



# FWS Retirees Association

## NEWSLETTER

Spring 2014

### 2014 Board of Directors

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Gail Carmody, Treasurer	850-235-9012	<a href="mailto:gcarmody@att.net">gcarmody@att.net</a>
Jim McKevitt, Sec'ty/Scribe	530-878-7883	<a href="mailto:jimmymac@usamedia.tv">jimmymac@usamedia.tv</a>
Nell Baldacchino	301-464-1239	<a href="mailto:nellpb@nhinet.org">nellpb@nhinet.org</a>
Jerry Grover	503-684-1809	<a href="mailto:Groverjerry.judy@att.net">Groverjerry.judy@att.net</a>
Mamie Parker	703-948-0032	<a href="mailto:mamie.parker@comcast.net">mamie.parker@comcast.net</a>
Matt Perry	301-249-5305	<a href="mailto:mperry1209@verizon.net">mperry1209@verizon.net</a>
Bob Streeter	970-495-1893	<a href="mailto:rgstreeter@gmail.com">rgstreeter@gmail.com</a>

### Board Member Emeritus

Denny Holland	334-616-6027	<a href="mailto:Dennis_Holland@fws.gov">Dennis_Holland@fws.gov</a>
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## Election of Board Members

Elections for seats on the Retirees Association's Board of Directors were held in December and the voting members of the Association (i.e. the dues-paying members) chose two new Board members and returned two current members to Board seats. Nell Baldacchino was elected to fill the seat vacated by Dick Gritman who chose not to run for a second term. Bob Streeter was chosen to fill the unexpired term of Bob Stevens who resigned for personal reasons. That term will expire at the end of 2014 and we hope that Bob will choose to run again, this time for a full three year term.

Board members Matt Perry and Jim McKevitt were both re-elected to full three year terms.

Bios of the new board members are provided below.

**Ellen (Nell) Prior Baldacchino** was born and raised in Charleston, South Carolina, and introduced to nature by her dad, a history professor at the Citadel. That exposure, reinforced through nature classes for children at the Charleston Museum and a youth conservation camp sponsored by the South Carolina Wildlife Resources Department, cemented her fascination with the work and concepts of wildlife and habitat management and led her to pursue in a degree in biology at the College of Charleston. Nell went on to get her Master's degree in wildlife management from Virginia Tech. Following grad school, Nell began her career with FWS in 1969 as a seasonal at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. She then spent three months of interpretive training with the Audubon Society before coming back to FWS full time at Okefenokee and Blackwater NWRs. In the mid-1970s she took a detour from Refuges and went to work for Ecological Services at the Annapolis, Maryland Field Office. In the late 1970s, a growing family convinced Nell

to convert to part-time status and return to Refuges in the Washington Office where she dealt with issues such as steel shot, trapping, feral animals, and public use. Nell managed to escape DC in 1988 and joined the Patuxent Research Refuge staff when Patuxent was still part of the FWS Research Division. She loved sharing Patuxent's research and management history with



educators, the media, and the community. It was also an exciting time at Patuxent with the acquisition of additional lands from Ft. Meade and the opening and growth of the National Wildlife Visitor Center as a major educational facility. After nearly 25 years at Patuxent and over

43 years with FWS, Nell finally decided to retire at the end of December 2012.

When asked about her personal life aside from FWS, Nell had to think twice. Her career has been so much a part of her life that she had not had a lot of time for hobbies and outside activities other than photography. She and her husband, Joe, married over 40 years, enjoy getting together with their four children and six grandchildren (ages 6 mo. to 6 yrs.). She is still very much involved at Patuxent, commenting that she has never been anywhere where the employees were so dedicated to their work. "FWS attracts a special quality of people. This is one of the reasons I worked for so many years and continue to volunteer."

**Robert (Bob) G. Streeter**, a son of the South Dakota prairies, developed his life-long fascination with wildlife while working on his parent's farm near Madison, South Dakota. He completed degrees in zoology, plant ecology, wildlife ecology and physiology at South Dakota State, VPI and Colorado State Universities and was employed by game and fish agencies in both South Dakota and Colorado. After a stint in the US Air Force, Bob joined the Service's Cooperative Wildlife Research Units program in 1972. Twenty years were spent in various Service Research locations, primarily in the West. He became part of the North American Waterfowl Plan operations in 1988, and established the North American Wetlands Conservation Act

program. Bob was appointed as Assistant Director, Refuges and Wildlife in 1995 and retired from the Service at the end of 1999. Bob and his wife, Karen, live near Fort Collins and remain very active.

