



Fish and Wildlife Retiree Association

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2012



2012 Board of Directors

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Kalispell and clear your calendars for the fall of 2013. In the interim, give us your ideas for interesting agenda items and possible field trips. This promises to be one of the best reunions ever. Hope to see you there.

Retirees in Action

We hope to make this a regular feature of our newsletter so if you have a story or a photo you think might be of interest to your fellow retirees, please send it to Jim McKeivitt at jimmymac@usamedia.tv. We will try to include at least one story or photo each edition.

Dave Paullin, who retired from Sacramento, California and moved to Sheridan, Wyoming, seems to be enjoying retirement quite well; the pronghorn and the moose, not so much.

Reunion 2013 - Where and When

Our membership has spoken and their choice for our next reunion was the northwestern Montana area around Kalispell and Missoula. The Yellowstone-Grand Teton area came in a distant second among those who responded to the questions we posed in our last newsletter. The Missoula-Kalispell area of Montana provides opportunities to visit the National Bison Range, Creston NFH, scenic Flathead Lake and Glacier National Park. The town of Kalispell also provides many opportunities that will interest those not so inclined towards things wild and rugged. In addition, Missoula is home to the University of Montana. The northwest Montana area is a natural for proposed presentations on wolf reintroduction and grizzly bear issues. It also meets with your recommendation that we keep lodging costs to \$125 per night or less (including breakfast).

Weather in this area is a very real factor. We want to avoid the major vacation times (and crowds) but still enjoy pleasant conditions. We are looking at a period from mid-September to mid-October but the actual dates will depend on site rates and availability. Travel costs also need to be considered. Flights into the northwest Montana area from some parts of the country may not be as cheap as flights to major metropolitan area but can be expected to be offset to a great degree by the lower costs of lodging. And not many areas of the country can boast of scenery, natural wonders, and recreational opportunities as northwestern Montana.

Based on your preference for this area, we have contacted the local Chambers of Commerce and Visitor's Bureaus. Their input led us to submit "Requests for Proposals" to potential host sites, asking for information on accommodations and amenities, costs, availability during our time frame, etc. From the various proposals received, your Board has focused in on *Kalispell* as meeting our requirements for quality lodging at reasonable cost and proximity to points of interest. Site visits to potential reunion facilities and negotiations with vendors are in the works, after which a final selection will be made and a contract signed. But, unless something unexpected comes up, set your sights on



Election of New Board Members (and a special offer to new members)

It's that time of year again when we choose Directors who will guide our Association over the next three year period. There are nine seats on the Board and each Director is elected for a three year term. The terms are staggered so that three of these expire every year, providing the opportunity for eligible members to choose who will fill those three seats. Once elected, Board members have the collective authority to conduct the business of the Association and to make decisions that affect its operation and activities.

This year we have an outstanding slate of candidates who meet the criteria of experience, competence, dedication to the purposes and goals of the Association, and a willingness to serve and to put the good of the Association and the wishes of the membership ahead of any personal agenda. Candidates must also be dues-paying members of the Association. This year's candidates for election to the Board are:

- Larry Shanks (incumbent) from Monett, Missouri
- Frank Cockrell (incumbent) from Beltsville, Maryland
- Jerry Grover (past Board member and Association co-founder) from Tigard, Oregon,
- Gail Carmody of Panama City, Florida, and
- Dick Gritman from Sequim, Washington

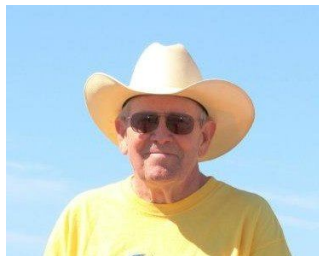
To be eligible to vote, you must also be a dues-paying member of the Association. Ballots will be mailed to those eligible at the end of October and completed ballots must be returned not later than December 4th, 2012.

Have I got a deal for you! As an incentive for signing up as new members, any application for membership we receive before we mail out ballots on October 31st will entitle you to vote in this years election and will give you full membership benefits through the next year (or longer if you choose to sign up for multiple years or for a lifetime membership). This is a no-brainer. Sign up now!

Know Your Board

In each edition of the newsletter, we hope to provide a brief biological sketch of three Board of Directors members.

