

# FWS Retirees Association NEWSLETTER



Winter (February) 2022

## 2022 Board of Directors

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Jerry Grover, Emeritus	Reunion Arrangements	503-684-1809	reunion@fwsretirees.org

## Board Business



### Message from the Chair.

Eighteen months ago, I wrote an article for this newsletter, and concluded my remarks with, "I am coping with the quarantine as best as any extrovert can!" Well, in the past year, I have traveled quite a bit (this photo was taken about 100 miles north of Reykjavik, Iceland), and I have also traveled to the

island of Madeira, Portugal, and to the Amalfi Coast of Italy, and Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, in addition to some domestic travel, too. Beforehand, I research all the COVID safety measures in place and how I can best prepare to travel again.

The Board has been busy planning for our reunion, postponed in 2021, now scheduled for June 19-25, 2022, in Spearfish, SD. This is a prime tourist destination, and during peak season, so we need to ensure we can fill a minimum number of rooms before finalizing our hotel contract and continue to work with Region 6 on the agenda. Traveling anywhere right now is such an individual decision (higher than usual cost, COVID, etc.). **If you think you might attend (no commitment at this time), please contact Jerry Grover before April 1<sup>st</sup> (no fooling!)** at [reunion@fwsretirees.org](mailto:reunion@fwsretirees.org) or call 503-684-1809. The Board will commit to making a decision whether or not to hold the reunion as soon as possible, and send out an email to our membership by April 5<sup>th</sup> to let everyone know the decision, and with all the logistical information to make your reservations.

Other Board Business since our last newsletter:

- Our webmaster (Melanie Fischer) is working on a new website for us. Don't worry, we will keep using our existing website until the new one is up and running.
- Our current website informs our membership whether they are up-to-date with Association dues. Do you know if you are up-to-date? Most folks just forget, so you can go to the Membership List page at [http://www.fwsretirees.org/Membership\\_List.html](http://www.fwsretirees.org/Membership_List.html) on the website and click the link "Membership List and Dues Status" to find out whether you're current or not. If you're not you can back up to the Membership List page again, scroll a little further down, and you'll see how you can fix that!
- We are working with the FWS on outreach materials to let current employees know about our Association before folks retire. We are trying to reach folks in creative ways. Lack of local social gatherings has contributed to a decline in our membership numbers. All ideas are welcome!
- We are taking advantage of outreach opportunities and events to solicit requests from youth groups for our on-the-ground project funds.

**Be Sure to Check out the Reunion Update on the Next Page!!!**

- Don't forget about the FWS's "Experienced Services Program" as a way of staying connected to the FWS. Take a look on Page 6 for more information if you think you might be interested.

The Board meets on a videocall every month, so please forward your thoughts, ideas, comments, and articles for this newsletter including "Fun Facts" to share! *Cindy Uptegraft Barry, Chair*

**2022 Board of Directors.** The terms of three members of the Association's Board of Directors expired at the end of 2021. Each of the three board members, Cindy Barry, Doug Frugé, and Steve Rideout sought another three-year term. Also seeking to join the Board as a new member was Conrad Fjetland. Voting by all Association members current on their dues was held from November 27 through December 18, 2021. Our voting-eligible members elected to retain the three existing 2021 Board of Directors for additional three-year terms, set to begin January 2022. Of the total eligible members, 55 percent participated in voting. On our first conference call in 2022, the Board selected and approved officers for the year: Cindy Barry as Board Chair, Denise Baker as Secretary, and Steve Rideout as Treasurer. Please welcome our re-elected Board of Directors. *Denise Baker, Secretary*

**Update on 2022 Retirees Reunion.** We're starting to firm up plans for the next Retirees Association reunion. The reunion is being planned to take place from Sunday, June 19, 2022 through Friday, June 25, 2022 in Spearfish, South Dakota centered around the DC Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery (NFH) and Archives (formerly Spearfish NFH).

**ALERT:** As this Newsletter goes to press, negotiations are underway with the *Lodge at Deadwood*, about a 10-minute drive outside Spearfish. They have offered a nightly rate of \$134 (no taxes) that includes a light continental breakfast of coffee, rolls, muffins, fruit and juice and complimentary airport shuttle service to Rapid City. Locals who have attended functions there say it has always been good. Talks are continuing with them to iron out reunion needs for meeting space and social functions. We're hoping to have sleeping rooms available for arrival three days pre- and post-core meeting dates for those who may want to come early or stay later. Further, we are also trying to arrange for on-site RV parking, or at the very least be within easy walking distance. Be sure to watch your e-mail for information on final lodging and reservations arrangements.