Bob reports that his time since retiring from the Service “has been full, wonderful and fulfilling.” He and Karen love where they live on the Colorado prairie, on the shore of a small lake and in the shadow of the 14,000’ Front Range peaks. They have restored their 5 acres from marginal farmland to a complex of a wetland, native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs and trees. Where only a meadowlark nested, there are now more than a dozen



species of nesting birds, ranging from osprey to American goldfinch. Their large garden produces much of the vegetables they consume, including gallons of great salsa, and their small vineyard provides enough grapes to make several cases of wine for their table each year. Time not working in the woodshop he has always desired is likely to be spent with a recently renewed hobby, photography, or visiting with his two sons and their families. Of course, hunting and fishing remain important activities as is time with his new pup, a yellow lab that is a “gentle friend in the house but a hunting fiend in the field.”

Volunteering is also a big part of their lives and keeps their “neurons dancing” as Karen observes: AAUW, theater board, CSU foreign student English partner and book clubs for Karen, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission, Greater Outdoor Colorado (allocating lottery funds to open space, wildlife habitat and parks), statewide water committees, and Trout Unlimited positions for Bob take up many days each month.

Bob tells us that he and Karen host many patio and dinner parties, so “when in the northern Colorado area, know you are welcome and will be an excuse for another party!”

## South Africa 2014 – Another Successful Trip

Board Member Donna Stanek submitted the following:

During the last two weeks of February, eight retirees participated in the second volunteer trip to Chazen Game Reserve outside of Parys, South Africa. This year’s group project was to reseed a hillside and plateau with native grasses. But it was not all work and no play! After working in the mornings, most afternoons were spent birding around the compound, reading, napping (a lot

of napping!) and just enjoying the peace and quiet of nature. Late afternoons, after tea of course, game drives throughout the 40,000 acre reserve were offered. Cape buffalo, giraffes, a variety of antelope species, zebra, black and blue wildebeest, were seen grazing and roaming the grasslands and hillsides.

One of the highlights was observing and learning about an on-going lion breeding program at Chazen. One of the lionesses had three cubs early in January and it was amazing to watch these young cubs and the adults interact with each other. We did



decide the official biological term for the cubs was “they are so cute!” The goal of this program is to improve the genetic pool and these young lions will be placed in the wild when they are adults.

As part of the two week excursion, we departed Chazen and headed to the Center of Humankind Cultural Center to learn about the history and tribal culture, then onto the Elephant Experience Sanctuary for a night, where we learned about elephant behaviors and biology. The “Experience” included grooming and taking the elephants for walks! Before heading back to Johannesburg we spent two days and nights at Pilanesburg National Park, seeing elephants, rhinos, hippos, zebras and a variety of birds during our tour.



We are in the process of planning for next year’s trip. It will again be in February and, in addition to the two weeks, we plan to add an optional safari to KwaZulu-Natal area in eastern South Africa. If you are interested in joining us, you can contact me, Donna Stanek, for more information. And for additional photos and future

information on volunteer travel, check out the website and like the FWS Retirees on Facebook.

## Board Planning Meeting

Normally, your Board of Directors convenes on a monthly conference call to conduct the business of the Association and we meet face to face only at reunions. However, with a slew of topics and issues needing to be discussed and decided, this month the Board held a four day meeting at our home base, the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) at Shepherdstown, West

Virginia. We worked on a variety of issues currently affecting our organization and moved into planning for the future, i.e.; what changes do we envision to better fulfill our existing mission and should we move into new areas and activities. A very lot was discussed and decided, too much to cover adequately here. Consequently, a *Special Edition* newsletter is planned to advise you of our deliberations and any new efforts we propose. Keep posted: we will keep you fully informed.

## Reunion 2015

We have narrowed down our search for a time and place for the next *Retirees Reunion*. We are focusing on the Texas Gulf Coast around Corpus Christi as our first choice for location and February to early April of 2015 for the time. Austin, Texas is also under consideration. Time and location will be narrowed further as we begin negotiations with possible host venues and explore field trip opportunities. Possible themes include challenges to fish and wildlife resources from possible climate change and sea level rise, resource recovery from recent environmental disasters, and endangered species and border issues. We welcome your input as we continue our efforts to provide a reunion as entertaining and successful as our last get-together at Kalispell.

## Lifetime Memberships

We want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank those members who have opted to become lifetime members of the FWS Retirees Association. These stalwarts are foremost in supporting our efforts and among the most active of our members. They are:

Jay Banta  
Dr. Gail S. Baker and Doyle Braner  
Ray Brunson  
Frank and Elaine Cockrell  
Jerry and Pat French  
Dale and Sarah Hall  
Denny and Kathy Holland  
Jim and Mary Lou King  
June McIlwain  
Mike McMinn  
Marvin Moriarty  
Jim Pulliam  
Judy Pulliam  
Barb and Jerry Ritter  
Tom Smith  
Donna Stanek  
Tom Taylor  
Robin Thorson, and  
John and Barbara Weiser

While we can't guarantee that their investment in a lifetime membership will assure them of a long lifespan, I have it on good authority that it will merit them a higher seat in Heaven when their membership does expire.