Bob Jacobsen Bob came onto the Board of Directors in April 2012, replacing Ed Loth who passed away. Bob hails from Montrose, Colorado and was a public servant for 35 years, four of those in the Pacific as a U.S. Navy shipboard radio operator. Upon graduating from Colorado State University, Bob began his 31 year career in the Department of the Interior with the Bureau of Land Management in the Craig and Montrose Districts in Colorado (5 years) and New Mexico (4 years) as a wildlife biologist and as an area manager in the Las Cruces District. His career with the Fish and Wildlife Service began in 1974 in the Office of Endangered Species and International Affairs (WO). He transferred to Salt Lake City Utah to assume the position of Ecological Services Field



Supervisor for Colorado and Utah and later moved to the Alaska Regional Office as ARD for Habitat Resources/Fish and Wildlife Enhancement. He was also responsible for the Fisheries program for a short while. Bob made his final move to the Denver Regional Office as the ARD for Ecological Services and retired in 1994. He now lives in Crockett, Texas and enjoys creating wildlife habitat on his and his wife Bonnie's small farm and frequently traveling for recreation and to visit family. Bob has taken on the monumental task of planning for the next Retiree's Reunion.

Jim McKevitt only reluctantly admits to being a native of New Jersey. Raised on the Jersey shore (pre-Snookie), Jim spent 11 years in private industry while attending Seton Hall, Monmouth, and Rutgers Universities working towards a degree in Chemistry. After two years in the Army, Jim decided to chuck it all, got his B.S. in Wildlife Management from Utah State and joined the FWS in 1971, starting in River Basin Studies in scenic Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. He helped to open the Annapolis ES Office, later moved to Laguna Niguel, California as ES Field Supervisor and in 1978 took over as Field Supervisor of the ES Office in Sacramento. With passage of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act in 1992, Jim assumed the role of FWS Program Manager for the Central Valley Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program, serving until his retirement in 2000. Jim continues to be involved in Central Valley and local conservation efforts from his home in the Sierra foothills. He was elected to the Board in 2011 and, like an idiot, agreed to serve as Secretary and Scribe.



Matt Perry was appointed to the Board in 2012, replacing Judy Pulliam who resigned for personal reasons. Matt, a native of Rhode Island and a Viet Nam era Navy veteran, earned a B.S. degree in Wildlife Management and Forestry from the University of Rhode Island, a Masters from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and a PhD from the University of Maryland. He worked for Rhode Island Fish and Game for two years prior to joining the Service at Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge where he spent a year as Assistant Refuge Manager, then on to the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, where he worked for the next 40 years until his retirement in 2011. Most of Matt's research at Patuxent was with studies on waterfowl of Chesapeake Bay and other important habitats of the Atlantic Coast. He also was heavily involved with studies dealing with habitat management for wildlife. As an emeritus scientist, Matt stays active in several wildlife research and conservation projects. He has also had a long interest in the history of Patuxent and for many years served as the unofficial historian. He coordinated the activities for Patuxent's 75th anniversary and is editing the proceedings of the 2-day symposium of Patuxent history. While on the Board, Matt hopes to bring more retired research staff into the Retirees' Association and intends to take an active role in all activities of the Association.



There is Life After Retirement

Have you seen the latest copy of the Fish and Wildlife Service News? There, prominently displayed in a full page article on page 7, was a story on the FWS Retirees Association. Check it out on the Service's website and, if you do not already have a hard copy, download one to frame and hang over your mantle.

Reminder: Dues

For our current dues-paying members, just a reminder that, if your membership is about to expire, it can be renewed by using **PayPal** at the Association's website (<http://www.fwsretirees.org>) or by filling out the form on the back page of this newsletter. If you are not already a full-fledged member, please consider joining us. Membership benefits, in addition to receipt of newsletters and special announcements, include the very important right to run for election to our Board of Directors and the right to vote on key decisions affecting the Association and its governance. **With the upcoming election of three members to the Board of Directors, won't you seriously consider becoming a member? Applications received prior to the mailing of ballots on October 31st will entitle you to cast your votes for candidates of your choice and will enroll you as a full-fledged member through the next year (or longer if you choose to sign up for multiple years or for a lifetime membership).**

Thank You from the Family of Former Director Sam Hamilton

The Retirees Association, through Denny Holland, our representative, received this very nice "thank you" note from Becky Hamilton, Sam's wife for our assistance at Sam's funeral and at the Noxubee NWR re-naming ceremony. The following is a transcript of that note.

