



Summers of Fire

by Linda Strader

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Linda Strader is one of the first women hired on a fire crew with the U.S. Forest Service. A naïve twenty-year-old in the mid 1970s, she discovers fighting wildfires is challenging—but in a man's world, they became only one of the challenges she would face. Battling fire is exhilarating, yet exhausting; the discrimination real and sometimes in her face. *Summers of Fire* is an adventure story that honestly recounts the seven years she ventures into the heart of fires that scorch the land, vibrant friendships that fire the soul, and deep love that ends in devastating heartbreak.

From the author

In 2011, if someone had told me I'd write a book, I would've told them they had mistaken me for someone else. For a real writer. My new

neighbor was the person that instilled the idea of writing about my experiences. He'd come over to help me with a repair, and spotted on a wall a collage of photos depicting my firefighting days. When I told him I used to be a Forest Service firefighter, he was impressed, and suggested I write a book about my adventures. That suggestion stuck. Maybe revisiting those times would help me feel better. After all, they held not only fond memories, but also plenty of excitement and challenges; both of which I loved, and others found interesting.

Discussion Questions

1. Why has little changed in the way of acceptance for women in men's jobs?
2. Should women be accepted in all jobs traditionally held by men? For example, military combat.
3. What can be done to help young women recognize abusive behavior in relationships before it gets out of hand?
4. What can organizations do to prevent discrimination and sexual abusive?
5. Is there anything that can be done to change the attitudes towards women working in men's fields?

About the author

Linda Strader is a landscape architect in southern Arizona, the very same area where she became one of the first women on a Forest Service fire crew in 1976. Her publishing history includes many web articles on her expertise of landscaping with desert plants. A local newspaper, the *Green Valley News*, printed an article about her firefighting adventures, which led the magazine, *Wildfire Today*, to publish an excerpt. The article generated interest in her speaking on this topic to several clubs, including the American Association of University Women.