## Change in our Mailing Policy

Your Retirees Association has about 2700 members but fewer than 200 paid up dues-paying members. However, all of our members receive our newsletters, either via notification of its availability on our website or by receiving a hard copy through the U.S. Postal System. The cost to the Association for posting the newsletter on the website and announcing its availability is negligible. However the cost for bulk-mailing hard copies to roughly 1000 members who don't have e-mail addresses on file runs over \$800 per issue, all of which comes from the dues we receive. Until now, we have been able to accommodate any of those members who prefer the hard copy, whether they pay dues or not, without unduly affecting our ability to perform our other functions. That is no longer the case. Effective *after the mailing of this newsletter*, only dues-paying members will receive hard copies of our mailings.

## Have You Moved?

To keep you in the loop on relevant happenings and events and to send you the latest newsletters, we need to have up-to-date contact information. If you have a new mailing address, phone number, or e-mail address, please let us know. You may use the form at the back of this newsletter or you can phone or e-mail the new information direct to our database manager, **Kelle Quist**; **Phone: 1-413-339-4718**; **e-mail: [kquist1@verizon.net](mailto:kquist1@verizon.net)**

## Lost Souls

We need your help! Over the years, the Retirees Association has lost contact with several of our retired members, usually via bounced e-mails and/or returned snail mails. They have become 'Lost Souls' in our database. We don't know if they have died or just moved on to a new address and didn't inform us. Would you take a moment and look at the list below and if you know the whereabouts of any of these folks or have their current contact info, please either pass it on to us or ask them to contact us. We will take it from there to determine whether they wish to remain in our database and receive our mailings. A big 'Thank You' in advance.

Gerry and Linda Atwell, Nelli Barnes, Dan Baumgarner, Terry Bell, Art Bullard, Galen Burgett, Charles Burner, Lois Chapman, Leon Colborn, John Collins, Wilfred and Helen Crabb, Anne Cullen, Thomas DeVaney, Juris I. Eglite, Maggie Evans, R. Scott Faley, Dave Ferrell, Robert Finley, Doris Gaylord, Kenneth George, Roger Gephart, Betty Halvorsen, Lowell Harrison, James I. Hatch, William D. Hawes, K. Nadeen Haworth, H. J. Johnson, Sue Kaminski, Martin Kenney, Karl Kobes, Peggy Kohl, Barbara C. Kroon, Jim Leopold, Noah Long, Lenora Lundeen, Russell Massey, Vicki McCoy, Samuel Milazzo, Bob Misso, Roger and Laura Nass, Brian Norris, Carol Olson, Wanda Osbolt, Dennis Peters, Edward J. Peterson, Harry Pinkham, B.H. Powell, Grace N. Roberts, A.J. Robinson, Don and Barbara Rodgers, James Runningen, Linda and Alan Saunders, Joseph Scott, Charles Wm. Shaiffer, Edith Sloan, Dean Smith, Paul Smith, Robert J. Sousa, Teresha Taylor, Sim Vickery, Ken (Skip) Walch, Lillian Walter, Sedgewick Watson, Phyllis Weisz, Doug West, and Einar Wold.

# Miscellaneous

**Change in Dues Structure.** The Board recently voted to make a slight change in the dues structure to make it a little more attractive to our members. Annual dues still remain at \$25 per year and a lifetime membership is still \$500. However, we have added an option for a five-year membership for just \$100, a savings to you of \$25 over that period. We strongly encourage all retirees to enroll as sustaining, dues-paying members to support the Association's activities and to avail yourselves of benefits not afforded others (eligibility to vote in our elections and to hold office, discounts at reunions, etc.).

Reminder: Our dues are by calendar year. If you have not renewed for calendar year 2014, please go to <http://www.fwsretirees.org/JoinUs.html> to update your membership form and review your payment options

**A Little Help for NCTC.** The archives folks at NCTC are looking for copies of "Inside Interior," an old publication of the Department, and for anything on the history of the Everglades National Wildlife Refuge before it was turned over to the National Park Service. If any of our readers can help or have info on where such may be found, contact Mark Madison at [mark\\_madison@fws.gov](mailto:mark_madison@fws.gov) or phone at 304-876-7276.

Any help will be appreciated.

**Retiree Association Contributions to the FWS Heritage.** The Association provided the funding for the purchase of two books for NCTC. The following is a 'Thank You' from Mark Madison at NCTC

"Thanks so much for sending the two copies of Charles LeBuff's excellent new book: *Amphibians and Reptiles of Sanibel and Captiva Islands, Florida*. They are a great resource for us and the many scholars we get who are interested in Darling NWR. All of us at NCTC really appreciate the tremendous support the Retirees have given the archives over the years to help us obtain important parts of our heritage we might not have known about or had easy access to through regular procurement. So thank you very much; we are most appreciative."