"Dear Denny,

Thank you so much for all that you and the members of the FWS Retirees Association have done to honor Sam's life and his conservation career. My family and I truly appreciate your kind contribution to the scholarship fund at Mississippi State. I know how much that would mean to Sam. Your support for the refuge renaming event was also greatly appreciated. You were very sweet to attend the ceremony. Although we continue to miss Sam daily, we will always find great comfort in visiting the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you for helping to make this possible through your gracious remembrance of Sam.

Warmest regards,

Becky Hamilton"

Author Needs Help

Doug Brinkley, who wrote *"The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America"* and *"The Quiet World: Saving Alaska's Wilderness Kingdom"*, and who was the keynote speaker at our 2010 reunion in San Diego, is working on another book. It is tentatively titled *"Forester-in-Chief: Franklin*

Roosevelt, the CCC, and Wild America". He is looking for anyone who can provide remembrances of working in the conservation arena during the FDR years, the 30s and the 40s. If that's you or if you know of someone who was part of that great era, you can contact his research assistant, Virginia Northington, at virginia.northington@gmail.com or phone at 571-218-0708. Be sure to let them know the info or contact was provided through the FWS Retirees Association.

Preserving our Heritage

The Oral History Project is an effort by the Retirees Association and the Heritage Committee to record the experiences, thoughts and feelings of past employees of the Service while they are still with us to share their stories. We are interested in gathering first-hand accounts from any retired FWS employee, whether a trailblazer or someone who has toiled in the trenches, in the field, region or central office. We want to interview former biologists, law enforcement agents, directors and administrative personnel, anyone whose recollections can illustrate the past history and exploits of this unique agency. Hundreds of interviews have already been conducted and their stories archived at NCTC, some on tape or video and others transcribed into written narrative. NCTC has a database of those interviews already conducted. To see what's been done thus far, log onto the NCTC website, click on "Conservation History" and go from there. See someone you know or used to work with? Or perhaps there is someone missing whose story really needs to be told. Check it out and let us know what you think. Any chance you might want to help to gather these stories? It requires some training but Mark Madison, the Service's Historian can tell you how to get involved.

Letters to the Editor

Have something you want to express your opinion about? We will try to publish at least one letter to the editor in each edition of the newsletter. Send them to Jim McKeivitt at jimmymac@usamedia.tv

Wolves in the U.S. Northern Rocky Mountains

I was the USFWS Wolf Recovery Coordinator in the northern Rocky Mountains (NRM) from 1988-2011 until my retirement in 2011. When I first came to Montana there were only a dozen wolves, all of them in Glacier National Park. Currently there are over 1,700 wolves in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and eastern Washington and Oregon. Except in Wyoming where delisting of wolves under the Endangered Species Act has been accomplished via the more common rules process, it was Congress that removed them from listing by reinstating a court-overturned USFWS science-based 2009 delisting rule. That was not the ideal way to delist NRM wolves, but I believe it was biologically sound.

USFWS and its many cooperators conducted a tremendous amount of research on wolves and their relationships with habitat, wild prey, competitors, scavengers, and domestic animals. Genetic and other health issues and human values were also studied. That research showed that wolves in the NRM were biologically recovered and that populations should remain healthy, provided that the states and tribes adequately regulate human-caused mortality. The states committed to manage for long term wolf conservation and, as promised, management was transferred to their professional state and tribal wildlife agencies. They fully recognize that if they fail to conserve wolves, a return

to federal ESA oversight is certain. However, it took 40 years for wolves to recover under the ESA and the states will need more than just a couple of years to find the right balance between protection and control.

I am a huge supporter of letting the entire ESA process, including delisting, run its full course. I personally view wolf recovery and delisting as proof that the ESA can work. The ESA has many checks and balances that guarantee wolves will not be extirpated again. They are a very resilient and adaptable species and the NRM has enough habitat for both wolves and their prey. Over time I expect that "*crying wolf*" by both sides will fade and sound state management will ensure wolves are fully conserved.

As U.S. citizens, we all have the right and obligation to lobby hard for our values and to insist in openness, honesty, and transparency from our state and federal governments. As a retired wildlife professional, I will keep watch to see that science is used appropriately. As an outdoorsman, I will continue to enjoy the NRM and its full complement of large predators and their prey.

For at least the next 5 years, the public can follow the status of wolves on the USFWS website (<http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov>). Anyone who feels wolves are again becoming threatened can propose re-listing under the ESA.

Ed Bangs, Helena, Montana

Miscellaneous

Silent Spring. September of this year marked the 50th anniversary of the release of Rachel Carson's book "*Silent Spring*". Rachel, an FWS aquatic biologist, turned the world on its ear with her expose of the damaging effects of pesticides on America's fish and wildlife resources and profoundly affected the direction of the Service with regard to preservation of species.

