

In the old days, when you approached a lumber camp, you began to feel the tempo, the intensity, the turmoil. It was something like a war zone. You could see loggers everywhere, going somewhere, coming back. There were always locomotives, moving, backing out, switching. You'd hear the sound of the pop-off valves of escaping steam. And the smells of crude oil. There was always excitement there.

They had the old highball days. You really traveled. One tough, old hook tender told a new man: "We don't walk around here. We don't run around here. We fly." There were frequent accidents — broken arms, broken hips, men just killed outright.

The camp was a little company town. They had some fellas that they called Wobblies, organizers.\* They tarred and feathered them up here at Big Creek and made them walk down the tracks. My mother remembers that. She was broken-hearted about what they did to those men.

#### Who's they?

The company men who were afraid of losing their jobs. They had no protection, so they took it out on the Wobblies. Old-timers used to talk about firings. They had three crews: one working, one coming from the labor pool, and one going. Work was tough. The methods weren't safe. They were running the men too hard, driving them, working them too long hours and too many days. If the company didn't like you for one reason or another, they fired you.

My dad was a union man. Today, all of us loggers belong to the union. My sister still has her union book at home. As a young girl, she was a waitress in the cookhouse. It was a large dining room. They rang the gong, and that was time to eat. The food was good, and they ate heartily. You hardly saw a fat logger in those days. They were all rawboned. It was very physical. The machinery has taken over so much of that today.

I can remember yet the fallers that were falling trees. The saw, not a power saw, made a beautiful *swish, swish, swish, swish*, a rhythm to it. These men had no shirts on, just down to their wool underwear. Each one with a big chew of tobacco in his mouth. One stopped and looked at his partner and said: "Get off and let me ride for awhile." Meaning he was doing all the work. (Laughs)

Each man excelled in his own part. Your value as a faller meant not only how much timber you could put down but how much you could save. Long before the tree ever came down, you would hear them holler: "TIMMBERRR!" (He sings it, and his voice fades to a last dying note) That call would go down the hill and all through the canyons.

The timber is getting so much smaller now. Logging can't be compared to what it was before. Something wild, something beautiful, something free, it's gone. I've been on the hills here and can see so far away, all this logged-off land. It is almost impossible for me to comprehend that mere men destroyed all this timber. Every foot of that ground has been stomped by men. What happened to all that timber? It's one of the few things in the world that boggles my imagination.

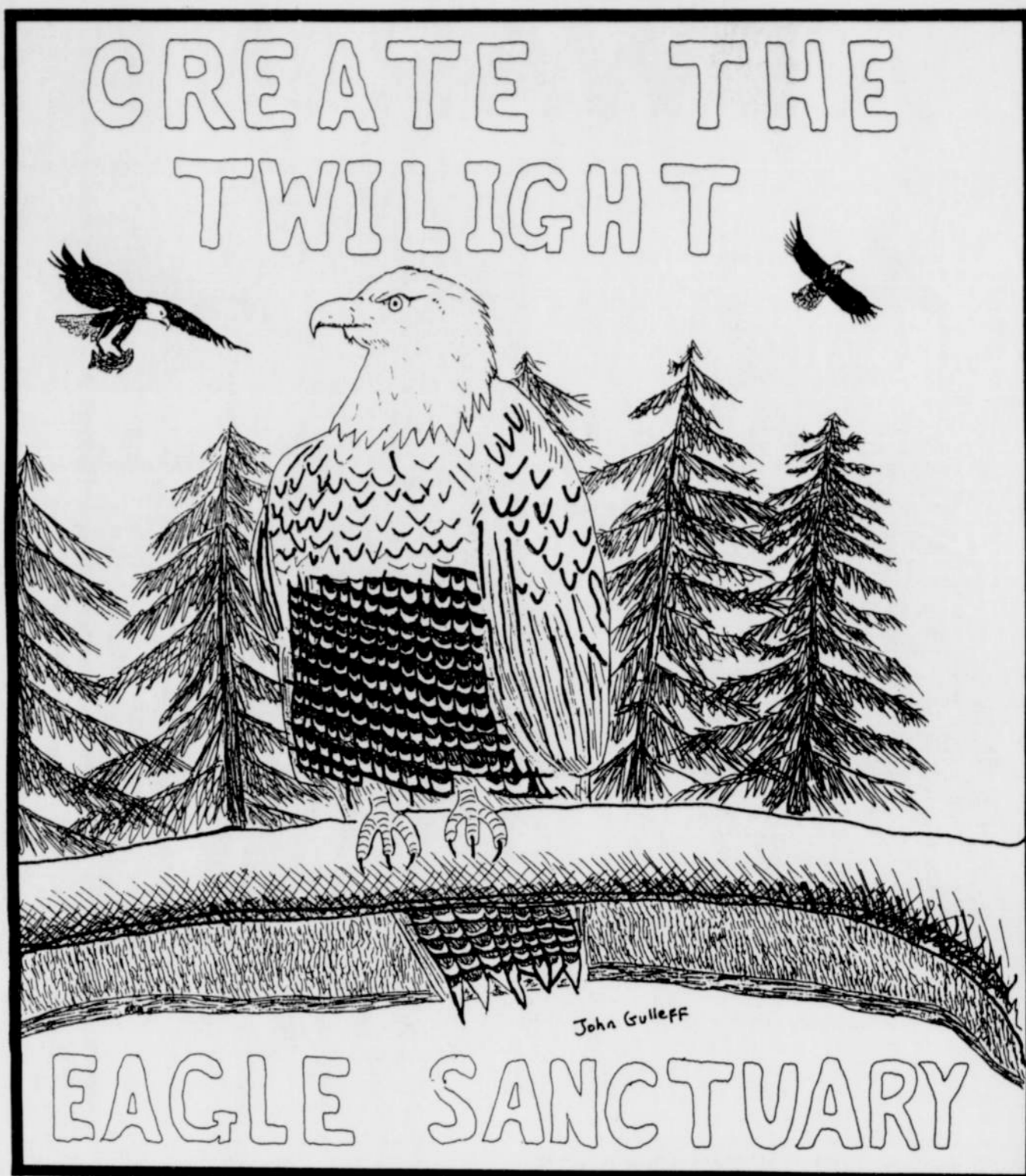
Sure, some of the animals are dangerous to you. They are after your life. They've crippled many guys and killed people. They're wild in another way now. They're wild from being pursued by people in 4-wheel drives, campers. I don't kill anymore. I was very young when I quit. When I'd kill something and watch it die and look at the eyes, I knew I'd taken what attracted me in the first place — a life. What did I have but a carcass? And I wasn't hungry.