**Free Online Mentoring Course.** We have been appraised of a free online course in mentoring that may be of help to anyone involved with mentoring potential or incoming FWS recruits.

In this course, mentoring experts provide tips and techniques based on their experiences. This self-paced training focuses on mentoring fundamentals, including tools, job aids, and skills needed when meeting with a mentee for the first time. Participating in this course will contribute to building a successful partnership with your mentee. Participants are given a 'quarterly' timeline (January 1; April 1; July 1; October 1), i.e. 4 months intervals to complete this online course. This course is a prerequisite for "Mentoring the Next Generation: Voices of Experience" OUT8050-ELEARNING, an Archived Webinar  
Contact: [Ora Dixon@fws.gov](mailto:Ora_Dixon@fws.gov); 304-876-7314 or [Sandy Spakoff@fws.gov](mailto:Sandy_Spakoff@fws.gov); 304-876-7783.  
Registration Deadline: Ongoing in DOI Learn: [www.doi.gov/doilearn/index.cfm](http://www.doi.gov/doilearn/index.cfm).

**Resources in Retirement.** We are frequently asked questions on topics of concern to retirees, topics such as health coverage under FEHBP and Medicare and what's in the offing in

Washington that will affect your lives in retirement. Not being experts in these matters, we have provided instead a few links to help you do your own research online.

This one addresses the question of "FEHBP or Medicare or both." If you haven't already committed to the point there is no backing out now, you ought to give it a look.

<http://www.govexec.com/pay-benefits/retirement-planning/2014/02/big-health-insurance-question/79504/>

If you want to know what's ahead regarding health care programs, check this link out.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/federal-eye/wp/2014/02/26/federal-insurance-program-wont-add-self-plus-one-option-until-2016/>

Or, if you want to know all there is to know on any retirement subject, here's the site for you

<http://www.myfederalretirement.com/public/department2.cfm>

## 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 pass that information on to their former co-workers and friends.*

**William A. (Bill) Aultfather (1925 – 2014).** Bill Aultfather passed away in Edina, Minnesota on January 30, 2013, at the age of 88. Bill was born in Minnesota, educated in the public schools of New Jersey, served in the U.S. Army Field Artillery Service during World War II, and later attended the University of Minnesota, graduating in 1950 with a degree in Forestry. Bill started his professional career as Forester with the State of Minnesota, becoming the State Forester before joining the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Bill was the first Region 3 Forester and later served as an Area Manager in Region 6. Bill was a Fellow in the Society of American Foresters, served as President of the Minnesota chapter of the Wildlife Society, and held numerous offices in the Izaak Walton League. He was also a talented musician.

Bill was preceded in death by his wife Mary, and is survived by his son David, daughter Ann, one grandson and two great-grandsons. Memorial services for Bill were held in February in Edina, Minnesota.



**Fred L. Bolwahn (1932 – 2013).** Fred Bolwahn died in Albuquerque, New Mexico on December 5, 2013 at the age of 81. Fred was born in Chicago, Illinois and, after graduating from high school, joined the U.S. Navy in 1951. After his service, Fred moved to Colorado in 1955 where he attended and received his bachelor's degree from Colorado State University and later attended Colorado A&M University. He joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and began a career that lasted over 30 years. He started in the Federal Wildlife Permits Office in Washington, D.C., transferred to the Endangered Species Office in Salt Lake City, Utah, and later served at Salt Plains NWR in Oklahoma and as Manager at Las Vegas NWR in New Mexico.

Fred was pre-deceased by his wife Mary Ann and a son, Paul. He is survived by ten children, 28 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren. A celebration of his life was held in Albuquerque in December 2013 and he was laid to rest at the Santa Fe National Cemetery in New Mexico. Contributions in his name may be made to the Alzheimer's Society of New Mexico.

**Bobbie Lee Burkholder (1923 – 2013).** Bob Burkholder, veteran of World War II, bush pilot and FWS biologist in Alaska, political activist for good government and environmental issues, actor, writer, and family man died on September 13, 2013 on Bainbridge Island, Washington at the age of 90. His spirit lives on, however, in all of the lives he touched.



Bob was born in Kansas where he hunted and fished the woods and flatlands outside of Salina where he lived until military service called. He served in the 101st Airborne Division (Reconnaissance) and was awarded a Purple Heart for injuries suffered in the Battle of the Bulge.

He received a BS in wildlife biology from Colorado State University, married Norma Watson and, being a man of adventure, he and Norma moved to Alaska to work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. His career as a wildlife biologist, pilot, land use specialist, and manager of National Wildlife Refuges spanned 35 years primarily in Alaska, Montana and Oregon.