Here is a schedule of planned activities (subject to change):

**Sunday:** Sunday is Juneteenth and note that the next day will be a federal holiday observing that milestone in our nation's history, as well as a state holiday in South Dakota. Juneteenth commemorates the date in 1865 when news of the emancipation of people still enslaved in the southern United States finally reached Galveston, Texas, over two years late. There may be local events for us to participate in. Board members will arrive. Rooms will also be available for other attendees who may want to arrive early. Registration will open at 5:00 PM for those who arrive early.

**Monday:** Primary arrival day for attendees. Association Board meets. You can tour the local area, or we may put you to work setting things up, sorting raffle and silent auction items and stuffing goody bags. Or you can set up a time to have your oral history done. Reunion registration starts at 2:00 PM. We will repeat the highly successful fundraiser, the Lynn Greenwalt Walk for Wildlife, that day.

**Tuesday:** The reunion formally begins!! Registration opens at 7:00 AM. Regional and National FWS presentations (find out what is going on in the FWS these days); possible OPM presentation. Icebreaker/social 6:00-10:00 PM with retirees and current FWS employees and the Booth Society (DC Booth's Friends Group).

**Wednesday:** Presentations continue. Afternoon tour of DC Booth National Fish Hatchery and Archives. Evening barbeque with music in the park adjacent to the hatchery.

**Thursday:** Wild Card Day!!! Activities TBD. History (formerly Heritage) Committee meeting. Banquet (invited: Booth Society Board members, congressional and local politicians and distinguished hatchery friends). Presentation of annual History Committee awards. Possible performance by DC Booth himself (local actor).

**Friday:** Departure day. Clean up. Family fun day sponsored by the Booth Society.

**Note:** We will follow the COVID safety protocols in place for each venue at the time of the reunion.

**For planning purposes, if you think you might attend all or part of the reunion events, please take a moment to send an e-mail to Jerry Grover at [reunion@fwsretirees.org](mailto:reunion@fwsretirees.org) with the number attending and we'll take it from there. Please let us know by April 1.**

**Further, there are a substantial number of your former colleagues without e-mail who do not get information from the Association. If you have the opportunity to share this announcement, please do.**

**Speaking of sharing, do you have a talent you'd like to share--written a book or painted your masterpiece? We are looking for items for our silent auction and raffle at the reunion. If you have any items you would like to contribute, or if you are interested in helping with any of the other activities preparing for the reunion, such as registration, preparing participant packets or stuffing goody bags, please contact us at [reunion@fwsretirees.org](mailto:reunion@fwsretirees.org).**

Coincidentally with the reunion, 2022 is an important milestone in the FWS's history -- the 150th anniversary of the National Fish Hatchery System. This anniversary marks the creation in 1872 of the Baird Fish Hatchery on the McCloud River in CA by the newly created US Fish Commission (the first precursor agency of the FWS).

In addition, 2022 is also the 125th Anniversary of the establishment of the DC Booth (formerly Spearfish) NFH, one of

the oldest NFHs still in operation. In addition to fish production the mission of DC Booth was expanded to include hosting an archive facility to conserve items important in the history of Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program as well as the FWS generally. One prominent example of that is a railroad car that was used during the early days of the NFHS to stock fish in efforts to restore fisheries across the United States. Last year the Retirees Association provided a \$5,000 grant to the Booth Society to help restore the railroad car, which is a favorite of visitors to the hatchery. More information about DC Booth Historic NFH and Archives can be found at <https://dcboothfishhatchery.org/education/> and at <https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/fisheries/dcBooth.php>.

The Board will commit to making a decision on whether or not to hold the reunion as soon as possible and send out an email to our membership by April 5<sup>th</sup> to let everyone know the decision, with all the logistical information needed to make your reservations. **Be sure to put a placeholder on your calendar now and stay tuned for more information! Closest airport is Rapid City, SD which is about 50 miles away. We will have more specific information on lodging, registration and schedule later!!**

We'll keep you posted as planning continues for the reunion in 2022, and we look forward to seeing you there!. *Nancy Gloman and Jerry Grover*



*Newly repainted Fish Car #3 glistens in the autumn sun on the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives grounds in Spearfish, SD. Photo by Sam Stukel, USFWS*

**Treasurer's Report.** We ended 2021 receiving \$4,300 in regular dues payments, \$700 below our target, mostly due to reduced notices to members through Newsletter announcements or other email blasts to the membership. However, we exceeded the target of two projected life memberships, receiving a third by years end adding \$1,500 to dues income. Our final income was \$5,963.87 vs \$6,020.00 projected.

Final expenses were \$2,066.32 vs \$4,100.00 expected, with income exceeding expenses by \$3,897.55. These figures do not include the addition of \$43,396.02 provided from base funds that have accumulated over several years that supported five Conservation Projects awarded to FWS field stations or programs based on a competitive application process.

We ended the year with \$18,113.57 vs. \$58,863.21 in our main checking and PayPal accounts at the end of 2020. The major change was using funds for the Conservation Projects, the first time the Association has furthered its mission in such a substantive way without jeopardizing our routine financial operating security.