National Wildlife Refuge Week. The Senate has designated the week of October 14-20 as National Wildlife Refuge Week. In their declaration, they acknowledged the invaluable contribution of the Refuge System to the nation's fish and wildlife resources and the public's enjoyment thereof. They also expressed their intent to continue support for the National Wildlife Refuge System in conserving America's wildlife for future generations.

Website. Very soon, you will see dramatic changes and updates to the FWS Retirees Association website. The Board, with the able assistance of retiree Linda Purviance, is reviewing what needs to be done to make the site more attractive, more informative, and easier to navigate. Check out the current website at <http://www.fwsretirees.org> and, if you have suggestions for format or content, let us know.

Research. Discussions have begun in Washington about the possibility of returning all or parts of the former Fish and Wildlife Service Research Division to the fold. We will keep you informed of any progress as it occurs, recognizing that this is a very sensitive issue, both organizationally and politically.

Endangered Species Info. Anyone interested in following the latest with regard to listed threatened or endangered species can sign up to receive the Program's newsletter by going to the Service's website (www.fws.gov) and clicking on the Endangered Species link. At the bottom of the homepage you can sign up to receive the newsletter. They also have links to connect through the various social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Passing of Colleagues

If you are aware of the passing of any retired FWS employee, including those who left the Service because of organizational changes or late career changes, please let us know so that we can let their former co-workers and friends know.

Yates M. Barber Jr. (1921-2012)

Yates Barber died on March 9, 2012 in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. A North Carolina native, Yates proudly served his country during WWII in the U.S. Army in North Africa and Europe. After returning, he earned both Bachelors and Masters degrees in Wildlife Conservation and Management from North Carolina State College. His first assignment was at Orton Plantation near Wilmington for the North Carolina Department of Wildlife Resources. Yates had a lengthy career with the Fish and Wildlife Service in Raleigh and in Washington, D.C., as well as nine years with the National Marine Fisheries Service. In almost thirty years of retirement in Elizabeth City, he volunteered with collecting water samples from local waterways for the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, was a member of the Currituck Sound Study Advisory Committee, and was active in his church. He particularly loved the fish and waterfowl of Currituck Sound. Yates is survived by his wife of 66 years, Mavis, by his brother, John, and by numerous nieces and nephews.



Erwin L. "Erv" Boeker passed away 12/26/2011 at the age of 91 after a three-year battle with cancer. After service as a pilot in World War II with the United States Navy and attaining a Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology at Colorado State University, Erv spent three busy years as Chief Pilot for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. He then transferred to become a FWS Refuge Pilot/Biologist in Region 3 from 1955 to 1958, becoming a Research Pilot/Biologist with Denver Wildlife Research Center in 1958. Erv made many important contributions to our field of knowledge about birds and other wildlife; notably whooping cranes, sandhill cranes, Merriam's turkeys, bald and golden eagles, Aleutian geese, peregrine falcons and black-footed ferrets. His career continued to grow after he retired from FWS. He was hired by the National Audubon Society to conduct a multi-year study of bald eagles, working closely with the Native American community in Haines, Alaska. This critical conservation effort led to the formation of the Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve. Well into his late eighties, Erv worked as a volunteer biologist with the Division of Migratory Bird Management, lending his expertise on crane and goose surveys. His unique personality and tireless dedication to conservation will be greatly missed.

In 2005, the FWS collected oral histories of pilot biologists in a series of interviews. Erv's full biography can be viewed at:

<http://digitalmedia.fws.gov/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/natdiglib&CISOPTR=10715&filename=10716.pdf>

Leland E. "Lee" Herzberger (1944-2012)

Lee passed away at his home in Columbus, Indiana on May 10, 2012 at the age of 67. A native of Virginia, Lee retired from the Fish and Wildlife Service after 39 years. He served as refuge manager on several refuges throughout the U.S, the last 29 years at Muscatatuck NWR in Indiana.



In addition, he was the first manager at Atwater Prairie Chicken NWR in Texas and the Big Oaks Refuge Complex in Indiana. Significant accomplishments included the reintroduction of river otters to Indiana and the establishment of the Conservation Learning Center at Muscatatuck. Lee is survived by his wife of 44 years, Sharon, and by his sons Thaddeus and Zachary, daughter Alicia, and three grandchildren.