He retired in 1983 and moved to Bainbridge Island where he worked tirelessly as a political activist on local planning and environmental issues. The Governor of the State of Washington honored him as the "Democrat of the Year" in 2003.

Although many begin to slow down after eighty, Bob was just getting started. During the last ten years of his life he accomplished some of his most significant milestones. He was a long standing member of the Men's Group in Winslow, sang in the local church choir, and played a strong role in the conservation of unique habitats on the Island. Still gaining momentum, he wrote his memoirs, *Skirting the Edge*, and starred in four short movies and two full-length movies including the movie *Old Goats*. He was still driving and going to the gym three weeks before his death.

Bob is survived by his seven children, Bobbie, Jana, John, Lynn, Roy, Carl and Carrie, eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren. He was pre-deceased by his wife, Norma. If Bob could be remembered for one thing it was his love of life, family and friends. Bob was a man who could brighten a room just by walking into it. There was never a social event that he didn't like. He had friends of all ages and political persuasions. He was a happy man and will be missed by many. A memorial to celebrate his life was held at the Eagle Harbor Congregational Church on October 26, 2013.

**Valora (Vickie) Henriette Davis (1920 – 2014).** Vickie Davis lived a special life before she passed away on January 17, 2014 at the ripe age of 94. She was born in Chokio, Minnesota, attended schools there and after high school in 1938 moved to Minnesota to go to business school. In 1941, Vicki moved to Oregon, planning to move on to Alaska. When that dream was



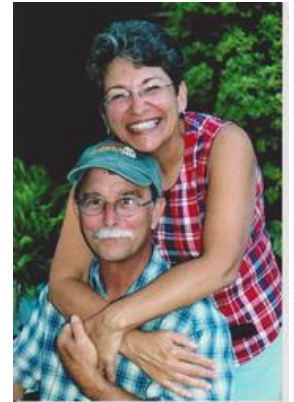
interrupted by World War II, Vickie and her husband decided to stay in Portland. There she ultimately joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the Portland Regional Office where she worked for the Chief of the Fishery Resources Division. She retired from the Service in 1984. She loved to travel, and was a voracious reader never to be found without a book. She passed a love of

reading, as well as her deep religious convictions, on to her children. She also loved to fish on quiet lakes, go to the beach, and eat crusty breads with real butter, chocolates and strawberries.

Her husband, all of her siblings, and sons, James and John have preceded her in going home to the Lord. She is survived by her children and their spouses, Becky King, Judy and Robert Beisell, Stephen and Sharon King, Gary King and Christopher and Aloma King; 15 grandchildren; and 33 great-grandchildren. A service for Vickie was held on January 28, 2014 at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Portland, where she was a longtime member.

**James Henry Kenyon III (1947 – 2013).** Jim Kenyon was at peace when he died at his home in Exmore, Virginia on November 1, 2013 with his wife Kathy at his side, holding his hand and singing to him.

Jim was born on, September 15, 1947 in Nassawadox, Virginia, grew up in Wachapreague and graduated from Central High School in 1966. He married Kathleen Rozgonyi in 1981 and they lived happily together in Virginia for 32 years. Jim was an Outdoor Recreational Planner for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Chincoteague and Eastern Shore National Wildlife Refuges and retired in 2003. Since his retirement, he spent his time volunteering for Shore Memorial Cancer Center and Northampton Social Ministries until he began to get ill.



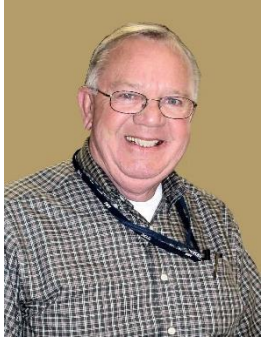
Jim was a member of Franktown United Methodist Church. He loved to travel with Kathleen and friends. He and Kathleen took in two Russian girls, Olga and Ksenia, and have loved them as their own.

In addition to Kathleen, Jim is survived and beloved by his extended family, including his in-laws, eight nieces and nephews and three great-nieces.

A Celebration of Life service was held on Saturday, November 9, 2013. Should you wish to honor Jim, the family is requesting donations be made to: Northampton Social Ministries, PO Box 553, Eastville, VA 23347.