The Heritage (History) Grant program used only \$5,291.20 of the \$34,033.88 available funds, primarily for management of our database program. The remaining balance of \$28,742.68 is available for approved activities identified in our award letter from the FWS for 2019. Most activity was paused due to COVID-19 as happened in 2020. All previously requested funding remains available as approved.

In our Youth Grant program we used only \$2,000 to support two honoraria at the annual Tribal SC3 conference at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). All other planned projects and activities approved by the FWS for funds awarded to us could not be spent due to COVID-19 restrictions but remain available for activities approved for 2022. Our 2020 year end balance of \$44,800.00 thus remains healthy at \$42,800.00. We are hoping to increase our regular dues income in 2022 to \$5,500 and add two more Life Memberships. We already have one (Jim Kurth) so the year is starting out strong. We will send reminders periodically to members whose dues are expiring or have expired in recent years, as well as those who joined by our first-year free program. *Steve Rideout, Treasurer*

## Membership

**New Life Member.** We congratulate and thank former Acting FWS Director Jim Kurth as our newest life member and the first for 2022! Jim, we appreciate your support of the Retirees Association. *Deborah Holle*

**Thank You Sustaining Members!** This is the fourth time we have recognized members who have either renewed their dues or joined the Retirees Association. As explained in previous issues there are about 3,000 names on our membership list. Most are "general" members, those who are not up-to-date on their dues, but who enjoy attending our reunions, maintaining contacts with former colleagues, and keeping up on FWS news and fish and wildlife resource issues through our website and newsletters. We truly appreciate all of our members, but, the "sustaining" members, those who regularly pay their annual dues, are the ones who enable the Association to continue doing what we do on behalf of all FWS retirees and the agency we all worked for at one time. For instance, last year we provided \$43,396 to five FWS field stations to assist in completion of a variety of projects. The funding for these projects came primarily from membership dues that accumulated over the years. Without these contributions by sustaining members, we could not survive as a viable entity or fund projects such as those last year, and hopefully more in the future.

We've noticed that renewals and new memberships have increased since we started recognizing our sustaining members, and we hope you appreciate being recognized. We thank you so much for helping support the Retirees Association! If you have



questions or information updates, please contact me at [promote@fwsretirees.org](mailto:promote@fwsretirees.org). If I can't help you, I will contact the Board Member who can. *Deborah Holle*

The following are those sustaining members who have either joined or brought their dues up-to-date during October 2021 through January 2022.

