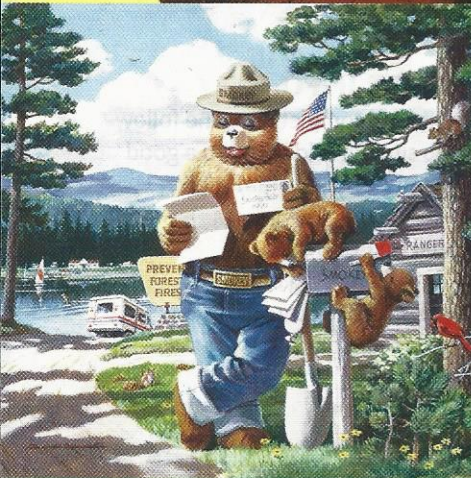


SMOKEY IS COUNTING ON YOU ...

To Make Sure Your Fire Is Completely Extinguished.

Did you know that 9 out of 10 forest fires are started by people. And probably, most of these fires could have been prevented if everyone followed this simple rule. Drown the fire with water making sure the entire area is covered with water. Stir with a shovel. And then drown the fire again. Remember, only you can prevent forest fires.

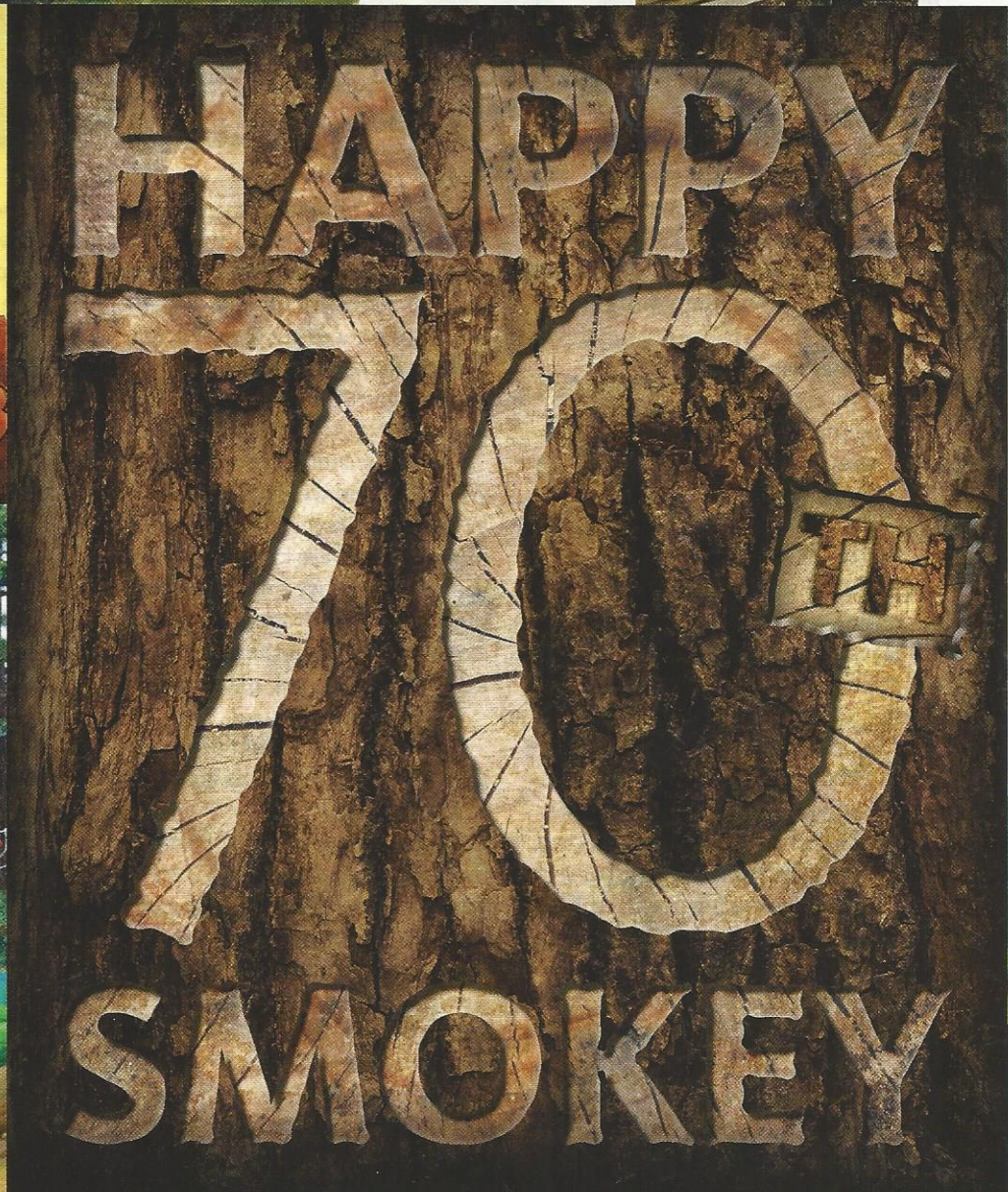
Ad Council



Protect Our Forest Friends.

Only You Can Prevent Wildfires.

Ad Council

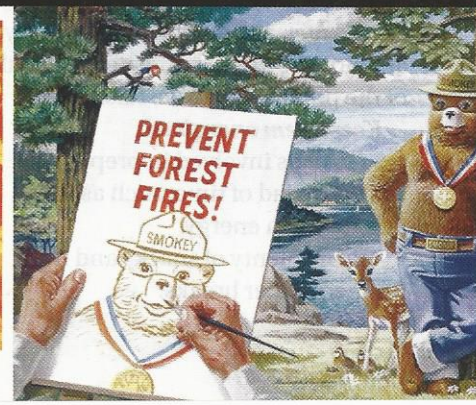


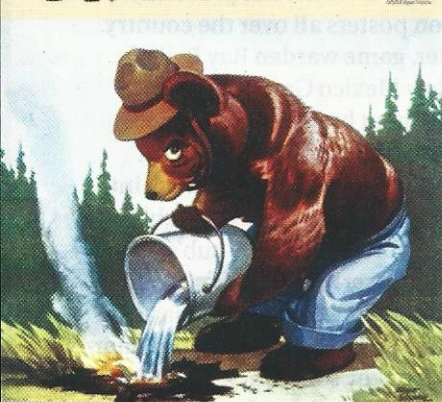
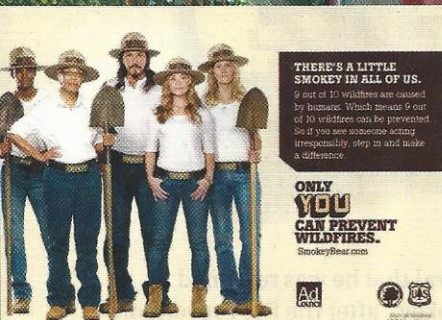
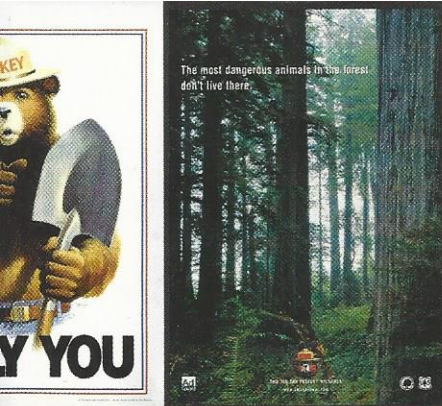
PLEASE FOLKS, be extra careful this year!

Remember-Only you can PREVENT FOREST FIRES!

