

Thirtymile Fire Memorial



Directions: From State Route 20 west of Winthrop, Washington, turn north on West Chewuch Road (county road #1213) right across from the Forest Service visitor center. Drive slowly and with extreme caution from here to the memorial. The road is narrow with sharp curves. Travel approximately six miles to a stop sign where the county road joins with Forest Service Road #51. Stay to the left on Road #51 and continue north about 17 miles on a single lane paved road to Andrews Creek trailhead. Here the road turns to a single lane gravel road. The memorial is approximately four miles further, on the left side of the road.

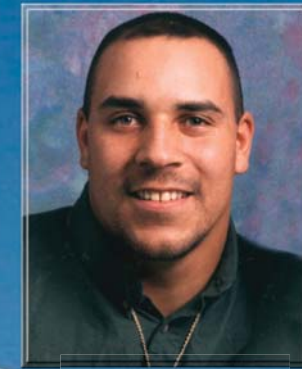
For more information please contact:
Methow Valley Visitor Center: 509-996-4000
Methow Valley Ranger District: 509-996-2266
Okanogan Valley Office: 509-826-3275

We honor their lives by continuing their work



We Will Never Forget

Thirtymile Fire Memorial



Tom Craven



Karen Fitzpatrick



Devin Weaver



Jessica Johnson

On July 10, 2001, high temperatures, low humidity and severe drought conditions caused an abandoned cooking fire to ultimately erupt into a devastating firestorm that swept up the Chewuch River valley, trapping 14 firefighters and two campers.

Four dedicated firefighters perished in a valiant effort to battle the Thirtymile Fire.

The Thirtymile Fire Memorial was constructed at the site where Jessica Johnson, Devin Weaver, Karen FitzPatrick and Tom Craven died in the Chewuch River valley on the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests, as a lasting honor to their memory.



Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests



Tommy Lee Craven

Tommy Lee Craven was a well respected member of the community; an exceptional athlete at Cle Elum Roslyn High School, the College of the Redwoods and Central Washington University where he graduated in 1997.

His career with the U.S. Forest Service began in 1989 on the Cle Elum Ranger District initial attack fire suppression crew, the year before he graduated from high school. Tom spent five seasons in Cle Elum, two summers on the initial attack crew, and three seasons on the district fire engine.

In 1994, Tom transferred to the Naches Ranger District where he worked on both engines and initial attack crews. He became a permanent employee in 1999 as assistant foreman on the initial attack crew.

Tom was a family man; son, brother, husband, and father, leaving behind wife Evelyn, with whom he was making a home filled with love for daughter Tomisha, and son Tshaun. Tom was always concerned about his wife, parents, brothers and sister, but he was extremely proud of Tomisha and Tshaun, who brought joy to him every day.

Tom was a man of many endeavors whether he was working, socializing, deaying, or playing football. His enthusiasm, sense of humor, and strength of character made Tom a person no one will ever forget!

Tom was a very hard worker as evidenced by what he achieved in his life. When Tom was helping someone with a job he would work side by side with him or her until it was done, never quitting or giving up, no matter how difficult or time consuming the task.

When Tom died on the Thirtymile Fire, he taught us many of life's lessons in a very short amount of time. He will always be in the hearts of his friends and family. Men like Tom Craven come around once in a lifetime and we were fortunate to have known 'Big Poppa.'



Karen Lee FitzPatrick

Karen Lee FitzPatrick, born December 27, 1982, died July 10, 2001, battling the blaze at the Thirtymile fire, near Winthrop, WA.

She was the youngest of the four firefighters who perished, only four weeks out of high school. Karen was often the youngest in her class, earning the nickname "Baby Karen", or "BK." Although she was often the youngest among her peers, she often excelled in the area of music, art, academics and sports. Since 1999, Karen had been a member of the girl's soccer team, The Bobcats, who won the American Cup in Seattle in 1994, for the Youth Soccer Association.

In 1997-98, she was the drum major for the West Valley Panther Band. Karen was also a member of the National Honor Society at West Valley High School, where she graduated June 8, 2001.

Karen had plans to enroll at Yakima Community College in the Fall of 2001, to study Fire Science, and eventually hoped to become an EMT. At the Senior breakfast, Karen was honored to receive the "Spirit" award, and she was also voted by her peers "Most likely to be the next Martha Stewart." Karen was known for her gourmet cooking and baking, much enjoyed by all!

A notable weight-lifter, she also received a medal at the women's lift-a-thon in May of 2001. Karen was the music director at the small church where she attended, and was known for her beautiful singing voice.

Amidst all these talents, the thing she was most known for was her vibrant and alive faith in God, which shown like a lighthouse from her life. Karen had written on the wall of her room these words, "Jesus let me love you with my life." This she truly did, every day of her life, and even now, in death . . . her memory goes on!



Devin Weaver

Devin Weaver was a thoughtful, quiet, genuinely kind young man. He possessed tremendous insight for a person of any age. He had the rare understanding of the inherent value of trying his hardest. He enjoyed the pride of accomplishment gained from doing the best he possibly could at any challenge he accepted. But still he was most proud, in his unspoken way, of the gentility and kindness that marked his character.

Devin was the most intelligent person in his family. He had a penchant for abstract thought that complemented his natural intellectual curiosity. His quick dry sense of humor left a constant smile on his face, described by a friend as "the smile of someone who knows something you don't."

Devin was a courageous man. Courageous not because he lacked fears, but because of how he reacted to them. He never let his fears slow him down. In spite of them he constantly demanded more of himself, he always set his bar of accomplishment higher and higher. Even though the thought of living in Seattle terrified him, he enrolled at the University of Washington fall quarter of 2001, and planned to stay until he had completed his graduate work in engineering.

Devin spent his youth building the foundation for his adulthood. While he was unable to conquer every challenge he accepted, he understood that the ones he did accept, rather than those he conquered, were the true measure of his character. And so it was that he took the job with the Forest Service, intending to stack more sticks, to dig more line than any other full squad.

Such a man is rare, such a son, irreplaceable. And while his loss irrevocably diminishes our lives, it's hard to imagine a better ally to proceed us in the next life or a sweeter reunion when next we meet. We all love you son!



Jessica L. Johnson

Jessica L. Johnson was a special daughter, sister, friend and comrade. She was strong in body, mind and spirit. She loved her family and friends and they loved her and always will. She was an American girl with attributes of kindness, compassion, athleticism, dependability, fortitude, loyalty, zeal, humor, tenderness and thoughtfulness. She was raised in the country and she developed a love for nature and animals. She enjoyed many activities; camping, fishing, water skiing, boating, hiking, swimming, and running. She loved life and it's challenges. She lived each day to the fullest.

In just 19 years she accomplished more than many adults. At the time of her death Jessica was an employee of the U.S. Forest Service. She was a junior at Central Washington University majoring in Food Science and Nutrition. In 1999 until the time of her death she volunteered as a firefighter for the West Valley Fire District of Yakima County. She worked for the Department of Natural Resources as a firefighter during the summer of 2000. Jessica loved being a firefighter; it meant everything to her to help other people. She had set many goals for her young life and she was true to herself.

Her unselfish dedication to serving others, never asking for anything in return but always willing to give, makes us proud to honor her as our daughter. The grief and the loss felt by her family and friends is beyond words. Jessica was the sunshine of her family's life for 20 years. That love will remain in our hearts as long as we shall live. We will cherish her memory forever and we will never forget.