- ALBERS, Peter (Bernadette), Traverse City, MI, Retired 2007, R8 (Research), Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
- ANSCHUTZ, Steven (Jurita), Russel, Kansas, Retired 2007, R6 Ecological Services, Nebraska Ecological Services Field Office
- BAKER, Denise Albuquerque, NM, Retired 2018, R2, RO, Ecological Services.
- BENVENUTI, Winifred, Sandy, OR, Retired 1999, R1 RO, Endangered Species
- BIDWELL, John (Bonnie) Easton, MD. Retired 2010, R9/WO Migratory Birds, Biologist/Pilot
- CICCONE, Dom (Beth), Albuquerque, NM, Retired 2006, R2, RO, Refuges & Wildlife
- COON, Nancy (Richard), Palm Beach Gardens, FL, Retired 1995, R4, RO, Ecological Services
- COON, Richard (Nancy), Palm Beach Gardens, FL, Retired 1997, R4, RO, Migratory Birds
- COLEMAN, Rick (Carolyn), Littleton, CO, Retired 2015, R6, RO, Refuges & Wildlife, Office of Science & Integrity **(NEW MEMBER)**
- DUBOVSKY, Jim, (Connie Young–Dubovsky), Littleton, CO, Retired 2021, R6, RO, Fisheries **(NEW MEMBER)**
- ELISON, Glen (Denice) Lewiston, MT, Retired 2002, R7, RO, Refuges & Wildlife
- ENLOW, Dale (Alice), Hackberry, AZ, Retired 2011, R2, Refuges & Wildlife, Office of Refuge Law Enforcement, Zone Officer
- FORTENBERY, Donald (Luann), Lewiston, Retired 2018
- FRUGÉ, Doug (Joyce Forbush) Whitingham, VT, Retired 2017, R6, RO, Fisheries
- GANTT, Mike (Alan Gantt), Raleigh, NC, R4, RO, Ecological Services
- GILBERTSON, Nancy (Tom Prall), Oro Valley, AZ, Retired 2010, R3, Refuges & Wildlife, Neil Smith NWR
- GILLETTE, Jim, Pungoteague, VA, Retired 1987, R9 WO, Refuges & Wildlife
- GLOMAN, Nancy, Rio Rancho, NM, Retired 2010, R2, ARD, Ecological Services
- GOLIGHTLY, Paula (Ed Fernbach), Portland, OR, Retired 2021, R1, RO, Ecological Services **(NEW MEMBER)**
- HALCOMB, Monty, Wartrace, TN, Retired 2000, R4, RO, Law Enforcement, SAC
- HANSON Brian (Kathryn) Albuquerque, NM, Retired 2008, R2, RO, Ecological Services **(NEW MEMBER)**
- HARP, Vergial “Cade”, Danville, MO, Retired 2010, R3, Refuges & Wildlife, Mingo NWR **(NEW MEMBER)**
- HAYS, Karen (Mark), Norfolk, VA, Retired 2008, R5, Ecological Services, Virginia Field Office
- HEFFERNAN, Dave (Catherine), Littleton, CO, Retired 2003, R6, RO, Refuges & Wildlife, Deputy Chief
- HUBER, Royce (Lana), Custer, SD, Retired 1999, R6, Refuges & Wildlife, Ft Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge Complex
- JACOBSON, Susan (Mark), Rio Rancho, NM, Retired 2020, R2, RO, Ecological Services **(NEW MEMBER)**
- JENSEN, Alan, Wenatchee, WA, Retired 2013, R1 Fisheries, Hatchery Manager
- KOCH, Ted (Lauri), Garden Valley, ID, Retired 2018, R2, RO Ecological Services
- KURTH, Jim (Tricia), Centreville, VA, Retired 2019, R9–WO, Deputy Director **(LIFE MEMBER)**
- MILLER, Jeff (Nancy), Portland, OR, Retired 2021, R1 **(NEW MEMBER)**
- MUELLER, Allan (Kathleen), Conway, AR, R4, Ecological Services, Arkansas Field Office
- NELSON, John (Vida), Sierra Vista, AZ, Retired 1993, R7, RO, Admin, ARD Fish, Endangered Species, Ecological Services, Federal Aid, Engineering
- PALMISANO, Bill, Shepardsville, WY, Retired 2015, R8 (CA & NV)
- PERCHETTI, Sandy, (Joe), Audubon, NJ, Retired 2018, R5, Refuges & Wildlife, Edwin B. Forsythe NWR
- REINITZ, Gary (Terry), Sharps Chapel, TN, Retired 2004, R9, Federal Aid & State Programs

- REYNOLDS, Jim, Apache Junction, AZ, Retired 1999, USGS–Alaska Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, University of Alaska, Fairbanks
- SCHUMANN, Len (Donna), Dewitt, Michigan, Retired 2002, R3, Refuges & Wildlife, Private Lands, East Lansing Michigan
- SCHWINDT, Ken (Janice), Ft. Collins, CO, Retired 1999, R2, Refuges & Wildlife, Washita/Optima NWR Complex
- RUTHERFORD, Constance, Fountain Hills, AZ, Retired 2007, R2, Law Enforcement, Nogales. AZ
- SMITH, E. Franklin (Robin), Kenton, DE, Retired 2003, R5, Refuges & Wildlife, Bombay Hook NWR
- SPIER, Sally (Joseph), Albuquerque, NM, Retired 1994, R2, RO, Law Enforcement
- STRADER, Bob (Candy), Natchez, MS, Retired 2014, R4 Refuges & Wildlife, Lower Mississippi River Refuge Complex
- UNDERWOOD, Jeff (Karen), Milton, DE, Retired 2020, R9, Fisheries, Pentagon Liaison **(NEW MEMBER)**
- WEGRZYN, John, Monterey, TN, Retired 2018
- WALSWORTH, Daniel (Beverly), Orangevale, CA, Retired 2010, R8 (CA/NV), Refuges & Wildlife
- WILLFORD, Wayne (Patricia), Lampe, MO, Retired 1994, R9 Research
- WILLIAMS, Keith (Zenobia), Palm Coast, Retired 2021, FL, R4, RO, Administration **(NEW MEMBER)**
- YOUNG–DUBOVSKY, Connie (Jim Dubovsky), Littleton, CO, Retired 2020, R6, RO, Fisheries **(NEW MEMBER)**
- ZETTER, Beth (Virgil Hockett), North Plains, OR, Retired 2003, R1, RO Budget & Finance.