**Paul Keywood (1940 – 2013).** Paul Keywood of Export, Pennsylvania, died on September 22, 2013, at the age of 73. He was born May 4, 1940, in Bartley, West Virginia, and attended local schools there. It was in West Virginia where he developed an early interest in natural resources. Paul served in the U.S. Army, U.S. Air National Guard, and the U.S. Army Reserve for twenty years. Paul transitioned to civilian life, working for the

Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) migratory bird program while stationed at the Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, Maryland. His expertise with computers, especially graphics, made him



very valuable in support of many migratory bird activities and programs and his advice was continuously sought by program staff. Paul enjoyed pursuing new methods to monitor waterfowl populations and developed techniques for computers to recognize and count waterfowl from photographic images. He loved to mentor young people in their careers by fostering connections and providing advice, always giving generously of

his time. He remained with FWS until his retirement from the Division of Migratory Bird Management in 2006. He had many hobbies over the years, including hunting, fishing, boating, computers, amateur radio, video, trains, and birding. Weekends were filled with adventures and meeting fellow enthusiasts. However, he also had a quiet side and was an avid reader and lifelong learner. Paul was willing to share everything he learned and always found time to spend with others. Surviving Paul is his wife of 36 years, Barbara Whitehead Keywood, who also worked for the FWS at Patuxent Research Refuge

**James L. (Larry) Smith (1939 – 2014).** Larry Smith passed away sometime in March of 2014: his body was discovered on March 6 outside his home in Bethel, Minnesota. We have been unable to find a formal obituary for him so the following is pieced together from some of his friends and colleagues

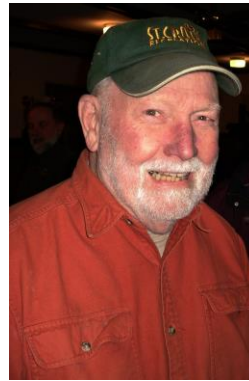
Larry was born on November 17, 1939, spent some of his childhood years in Hawaii, but attended the University of Minnesota where he earned a B.S in Fisheries Management in 1964. After joining the Fish and Wildlife Service, Larry worked in hatcheries, including a stint at Hebron National Fish Hatchery in Ohio, before moving over to the Division of River Basin Studies, now Ecological Services. He spent time in the Minneapolis Regional Office, the Twin Cities Area Office, and, after the closure of the Area Offices, in the Twin Cities Ecological Services Field Office. He was considered an expert in interagency coordination, often bringing diverse, sometimes antagonistic parties together in productive collaboration. He retired from the Twin Cities Field Office in April 1994.

Larry was a renowned World War II history buff, even going so far as to restoring a vintage WWII jeep, replete with machine gun and mount that he displayed at various venues. He was also well known for his skill at calligraphy and sculpted the cast for the Region 3 "Silver Eagle Award" medallion which was awarded to those outside FWS who contributed greatly in the field of conservation and resource management. Recipients include the District Engineer of the Army Corp of Engineers and the directors of the Minnesota Raptor Center. Larry will be greatly missed by those who knew and worked with him.

Condolences may be sent to his son, Jamie Smith at Larry's home address: Box 35, Bethel, MN 55005

**Ralph H. Town (1933 – 2014).** Ralph Town passed away on Tuesday, March 25, 2014 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota at the age of 80. Ralph was born on April 24th, 1933 in New Lothrop, Michigan and attended Central Michigan University attaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. Ralph married Helen

Miller in June of 1955 and later that year volunteered for the draft. He served on active duty for the US Army in Korea for 13 months. He then attended the University of Michigan where he earned his Master's degree in Wildlife Management.



Ralph worked for the US Fish and Wildlife Service from 1959 until his retirement in 1989. During that career, he lived and worked in many places around the United States; His first job with the Service was as Assistant Refuge Manager at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge in Michigan. From there he transferred to Agassiz NWR in Minnesota, also as the Assistant Refuge Manager. He then served as Area Biologist at Lake Andes NWR in South Dakota and

Jamestown, North Dakota as the Area Biologist. From Jamestown he transferred to the Washington Office where there he worked in the Alaskan Native Claims Office. Prior to his retirement, he transferred to the Division of Refuges in the Twin Cities Regional Office and back again to the Washington Office from which he retired.

He spent his retirement years in the Brookings, South Dakota area to be near the birds and natural areas that he loved so well. He was able to hunt and observe wildlife to his heart's content and still found time to do volunteer work with organizations such as the Brookings Wildlife Federation, the Audubon Society and helping students from South Dakota State University. In his retirement Ralph founded "Whit'lings", his wood carving business. His pieces of art included various size birds from nuthatches and wood ducks to full size loons.

Ralph is survived by his wife of 58 years, Helen; his sons, Crisfor (Kerri) and Charles (Paula); his sisters, Mary Jane (Steve) Swigonski, Shirley Ann (Roy) Seadorf and Caroline Beth (James) Sprague; his ten grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, his first born son, Chadwick Buford and granddaughters, Heather and Megan.

**Robert C. (Bob) Twist (1926 – 2014).** Carl Mitchell reported that Bob Twist passed away on Saturday February 15th, 2014, at his home in Hamilton, Montana. Bob was the Refuge Manager at Camas NWR in the 1960s. After he retired from the Fish and Wildlife Service, he continued to fly many waterfowl surveys.