I just quit killing because I took the beauty of the animal — the deer or elk or bear. If it was a duck, I'd want to smooth the feathers when it was dead and stiffened up, that it wouldn't look obscene. The animals aren't wild anymore, just pursued.

We've just gone through a cow elk season, to thin them out. The forestry department said there were too many, too much damage to young trees. They were killing these elk at a time when it was an absolute disgrace. The vegetation was completely frozen out. The cows, heavy with calves, would bunch up in the timber and lie there very still, conserving the body fat and heat to get through this starving period. Yet the hunters are out there pursuing them.

I have a little sanctuary down here, and I'd see big beautiful honkers coming in, Canadian geese. They're free.

\*Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), which fought bloody union wars organizing Pacific Northwest logging camps in the first decades of the 20th century.



TWILIGHT EAGLE SANCTUARY POSTER BY JOHN GULLEFF (1989)

I don't pinion them. To pinion a bird is like cutting off the leg of a child to keep it from running around. It turns you off to see them drop, a leg spinning, dangling on a thick piece of skin, shot by hunters. Guns go out there and shoot too many. There's no time to pick 'em up. They're thrown away.

Before I die, I'd like to hear the howl of timber wolves that used to exist here in our woods. We have too damn many hunters and no wolves. We need more cougars, less hunters.

Bears are fair game too. When a bear damages a tree, what he actually does is set that tree to produce more seeds. I've taken 10-foot stumps and found in the very center bear marks that the tree may have received 500 years ago, just as good as they are today. So bears aren't all that bad. We asked the timber company how many goddamn bears will you allow? I'm a believer that the animals and birds have some inherent right to the land. The man can't say: "I own this. Everything else off."

We had a ruckus with a pack of houndsmen over the killing of bears. Killing 'em left and right. Hounds are worth thousands of dollars, and the houndsmen are really well organized with a powerful lobby. It was a fist fight. Fortunately, I'm able to take care of myself pretty well.

There was a pickup truck with a bunch of guys in it. As I was walking to my truck, one of the fellows motioned me over. We'd had bad blood many times before. He once knocked on my mother's door and told her: "If any of your sons touches one of my hounds, I'll kill every goddamn one of 'em." I saw him again when he was found guilty of killing bears out of season.

Outside the courthouse we almost came to blows. This time, as I drove up, he punched me right in the face, through the window. I piled out and was able to neutralize the fellow. I had him about one foot apart, my face from his. He spat a mouthful of snooze right in my face. Immediately, I changed the look of his mouth with a good smash in the face. He got back in the truck, and I've had no trouble with him since.