*Leaping salmon sculpture at Craig Brook NFH. Photo courtesy of Atlantic Salmon Federation*

### Where is OSHA or the Safety Officer When You Need Them?

Did you know that in the early days of fish culture, raising fish in a captive environment was a major challenge? What do you feed them? How do you treat them for disease outbreaks? Craig Brook NFH at East Orland, ME was built in 1889 to raise small Atlantic salmon. In 1889 Purina didn't sell fish chow so

the enterprising staff fed fly maggots to the small Atlantic salmon. How did they do that? The hatchery staff would seek out large dead farm animals, bring them to the hatchery and deposit the carcasses into a specially constructed 'fly house' constructed away from occupied buildings to avoid any stench or unpleasantness. A specially imported European bottle fly would "blow" the carcass. The name blow fly comes from an older English term for meat that flies had laid eggs laid on, which was said to be fly blown. It was the job of a hatchery staff member to regularly jab the carcass with a pole shaking loose any maggots which then would be gathered and fed to the fish. The off-shoot of this is all the bottle flies did not stay in the fly house. The elaborate residence built for the Hatchery Manager, even 85 years later, had a persistent population of bottle flies. When Jerry Grover occupied this residence there was an upstairs bedroom that the family couldn't use as it would occasionally have a hatch of 100's of flies. Jerry referred to this room as the 'blue fly bedroom'. *Submitted by Jerry Grover*

**Not Just for Dog Food.** On a similar note, did you know wild horses were hunted in Arizona by hatchery staff to gather meat to feed hatchery fish? In a story relayed to Jerry by Walt Grimes, retired manager of the Winthrop NFH, WA, when he worked for the State. It was his regular duty to go out on the range hunting wild horses which were butchered and brought back to the hatchery and ground up and fed to hatchery trout. *Submitted by Jerry Grover*

**Endangered Playboy Bunnies?** The Lower Keys Rabbit is the smallest of three subspecies of marsh rabbits. It can reach a length of 14-16 inches. These rabbits inhabit higher elevations around



*Lower Keys Rabbit (AKA "Playboy Bunny")*

fresh and saltwater marshes. The Lower Keys rabbit (*Sylvilagus palustris hefneri*) was recognized as a distinct subspecies by Dr. James D. Lazell in 1984 based on an examination of specimens collected from Lower Sugarloaf Key, Florida. It was listed as an Endangered Species in 1990. The main threats are habitat loss and

fragmentation with over 50% of it's habitat lost. As fragmentation increases, the populations become segregated and isolated reducing their genetic viability. They are also threatened with sea level rise and hurricanes that flood their nesting habitat. Predation, especially by feral and domesticated cats also pose problems.

When Dr. Lazell described the species, he named it after Hugh Hefner, purportedly in exchange for a financial contribution from

**Fun Facts and Other Interesting Stories.** We have a few more FWS **Fun Facts** and **Interesting Stories** to offer this month. As mentioned in previous issues, the FWS's official Historian on staff, Mark Madison, is maintaining a record of all these stories that are submitted to us. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I do. If so, remember that we rely on you, our members, to submit them at [promote@fwsretirees.org](mailto:promote@fwsretirees.org) or [miamibig99@fws.gov](mailto:miamibig99@fws.gov). So, help us keep this fun section of the newsletters going. We all have interesting stories to tell. Fun Facts contributions from spouses of employees are also encouraged. I'm sure they will be enjoyed by all!

*Deborah Holle, Board Member*

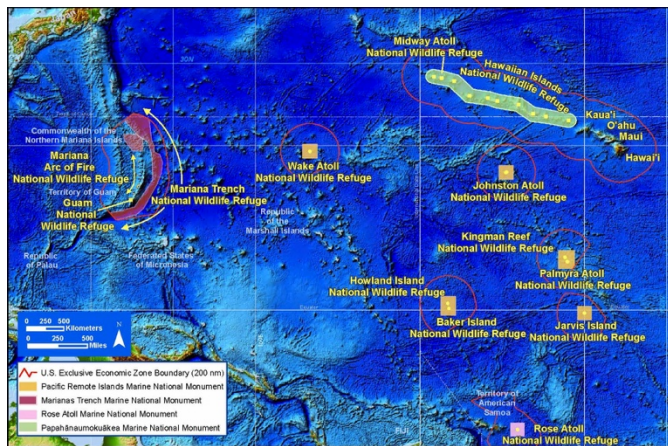
Mr Hefner’s corporation to help support Dr. Lazell’s research. While it is unclear whether the contribution ever occurred, the official common name of the critter, of course, was unaffected by all of this. However, the critter will probably always be locally known as the Playboy Bunny. *Submitted by Deborah Holle*

**Big Facts from Tiny Refuges.** On January 6, 2009, President George W. Bush established the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument. It incorporates approximately 86,888 square miles within its boundary. The boundary extends 50 nautical miles from mean low water mark of Howland, Baker and Jarvis Islands; Johnston, Wake and Palmyra Atolls; and Kingman Reef. Baker Island NWR served as a ‘mail stop’ for whalers in the mid-1800’s. Since whaling ships would spend three to five years at sea in the central Pacific Ocean, ships outbound from Nantucket and New Bedford would drop mail in a box on Baker Island and sailors would leave mail there for returning ships. This was probably the slowest mail service ever as it could take up to a year for a ship to travel the 18,600 miles.