No other information is available and no obituary found but if anyone would care to share details of his life and career, please send that info to Association scribe Jim McKevitt.

**Darrel (Dick) Uptegraft (1931 – 2013).** FWS retiree Darrell "Dick" Uptegraft died peacefully in Lakeville, Minnesota on December 16, 2013 and was laid to rest at Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis. Dick was the father of Cindy Barry, Deputy ARD for Ecological Service in the Pacific Region. Cindy, pictured below with her dad, took Dick's *Oral History* about 10 years after his retirement. As you might expect, Cindy, along with the transcript of that *Oral History*, has a lot of stories to tell about her father's life and career.

A native of Cadillac, Michigan, born in on December 8, 1931, Dick served four years in the Air Force during the Korean War. After his discharge, he went on to earn a B.S. degree from Western Michigan University where he conducted research on the rare Kirtland's warbler in 1955, followed by two Master's



degrees (Forestry and Science) from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse in 1959.

Dick began his career with the Service in June 1959 as a refuge manager on Long Island, New York. In 1961, he moved the family to the newly established Erie National Wildlife Refuge in Pennsylvania, where he was

the first Refuge Manager. Then it was on to Tamarac NWR in northwestern Minnesota in 1965, for a position as Deputy Director of Work at the new Tamarac Job Corps Conservation Center. As the new Center was being constructed, Cindy relates that *"our family of four lived in our Apache Raven canvas-sided camper, the back of a pickup camper, a nearby hunting lodge (for a shower and a bathroom) and an unheated fishing cabin, from July until the double-wide trailer arrived in January 1966."*

After just two years, it was time to move on. From 1969 to 1973, Dick served as Refuge Manager at Crab Orchard NWR in southern Illinois, the access restricted portion of which Dick described as *"like a Garden of Eden; you could just live among the deer and the geese. It was a tremendous area."*

After short stints at the Ecological Services Field Office in East Lansing, Michigan, and back to Crab Orchard NWR, Dick transferred to the Regional Office in Minneapolis in 1976. He retired from the R.O. in 1987 as a senior biologist and the Regional Environmental Coordinator. He could frequently be seen wearing a white T-shirt with the red letters *NEPA Man!* Said Dick, *"I considered that if there was a niche for me in the FWS, I liked this job the best."*

Dick was one of the lucky ones to retire at age 55, and lived another 27 years to enjoy his retirement. His passions were fishing (especially steelhead), deer hunting (every year), and the great outdoors. He is survived by his wife, Ollie, children, Cynthia Uptegraft Barry, Darrell (Kacey) Dewane Uptegraft, Jr., Kevin (Robin) Leehy, and Judy (Robert) Otteson, as well as eight grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and his brother, Ronald (Iva Lou). Memorials in his name to the Lupus Foundation of Minnesota would be greatly appreciated.

**Ed Yaw (1931 – 2013).** After a tough battle with prostate cancer; Ed Yaw passed away on July 8 2013 in his home in Maine. Ed was born in Battle Creek, Michigan on August 1, 1931. He attended Michigan State College, now Michigan State University, where he studied and obtained a degree in Wildlife Management. After graduation, he served in the US Army as a First Lieutenant and spent much of his tour in France. It was while in the Army in 1954 that he married to Ruth Courtier.

His first assignment with the Fish and Wildlife Service was at the National Key Deer Refuge on Big Pine Key in Florida from 1964 to 1966. He was then assigned to Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge (now the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee NWR) near Brooksville, Mississippi. In 1967 he moved his family to Okefenokee NWR near Folkston, Georgia to take a Public Relations position. There he hosted several VIPs, including John Chancellor of NBC News, and took many visitors on airboat rides. His next assignment came in 1971 when he took a job working at the Regional Office in Boston, Massachusetts. According to his son, Tim, "I wouldn't change a thing, except the Boston part. I think my father wasn't happy being stuck in an office in Boston."

Ed worked very hard in his career and made major contributions to the natural world which he loved so much. He was a very talented artist and often called to work on several artwork projects including building informative signage for nature walks, and the infamous Boardwalk. He also had a landscape design background and with that a vast knowledge of trees, and shrubs. To complement that, he had an incredible knowledge of all kinds of wildlife which he shared with his children; Deb Piotte, Tim Yaw, and Laura Parenteau. He instilled in his children a profound respect for fish and wildlife which they continue to practice in their everyday lives.