Ken Niethammer died in his Dallas, Oregon home in late February, 2012 at the age of 61. Born in Indiana and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, Ken began his career with the Missouri State Park System, working in the Montauk, Fort Zumwalt, Big Lake, and Johnson Shut-ins State Parks. His Fish and Wildlife Service career began in 1983, banding ducks and doing research in Missouri, Louisiana, and Canada, among other places. He worked as a Biologist, Refuge Manager, and in other capacities at the Four Rivers Wildlife Management Area in Missouri, Red Rock Lakes NWR in Montana, French Frigate Shoals-Tern Island and Midway Atoll refuges in the Pacific, and at the Willamette Valley NWR Complex and Basket Slough NWR in Oregon. Ken retired in 2006. He has several publications on his research. Ken is survived by his sister and several nieces and nephews.

James R. "Bob" Norris (1927-2012)

Former Special Agent James Robert "Bob" Norris of Longview, Washington, died March 13, 2012 following a lengthy illness. He was 85. A native of Washington, Bob was a Navy veteran and a graduate of Washington State University who started his career as a Game Warden with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. Coming to the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1956 as a Special Agent, Bob served undercover in Oregon, California, Canada, and Mexico operations. In 1973 he transferred to Southeast Idaho to a newly-created position as a liaison for the Department of Interior and Native American tribal leaders. He retired from that position in 1977, and returned to reside in Longview.

Bob was an avid and knowledgeable outdoorsman, widely recognized for his expertise in fish and wildlife issues and area topography. He enjoyed fishing, boating, and hunting, and driving area back roads "on patrol" with family and friends. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Dorothy, daughter Nancy, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by his son, James R. Norris Jr., in 1985. A private family service was held.

John C. Peterson (1943-2012)

John died on July 28, 2012, at his Cedar Crest, N.M. home. Born in Louisiana, John was raised in western Pennsylvania, attended forestry school at Pennsylvania State University and Fort Lewis College but graduated from Utah State University in 1968 with a B.S. degree in Wildlife Management. He began his career with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a fish and wildlife biologist and over the years was stationed in Ecological Services offices in



Bloomington, Indiana, Lebanon, Ohio, Washington, DC, and Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was the field office supervisor of the Albuquerque ES office for several years. After retirement, he and his wife cared for foster teens under a special program in Albuquerque. Horses and riding were one of his passions, as was his interest in the history of the Old West. He was also part of coalition of people who raised government funding to purchase a \$2 million parcel of land which expanded the Albuquerque's East Mountain public open space area. John served on the boards of various community and municipal districts. He is survived by Carolyn, his wife of 47 years; his brother, Gregory; and many cousins. John is buried in the Hermosa Cemetery, Durango, Colorado. He would have greatly appreciated donations in his name to the Trust for Public Land, 607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F1, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87505 or to Hospice de la Luz, 3812 Academy Parkway North NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87109.

Neal A. Ward (1934-2012)

Neal died on August 22nd in Delta County, Colorado. He was born in Saratoga, Wyoming and grew up on a ranch there. He joined the Fish and Wildlife service in 1958 as a weir watcher at Bull Lake on the Wind River Reservation and in his 34 year career served at various hatcheries including stations in Saratoga, Wyoming, Springville, Utah, Mescalero, New Mexico, and Cortland, New York. While at Cortland, he attended the Cortland School of Fisheries Management. He then moved on to Alchey, Arizona, Uvalde, Texas, Jackson, Wyoming (as Assistant Hatchery Manager), and to Chattahoochee, Georgia, Heber Springs, Arkansas, and Hotchkiss, Colorado as Hatchery Manager. Neal retired in 1990.



Neal is survived by his wife of 56 years, Jean; his sons Timothy and Patrick; and by three sisters and two brothers. At his request, no services were held.

Membership Application/Renewal

(Fill out and mail or use PayPal on our website at <http://www.fwsretirees.org>)

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Mail Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ email _____

FWS Program (at retirement) _____ Title _____

Office and Region _____

Memberships: _____ 1-year - \$25.00 _____ 2-year - \$50.00 _____ 3-year - \$75.00* _____ Lifetime - \$500
(* why not just round it off at \$100: after all, it's a worthy and **tax deductible** cause)

Make check payable to and mail completed applications to:

Treasurer, FWS Retirees Association, 457 Wendell Rd., Shutesbury, MA. 01072-9714

For information or assistance, e-mail Steve Rideout at sgrideout@verizon.net or phone Steve at 1-413-259-9123