Which Island Refuges have been the sites of nuclear detonations? Amchitka Island (3 underground detonations, 1965-1971) and Johnston Island (7 aerial nuclear detonations from 1958 to 1962).

Johnston Atoll NWR is the oldest atoll in the world. At about 85 million years old, it sits on top of over 5,000 feet of coral.

Rose Atoll NWR is one of the smallest atolls in the world if not the smallest.



*Submitted by Doug Forsell former Refuge Manager, Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument*

## FWS News

### New FWS Director Nominated, but Senate

**Approval Pending.** Martha Williams was nominated by President Biden to be the next FWS Director and approved 16-4 by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on January 12. Williams, a former director of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks has also served as the FWS Principal Deputy Director for the past year. A favorable confirmation vote in the full Senate is expected soon. An early task for the new Director will be to fill vacancies in the

Directorate – Regional Director positions in Denver and Anchorage are currently vacant. *Robin West, Vice-Chair*

**Our Perspectives on the FWS in 2022.** Work life for government employees has changed a great deal since many of us left the Service, but perhaps no greater change in a shorter amount of time has occurred than in the past two years. With COVID-19, most offices have been closed, only essential travel has been allowed (no in-person meetings), and work has largely been completed from home. While there now seems to be a hopeful light at the end of the tunnel regarding the pandemic, transition back to the old way of doing business will be challenging and perhaps not even desirable. Virtual meeting technology is good, and employees have become used to avoiding the commute; proposed return to “normal” would likely meet with resistance and exacerbate existing staffing challenges. The OPM guidance generally only requires government employees to work in the office once a week and many cite much higher productivity with such an arrangement. Given very real budget concerns, and emerging goals to reduce carbon footprints, people should not be surprised to see a new normal developing in the coming months. Office space needs, overall organizational issues (such as the return to legacy regional boundaries from changes made by the previous Administration), and initiatives to address the priorities of the new Administration will all greet the new FWS Director. *Robin West, Vice-Chair*

**FWS Experienced Services Program.** We don’t want our members to forget about this exciting new way to stay connected to the FWS and make a few extra bucks as well. This program offers US citizens aged 55 or older employment in positions to assist the FWS with temporary workforce needs. Positions could be full-time, part-time or intermittent. Participation does not affect pension for most Retirees. We have a bit more information on our website home page at [www.fwsretirees.org](http://www.fwsretirees.org). Two non-governmental organizations, the Center for Workforce Inclusion and the National Older Worker Career Center (NOWCC) are managing the program. The two NGO’s list jobs independently of each other, so you should visit both sites to see what’s available and check frequently for updates. Two interesting examples of positions that the NOWCC is currently trying to fill are:

- **Uniform Change Consultant FW1517-VA-001.** \$54.25/hour, 30 hours per week, budgeted for approximately 52 weeks. The FWS Uniform Consultant would be a key Change Agent, responsible for evaluating the existing FWS Uniform program, providing recommendations to senior leadership and implementing actions to modernize and improve the program. The major activities would fall under three main work areas: 1. Contract and Policy analysis, 2. Communications and Training, 3. Oversight and procedures. [Uniform Change Consultant Job Description](#)
- **Technical Writer.** \$50 per hour, budgeted for approximately 160 hours, hours will vary per week. Looking for someone to start in March, and they anticipate the project will last approximately 3-4 months. Position will support the development of the first draft



Bull Trout Species Status Assessment Report (SSA report) through compilation of narratives from primary authors, revising narrative for readability and consistency, copy editing the report for minor typos and formatting, drafting the Executive Summary, and copy editing the final draft for publication after peer and partner review. Must be able to create and edit legally defensible documents with interesting tables and graphs. [Technical Writer Job Description](#)

Cindy Barry, Chair

## Natural Resource Issues

*The Association believes it is important that we keep our readers informed on what we think may be the most important or highest profile fish and wildlife matters of regional or national significance, especially those of major importance to the FWS. While we have no illusions of being comprehensive in selection of articles, we believe those of most interest or significance for fish and wildlife conservation in the United States should be brought to our members' attention. Please note that we also try to keep our website updated with more expansive information on important fish and wildlife issues. Please visit the website at [www.fwsretirees.org](http://www.fwsretirees.org).*



