few good detailers and their great ideas!

TO OFFER YOUR SERVICES:

Check the categories to the right that interest you. Fill out the form below and FAX it back to us!

TO: Sue Cummings, Program Analyst

FAX: 203-690-5658

The Few, The Proud, The Detailers

Do you have a talent, a skill, a passion, or an idea that you'd love to share?

Would you like to dabble in one of these exciting capacities from your home unit?

Pilot: Help us pilot new programs

Critic: Review projects under development

Artist: Create artwork in a variety of media

Monitor: Evaluate existing programs

Philanthropist: Share materials for nationwide use

Developer: Research content & outline new ideas

Pioneer: Conceptualize new ideas & program

FROM:		
PHONE:	EMAIL:	
ADDRESS:		
DESCRIBE WHAT YOU HAVE IN MIN	D:	
DESCRIBE YOUR SKILLS AND TALE	NTS:	