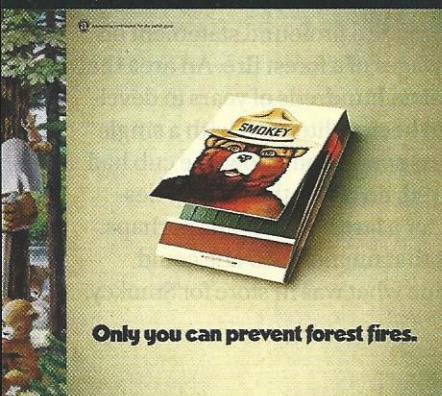
OUR MOST SHAMEFUL WASTE!

Remember-Only you can PREVENT FOREST FIRES!





SMOKEY SAYS—
Care will prevent
9 out of 10 forest fires!



BY HENRY M. HOLDEN

He is recognized around the world and known almost as well as the American flag. He is one of the most famous advertising symbols on the planet. He is so popular that the government gave him his own ZIP code (20252), and enacted legislation to protect his name and product line.

His name is Smokey Bear.

By age 70 most people are retired, or at least semi-retired. Smokey, however, approaches his 70th birthday on August 9, still fully “employed” as he continues to disseminate his powerful fire prevention message.

In 1944 Smokey first appeared as a full-grown bear on the sketch board of Albert Staehle, an artist working for the U.S. Forest Service. Six years later, a flesh-and-blood, real live bear came to represent the cause.

The cartoon version of Smokey arrived on the scene when Americans were in the throes of World War II. The country needed huge quantities of timber. U.S. armed forces used enough wood to construct 9.5 million average-size houses. Gun stocks alone consumed 50 million board feet.

Officials knew this valuable natural resource was vulnerable to enemy attack, saboteurs, man-made accidental fires, and the whims of nature. Smokey’s original message, “Care will prevent 9 out of 10 fires,” was changed after the war to “Only YOU can prevent forest fires.”

When the U.S. Forest Service and the War Advertising Council first laid out a fire prevention program, it did not include Smokey. Early campaign posters were colorful and featured short, witty slogans, such as “Careless matches aid the Axis.” People were told their efforts would save timber and help win the war.

As the campaign gained momentum, the council sought ways to give it more appeal. What would be more natural than an animal asking humans to help protect its home? Coincidentally, a popular movie character had narrowly escaped death in a forest fire; Walt Disney’s Bambi became the first to carry the fire prevention message.

Bambi’s strong appeal convinced officials that the use of an animal would pay dividends. The character, however, was on loan to the Forest Service from Disney for only a year, so the search began for

America’s iconic bear still works to prevent fires.

a replacement. While a fawn was compelling, perhaps a larger animal would be more convincing. Lovable Bambi could not put out forest fires, nor could chipmunks, squirrels, or any other small creatures.