#### **OTHER NOTABLES**

**Christopher (Kip) Koss (1935 – 2013).** Kip Koss, grandson of artist, conservationist, and political cartoonist Jay N. "Ding" Darling, passed away in Key Biscayne, Florida on November 4, 2013. Although Kip elected in his life's work not to become a professional in the natural resources field – he was an airline pilot – he was a conservationist through and through and spent his retirement preserving and furthering the legacy of his famous grandfather. As president of the Ding Darling Foundation, he contributed to the efforts his grandfather began and embodied the same passion for the nation's resources, Florida's environment, and Sanibel and Captiva Island's history. In his life he had the pleasure of sharing his childhood experiences and natural resource values with two more generations of Darling descendants. After his death U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe wrote that "Kip and the foundation were great partners with the Service in promoting the Refuge System, the Duck Stamp program and ongoing conservation education, all arenas in which his grandfather was an American pioneer." When the Service instituted a national Heritage Award in 2002 for extraordinary contributions to preserving the agency's history, Ashe noted that Koss was the unanimous choice for the first award winner.

**Elizabeth Harper "Beth" Stevens (1955 – 2014).** After a courageous battle with ovarian cancer, Beth Stevens died Feb. 27, 2014, at her home in Anchorage, Alaska surrounded by family. She was only 58. Beth was the second daughter of Alaska's late Alaska Senator Ted Stevens and Ann Cherrington Stevens.

Shortly after graduation from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1977, Beth moved to Washington, D.C., and began her career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. During her 28 years of service, she worked in various assignments in Washington, D.C.; the Denver Regional Office; in San Diego; and Sacramento,

California, this last as Deputy Director of the California–Nevada Operations Office. She returned to Washington in 1999 to serve as the Deputy Assistant Director for Endangered Species. In 2013, she transferred to the division's Anchorage office to be closer to family as she battled her cancer.

Throughout her career, Beth left an indelible mark on the Service but always took care to make sure people judged her on her own merits, not those of her father. FWS Director Dan Ashe wrote: "Beth Stevens was a woman and non-scientist who made a career

in a male-and science-dominated profession. She distinguished herself, her gender, her organization, and her country. She was the daughter of one of history's most powerful U.S. senators, but if he walked through the door of the FWS Service today, he would be distinguished, not as a powerful parliamentarian, but as the father of Beth Stevens. Our colleague. Our friend. Our mentor. And now, our beloved memory."

In lieu of flowers, Beth desired friends and family make contributions in her name to the American Red Cross.

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# FWS Retirees Association

*Why join?*

*Keep connected to USFWS, renew friendships, make new friends with similar interests, travel to unique wild places, and/or do volunteer work for fish and wildlife conservation.*



## Membership Application/Renewal/Update

Fill out and mail OR use online form and PayPal on our website at <http://www.fwsretirees.org/>

Please complete each section in **BLOCK LETTERS** using Black Ink

This is a: New Application \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Information Update \_\_\_\_\_ (CHECK ONE)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

FWS Program (at retirement) \_\_\_\_\_

Office and Region (at retirement) \_\_\_\_\_ Retirement Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Your interest area(s):

- Heritage – oral and written histories, artifacts, photo records; celebrate station anniversaries
- Mentoring – youth activities, new employees;
- Communication - newsletter articles, web page, Friends Groups, members, current employees
- Membership – Regional captain, recruiting; marketing
- Travel with other members – national and international volunteer projects
- Reunion Assistance - location – site selection, tours, program, auction, Walk for Wildlife

Memberships: \_\_\_\_\_ 1-year - \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_ 2-year - \$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_ 3-year - \$75.00 \_\_\_\_\_ 5-year - \$100  
\_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime - \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ Send a membership pin (one per member only)

**Make check payable to and mail completed applications to:  
Treasurer, FWS Retirees Association, PO Box 27896, Panama City, FL. 32411**

A retiree is any person who worked for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and has now retired, including their spouses or partners.

Even if you were caught up in a reorganization, retired from another agency, or took on a second career,  
but still consider yourself part of the FWS family, you are an eligible retiree.

Among these are colleagues that were formerly in Research, Animal Damage Control,  
or certain National Fish Hatcheries transferred to State operation.

## **A Successful 2013:**

- First international volunteer trip to South Africa
- Celebrated at the Kalispell Reunion, including tours of Glacier National Park and the National Bison Range
- Oral Histories
- Assisted NCTC in youth conservation programs and training new project leaders
- Supported youth – a local Envirothon, buses to a nature center
- Supported several field station anniversaries
- Help launch friends group at Creston NFH
- Kept you updated through quarterly newsletters, updated web page, and database for FWS News, Refuge Update, and Eddies

**Made possible with your support!**



## **Our 2014 focus areas:**

- Preserving and highlighting the rich history of the Service, including conducting additional oral history interviews
- Mentoring youth and new employees
- Learning about current conservation challenges and successes
- Planning for a 2015 Retiree Reunion
- National and international volunteer projects
- Helping celebrate significant anniversaries of FWS facilities and programs

*We are a 501C(3) organization.*

*Donations are tax deductible and will help support one of our focus areas.*

<http://www.fwsretirees.org/>