Photo courtesy of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

### Gray Wolf ESA Protection Restored in most of the US.

On February 10, 2022 a US district judge in California reversed a 2020 decision by the Trump Administration to remove Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections for gray wolves in most of the United States. Although the Biden-Harris Administration continued support for that decision, a group of environmental advocacy groups challenged it. The ruling effectively restores Threatened species status to gray wolves across the lower 48 states, with some exceptions, notably in the Northern Rockies, where Congress in 2011 had repealed ESA protection for gray wolf populations in that region. More information can be found at <https://www.jurist.org/news/2022/02/us-federal-judge-restores-federal-protections-for-the-gray-wolf-reversing-trump-era-policy/> and [https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/federal-court-restores-gray-wolfs-endangered-species-act-protection-2022-02-10/?utm\\_source=eoc&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=eoc127&term=CarnivoreConservation&emci=2866514a-b889-ec11-a507-281878b83d8a&emdi=83e5b2ca-bc8a-ec11-a507-281878b83d8a&ceid=303586](https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/federal-court-restores-gray-wolfs-endangered-species-act-protection-2022-02-10/?utm_source=eoc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eoc127&term=CarnivoreConservation&emci=2866514a-b889-ec11-a507-281878b83d8a&emdi=83e5b2ca-bc8a-ec11-a507-281878b83d8a&ceid=303586). Doug Frugé

### America the Beautiful Initiative (AKA 30 by 30).

The Department of the Interior (DOI) has accepted a challenge posed by the Biden-Harris Administration to work together with other stakeholders to conserve, connect and restore 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030 for the sake of the economy and our health and well-being. Called *America the Beautiful*, this will be a decade-long, locally led and voluntary nationwide effort to

conserve, connect and restore lands, waters and wildlife. The initiative addresses the interconnected climate and biodiversity crises, advances environmental justice and equitable access to nature, and strengthens the economy.

An initial report released in May 2021 outlines the key principles that will guide these conservation efforts, including:

- Pursuing a collaborative and inclusive approach to conservation;
- Conserving America's lands and waters for the benefit of all people;
- Supporting locally led and locally designed conservation efforts;
- Honoring Tribal sovereignty and supporting the priorities of Tribal Nations;
- Pursuing conservation and restoration approaches that create jobs and support healthy communities;
- Honoring private property rights and supporting the voluntary stewardship efforts of private landowners;
- Using science as a guide; and
- Building on existing tools and strategies with an emphasis on flexibility and adaptive approaches.

The DOI, in coordination with the US Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Commerce and the Council on Environmental Quality, is seeking public comment regarding the development of the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas (Atlas), a new tool that will contain baseline information on the lands and waters that are conserved or restored. The Atlas is intended to be an accessible, updated, and comprehensive tool to measure the progress of conservation, stewardship, and restoration efforts across the United States.

An interagency working group, co-led by the US Geological Survey, the USDA, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is seeking input from the public, states, Tribal Nations, scientists, and a wide range of stakeholders to help develop the Atlas with a goal to release a beta version by the end of the year. You can learn more at <https://www.doi.gov/priorities/america-the-beautiful> and submit written comments to [Regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) on or before March 4, 2022. Nancy Gloman

**A New National Wildlife Refuge?** There may be a new NWR on the horizon. The most recent addition to the NWR System was the Green River NWR established in Kentucky in 2019. Now, the FWS is hopeful that a refuge in an ecologically diverse watershed in Tennessee will be formally established. For over 25 years this area has been on the conservation radar of the FWS and partners, including private landowners, who have worked tirelessly to restore the river to its natural state. The Paint Rock River NWR was authorized in 2013 but requires an initial acquisition of land before it is considered an established refuge. The watershed is home to several threatened and endangered species, including gray bats, Indiana bats, Tennessee cave salamanders and Alabama cave shrimp. Streams within the Paint Rock River watershed are home to 100 species of fish, such as the rare and endangered palezone shiner and over 50 different freshwater mussel species. With the America the Beautiful

Initiative (see above) under full swing the new refuge just might become a reality. More information can be found at <https://www.fws.gov/southeast/articles/rolling-along-proposed-tennessee-refuge-in-sight/>. Nancy Gloman

**New Process for Recovery Plan Notification.** The FWS has streamlined the process for notifying conservation partners and the public of the availability of draft recovery plans. The FWS will no longer publish a notice of availability in the *Federal Register*. Instead, the FWS will post all notices to a [centralized recovery plan webpage](#), making it easier to review and provide comments on draft recovery plans. The notices will provide the public with what they need to review and comment on draft recovery plans. They will also tell the public how to obtain additional information. The new process began on January 1, 2022. Nancy Gloman

**New Landscape Conservation Task Force.** On December 6, 2021, the FWS and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) established a new Landscape Conservation Joint Task Force. The Task Force will foster long-term collaboration between the FWS and the states to work together more effectively with Tribes, other agencies, landowners, conservation organizations and other partners to implement landscape-scale conservation in a sustainable manner for the future. As outlined in the [Charter](#), the Task Force will examine what is working and what is not and make recommendations for a collaborative approach. The FWS and state fish and wildlife agencies have a long history of working together on complex conservation issues at landscape scales. As the entities that hold principal statutory responsibility for the stewardship of the nation's biodiversity, it's crucial that they work closely together to achieve landscape-scale conservation outcomes for the future of America's fish and wildlife resources. The Task Force will include senior members from the FWS and state fish and wildlife agencies and be co-chaired by the FWS Director and President of the AFWA. Nancy Gloman