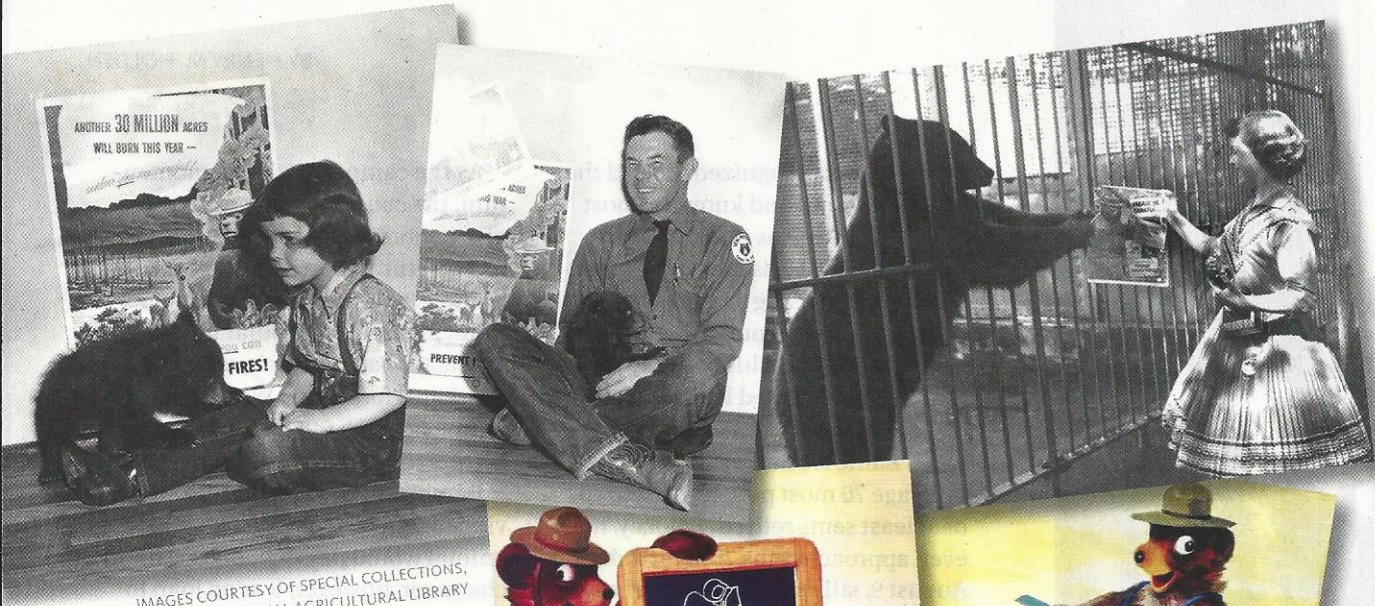
When someone suggested an animal that could stand erect and look like it could put out a fire, a bear came to mind. It had the qualities of strength and confidence, yet projected something gentle in its face.

Smokey (the advertising symbol) was born August 9, 1944. A Forest Service letter noted that he “should have a short, brown nose like a panda. His fur should be brown or black and he should look intelligent and appealing with a slightly quizzical expression. To make him more believable, he should be wearing a forest ranger’s hat.” Artist Staehle’s

continued »

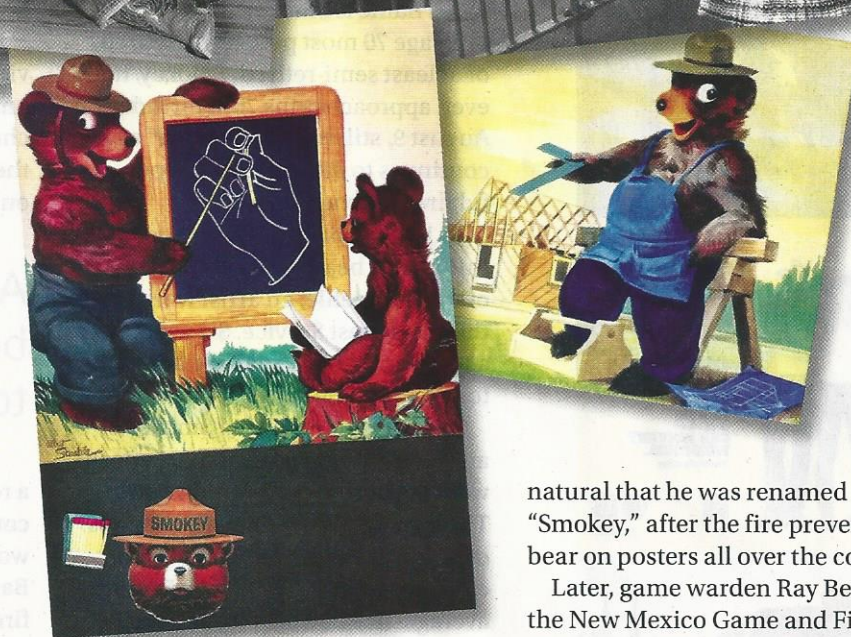
Smokey Bear, a symbol created for the U.S. Forest Service to spread the word about forest fire prevention, has appeared in numerous public service campaigns since 1944. His original message, “Care will prevent 9 out of 10 fires,” has been modified over the years.