I've been threatened, telephone calls to be killed. It was so tense for a while that I had to carry a pistol. Many times I'm alone in the woods, running a big cat, miles back there. Houndsmen are on these roads. They're all equipped with knives, rifles. It would be the easiest thing in the world to put a bullet through my head over in some canyon.

Sometimes people are hesitant to make a move, even though they know it's right. I was walkin' up this road with a company man. Lo and behold, here were some beautiful big bear tracks. She's in here, an old sow, probably got some cubs. We can't let the houndsmen see her. They have a network. One guy tells another, and down they come with their hounds. This company man — he had about number 10 size shoes — was goin' up the road, scuffin' out bear tracks. (Laughs) He was protectin' the bears when his job said get rid of 'em. Innermost in many men are subconscious desires they don't allow to surface.

I only express my thoughts to people who understand what I'm talkin' about. Many don't care, don't feel, but there are surprising ones who will help. I got a letter from a man who works for a big lumber company. It says: "You stepped on my toes many times. I'm ready to retire now, and I want you to know I'm for you. I don't care to let you know who I am because they'll send me off to Siberia."

Many people's voices are stilled because of the position they're in. I happen to be a single man, and it'll be pretty hard to starve me. (Laughs) So I can say what the hell I want. When my father died, I quit the woods and took an early retirement. I log my own place.

The chance to live my life out without being a rich man is probably the greatest gift that any person could ever receive. I have no feeling that I've ever been beaten or I'm a poor man. I'm rich in many things. I feel I have a responsibility while I'm on this earth to preserve some beauty and pass it on to the next generation. Because if I do not pass something on, these children and the children's children will have a barren world.

I believe that only by being in the presence of beauty and the great things in the world around us can man eventually get the goddamn hatred of wanting to kill each other out of his system. We begin to understand that we're only in this world such a short time it's incredible we should spend these few years hating and killing each other.

## REQUIEM FOR KEWPIE

BY REX ZIAK

Bob Ziak's nephew Rex Ziak, who lives in Ilwaco, Washington, is an award-winning photographer and has been instrumental in throwing light upon the part the north side of the Columbia River played in the Lewis & Clark Expedition when it spent the winter of 1805-06 in the Pacific Northwest. He wrote and delivered a eulogy to his uncle at Kewpie's funeral, August 22, 1990.

I was asked by my family to say a few words about Kewpie. It is difficult to do this because it is difficult to believe he is dead. He had been here all my life and I naturally believed he would be here for the rest of my life. As the years went by some men got old, stooped over, and showed their age. But Kewpie seemed to age much slower. At the age of 73 he was still strong as a bull, wise as an owl and clever as a fox.

I am happy to see that so many friends could be here. However, I naturally think about all of Kewpie's friends who could not attend. In the hills a black bear strips huckleberries from a bush and mourns Kewpie's death. Over the Columbia River an eagle teaches its young how to fish and mourns Kewpie's death. The geese that will return here from the north and seek refuge in the Knappa Slough mourn Kewpie's death. They know they have lost their very best friend. They realize that no one else will defend them. Kewpie spoke for the animals. He was the voice of the voiceless. The animals are crying because they know — They know if a logger is killed the boss just hires another logger. When a lawyer drops dead you just find another lawyer. When a senator breathes his last you just elect another to take his place. But the animals know that no one here or anywhere else will follow Kewpie. After all, how many here would risk their lives for the life of a bear? How many of us would dare confiscate the guns from poachers? There was only one Kewpie, and there will be no more.

Kewpie was a naturalist, a logger, a lover, a poet. He was a historian, an archeologist, an anthropologist and a story teller. He could do any of these as equally well as the other. But mostly Kewpie was a warrior. A warrior in our society is confusing. When we hear of a warrior we naturally think of a soldier. But a soldier is not a warrior. A soldier is sent into battle, whereas a warrior seeks battle. Kewpie was a warrior. Perhaps one of the last. He was constantly in a fight. He seemed to thrive on conflict. He fought with big timber companies. He fought with his neighbors. He fought with poachers, trespassing teenagers and industrialists. He even fought with his own family. He constantly sought war. We do not understand this. We cannot understand this. Warriors do not live in this world with our ideals and values.

But Kewpie showed us what a fighter can do. Kewpie showed us the power of public opinion. Kewpie showed us what an individual can do. In Kewpie's name, please keep up the fight. Speak up about injustices. Speak out when you see some wrong. Defend nature and our environment. That is what Kewpie would have wanted us to do.

We will all remember things about Kewpie. It is unlikely we will forget them. Whether it was his deep voice, his poetic words, his thick powerful hands or his animated stories, Kewpie will live on.

