

# NHS goes wild

By Marie Galyean  
Idaho Press-Tribune

Spring break. Some college students head for hot Florida beaches and may be seen in newspapers and on television reports frolicking their days away on the sand.

But recently, 29 Nampa High School Science Club students set off on an adventure of a very different sort — a backpacking trek into the vast Idaho wilderness area. The group was led by seven advisers: Rusty Taylor, Fred Hill, George and Charlotte Gunn, Wally Pankratz, Genille Steiner (a science teacher at South Junior High School,) and Bill Chivers (a parent whose son, David, was on the trip).

Three foreign exchange students went along too, including Mariska Meiring from the Netherlands, Isao Miyoka from Japan and Bettina Lamm from Denmark.

"For all three it was a chance to see a facet of the U.S. which most Americans know only from pictures," said Charlotte Gunn, "the wilderness that helps explain what America was and is. For the rest of us, it was a chance to share informally at rest stops and around the campfire our diverse cultures and appreciation of each other as human beings."

Intensive preparation went into the trip, according to Taylor, beginning almost a month before departure with classes in outdoor skills, equipment, safety and first aid, physical conditioning, emergency shelters, trail etiquette and natural history.

Finally the departure day arrived and after busing to Cascade, the group was flown by Ray Arnold and Arnold Aviation to Cabin Creek, a remote spot in the Middle Fork of the Salmon River area.

When the Dutch student saw the small planes she was shocked. "We're going to die," she declared, but she gamely boarded and flew safely away.

"This type of wilderness experience separates Science Club members from the safety and comfort of home, family, friends and routine and temporarily moves them to the unknown

environment of the wilderness," said Taylor.

"In a mountain wilderness setting, plenty of the right kind of challenges are found. Each individual forms a personal relationship with the environment, self-imposed limitations are left behind and positive aspirations take their place," Taylor commented.

Leaving Cabin Creek, the group headed for Taylor Ranch and the University of Idaho Wilderness Research Center where they found humane bobcat traps that catch the animals unharmed. The cats are tranquilized, measured, weighed, ear-marked, radio collared and then released.

They also learned about another research project that concerned the competition for range lands between the mountain sheep, elk and deer.

The next adventure took the students to the confluence of Big Creek and the Middle Fork of the Salmon River at the Waterfall Creek camp. Taylor said a few members crossed Big Creek on a cable crossing and hiked up to Soldier Bar to see the grave of Private Harry Eagan who was killed in the Idaho Sheepeater Indian War.

"At Waterfall Creek Camp," said Taylor, "the club made another hike to the Wilson Creek campsite. One challenge along the way was a gut-buster climb up and over Rattlesnake Creek Summit." The climb was worth the effort, however, because on the other side of the summit was Rattlesnake Cave where Indian pictographs were observed, he said.

The final day of backpacking was from Wilson Creek to the Flying "B" Ranch where the hikers were thrilled to find hot showers, real beds and home cooked meals, said Taylor.

The next day Arnold Aviation arrived to return the tired adventurers to civilization.

"Each day of the trip new challenges were met successfully," reported Taylor. Flora and fauna abounded profusely and there were sightings of elk, deer, sheep and eagles.

Taylor said he felt this was one of the most successful Science Club trips taken into the Idaho wilderness.



Off they go, airborne with Arnold Aviation, with West Mountain the background



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Bettina Lamm from Denmark hoists her backpack as she prepares to head into the wilderness with the Nampa High School Science Club on its recent trip into the mountains of Idaho.



Mike Moran stops for a water break during a backpacking expedition in the Idaho wilderness.

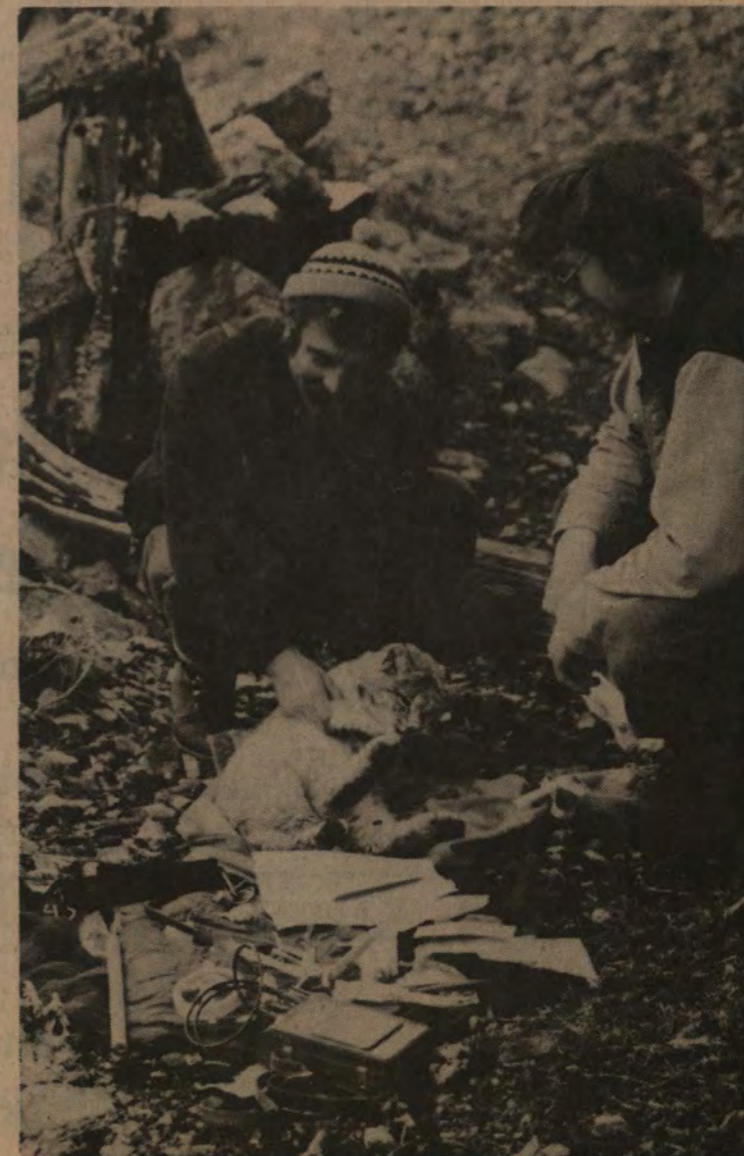


East meets West as Isao Miyoka, a foreign exchange student from Japan, learns about horses at the Flying B Ranch.

Photos by Fred Hill and Rusty Taylor



Rusty Taylor leads the climb up Rattlesnake grade on the Middlefork trip, as some of the hardier members of the trip follow. On the other side of the summit is Rattlesnake Cave, where Indian pictographs may be observed.



Bobcats are caught in humane traps, weighed, measured, marked and radio collared for a U of I study program.

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