IMAGES COURTESY OF US FOREST SERVICE AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY



IMAGES COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS,
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY

Judy Bell, daughter of
New Mexico game warden
Ray Bell, helped care for young
Smokey; she later visited the bear
at his permanent home, the
National Zoo, in Washington, D.C.
(above, left to right). Early posters
depicted a more stylized bear (right).



first few sketches did not show
Smokey wearing pants. His blue
jeans and shovel were added later
to improve his image as a real fire-
fighter in a working outfit. Smokey
was named in honor of an assistant
chief of the New York City Fire
Department, "Smokey Joe" Martin.

Rudy Wendelin became Smokey's
official artist in 1946. Over the years,
the bear's face and personality gradu-
ally changed, but his ranger hat, blue
jeans, shovel, and kind, yet confident
manner became fixed firmly in the
public's mind. Wendelin's versions
of Smokey varied from humorous to
serious, but always sympathetic.

During the first five years of his exis-
tence, Smokey was credited with pre-
venting more than \$10 billion in U.S.
forest fire losses. Smokey became so
popular that he was recognized from
Canada to Mexico. In Mexico he was
called "Simon el Oso," Simon the Bear.

Smokey came to life as a real bear
following a chain of events that began
with an accident in the Capitan

Mountains, in the Lincoln National
Forest of New Mexico, one warm
spring day in 1950.

It had not rained for weeks. A spark
or a carelessly tossed cigarette ignited
a small patch of dried grass. It took a
while before a forest ranger in a look-
out tower spotted the smoke. By then,
it was too late. The forest became a
blazing inferno.

While most animals ran for their
lives, a black bear cub sought refuge
in a tree. Soldiers from Fort Bliss who
had been fighting the fire found the
dazed cub clinging to the tree, which
was scorched black. The soldiers
brought the cub — severely burned
on the paws and hind legs — back to
camp. Briefly he was nicknamed "Hot
Foot Teddy."

Because the cub had been found
in a burned-out forest, it was only

natural that he was renamed
"Smokey," after the fire prevention
bear on posters all over the country.

Later, game warden Ray Bell of
the New Mexico Game and Fish
Department brought him home
to nurse him back to health. Bell
planned to release the cub back into
the forest after he gained weight.
But he soon realized the cub's burns
were more serious than first thought,
so he took him to a veterinarian.

Bell's supervisor also took an inter-
est in Smokey's recovery. He gave Bell
permission to take a photographer
back to the spot where the cub had
been found.

The photographs shot that day were
key to the development of the Smokey
brand. The desolate, blackened land-
scape made a profound statement on
the ravages of a forest fire. An area that
had taken hundreds of years to devel-
op had been obliterated with a single
careless spark. Somehow, the cub had
survived, an omen that he was des-
tined for a larger role in life, perhaps.
But at that moment, no one could
imagine what was in store for Smokey.

The cub, however, was not doing well. The vet had treated his burns, but the shock associated with the trauma slowed his recovery. Smokey would not eat and was losing weight.

Bell's 4-year-old daughter, Judy, heard her father discussing the cub's plight and asked if she could take him home and feed him. Bell reasoned that such a move could not worsen the situation, so he agreed.

The bear received love and attention from the minute he arrived at the Bells' house. He ate almost immediately from Mrs. Bell's hand and in a few days began to show signs of improvement. The cub alternately slept with Bell's daughter and the family dog. The bear got along so well with the dog that the Bells joked about Smokey thinking he was a canine.

Unfortunately, Ray Bell was not one of Smokey's favorite people. Bell had the thankless job of changing Smokey's bandages. For a while, Smokey's burned areas would hurt and bleed each time the game warden did his duty. Smokey developed an open dislike for Bell and never passed up an opportunity to bite him, which he did frequently.

After many weeks, Smokey's wounds healed. His bandages came off, and he was officially turned over to the Forest Service. During his recuperation, Smokey's fame had spread, and the orphaned cub became the Forest Service's real

Smokey. The agency flew him to the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., which became his permanent home. A sign declared, "A gift to the school children of America." The cub was soon a national hero.

People forgot that the original Smokey on the poster had been full-grown. Millions of Americans thought Smokey started life as a cub. Children's questions about his daily zoo appearance sans blue jeans and ranger hat were easily answered by officials, who said, "Who wears work clothes at home?"

By 1960, with Smokey about 10 years old and in his middle years, zoo and Forest Service officials decided it was time to find him a mate so an offspring could carry on the family name and fame. The bear selected to become Mrs. Smokey was an 18-month-old female named Goldie.

Goldie was also an orphan from a fire in New Mexico and had been living in a zoo. After months of careful introductions, the bears were allowed to share the same quarters. Nature, however, did not cooperate. Officials became worried. How could they carry on the tradition of a real Smokey without a baby? Smokey was the biggest attraction at the National Zoo, and he was invaluable in public relations. Someone then suggested that they find a new cub.

An intense search produced another orphaned cub. And, as if history were repeating itself, the cub was

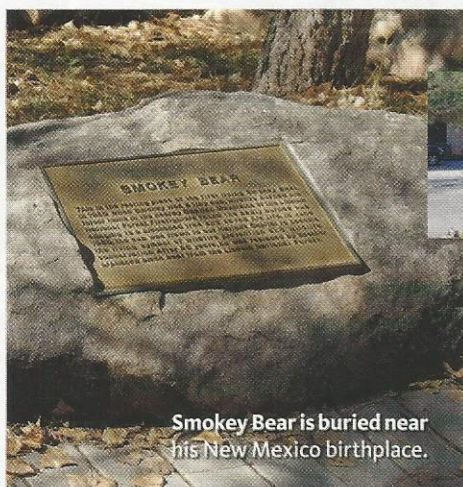
found in the Lincoln National Forest, Smokey's old home. The new cub, fortunately, was not the victim of a fire. He was christened Little Smokey and was brought to Washington in 1971.

Smokey, Goldie, and Little Smokey quickly became a family unit and made many public appearances together at the zoo.

As the years passed, Smokey slowed down and did not always come out to greet visitors. Age took its toll, and arthritis affected his mobility. Had he lived in the wild, he surely would have been the victim of a younger, stronger bear. But as a national hero, Smokey was allowed to spend his final days in a dignified way, befitting his station.

On May 2, 1975, Smokey was officially retired from the Forest Service, and Little Smokey, who wasn't so little anymore, was named his official successor. Old Smokey died at age 26 in November 1976. He was flown to New Mexico for burial near his birthplace, at what is now Smokey Bear Historical Park.

His important message endures. The phrase created in 1947 by the Ad Council, "Only YOU can prevent forest fires," was modified in 2001 to "Only YOU can prevent wildfires." According to the council, Smokey Bear and his message are recognized by 95 percent of adults and 77 percent of children. **FMC**



SMOKEY BEAR'S LEGACY

Smokey Bear Historical Park is in Capitan, New Mexico, approximately 2.5 hours southeast of Albuquerque. Exhibits and a short movie in the visitors center focus on forest health and

ecology, fires, fire prevention history, and more. Outdoor features include an exhibit illustrating New Mexico's vegetative life zones, an amphitheater, a playground and picnic area, and the final resting place of the first living Smokey Bear. The park is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and a small admission fee is charged. For more information, phone (575) 354-2748 or visit www.smokeybearpark.com.

IMAGES COURTESY OF NEW MEXICO TOURISM DEPARTMENT (ABOVE) AND SMOKEY BEAR HISTORICAL PARK (INSET).