## Notes From the Field and Other Things

*This is the section we formerly called "Miscellaneous". The following article contributed by Board Member Lew Gorman III tells the story of his visit to a refuge he hadn't visited before and resulted in his learning about how the FWS is partnering in a test of equipment that may hopefully help in decarbonizing construction in the future. With it we welcome your contributions of stories or articles on just about anything that may be of interest to FWS Retirees. Just send them to Doug Frugé at [communications@fwsretirees.org](mailto:communications@fwsretirees.org).*

**Chance Visit to a "New" NWR Yields a Unique Experience.** On a beautiful fall day in Arlington, VA, I was anxious to find a new place for a nature walk. Driving south on Interstate 95, a big brown sign came to the rescue. "Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge" Next Exit". Yay!

Entering the refuge, a temporary sign pointed to "Special Event". At the new Visitors Center, there was a uniquely shaped mounting

device for solar panels. Spying someone in all brown with a FWS patch on the left shoulder sleeve, I hopped out of the vehicle to ask her what was going on. She just happened to be the Refuge Manager, Amanda Daisey. How lucky!

She explained about the event that just concluded as follows.

"FWS collaborated with Volvo Construction on a pilot project using fully electric heavy equipment to construct a new half-mile accessible trail loop at Occoquan Bay NWR. The accessible trail starts at the new Visitors Center, features an overlook platform at the Painted Turtle Pond, and connects



to the existing environmental education pavilion. Volvo's electric mini excavator and front-end loader are the first electric heavy equipment publicly available in the US and will be charged using a BEAM portable solar electric vehicle charging station. This was a cooperative project where Volvo sought operator input for future research and development, and the FWS tested the suitability of electric machinery in refuge construction and maintenance activities.



Program Attendees included: Cynthia Martinez, Chief of the NWR System; Matt Strickler, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, DOI; Ray Gallant, VP, Product Management and Productivity, Volvo Construction Equipment; and Desmond Wheatley, President and CEO, Beam Solar.

Amanda went on to describe the new Visitors Center and that it was closed now but would be open in January 2022. After telling her that I was a FWS Retiree, she immediately offered to show me inside the new Visitors Center and Administration Facility. That felt good.

They do a lot of conservation education with local county schools at the Refuge. I informed her that the Retirees Association had a grant program to support youth-focused outdoor activities that had been put on temporary hold due to COVID, but that I would send her information on it, which I did.

Now off for the trails. Strewn with driftwood from a recent storm the Deephole Point Trail, an old US Army facility road, offered very pretty Occoquan and Belmont Bay water views. Rafts of



Ruddy Ducks, Pied-billed Grebe, Ring-billed Gulls, and Canada Geese dotted the waters. A Great Blue Heron graced a marsh while beaver-chewed sticks littered the edge of the trail. Brilliant autumn colors added to the delight of this nature experience. A walk in a refuge is a prescription that was just what the doctor



ordered. This country's NWRs are a treasure, indeed. And my Blue Goose Passport now has a new stamp!



*Lew Gorman III (Images by Lew Gorman III and Occoquan NWR)*



### Conservation Champion Neal Sigmon.

FWS Retiree Gail Carmody recently passed along information from Retiree Goeff Hasket that North Carolina native Neal Sigmon passed away on February 13, 2022, in Charlotte at the age of 78. Neal worked for the US House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies. During his career he was

particularly committed to protecting nature and the environment, working hard to obtain funding for the FWS, the National Park Service and other Interior agencies. One particularly important aspect of his work was advancing and supporting the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park. Neal graduated from Duke University in 1965 and enlisted in the US Air Force in 1968, serving a year in Vietnam. When he retired from his federal career after more than four decades in Arlington, VA, he and his wife, Mary Ann moved to his native city of Charlotte, where he was an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Community and volunteered in multiple Charlotte schools. During this time, he also served on the Board of the National Wildlife Refuge Association. At Neal's request there will be no formal funeral service, though a private celebration of life event will be held later. The family requests that people plant a tree, go for a walk in nature and/or make a donation to the National Wildlife Refuge Association to honor Neal's memory. *Doug Frugé*



### Fish and Wildlife Artist

**Duane Raver Jr.** Fish and Wildlife Service Retiree Wilson Laney informed me of the recent passing on February 15 of another North Carolina native, renowned fish and wildlife artist Duane Raver Jr, at age 94. Mr Raver lived near Clayton, NC. Born in Newton, IA on May 4, 1927, he was long employed by the North Carolina Wildlife Commission, beginning in 1950. He helped develop the Commission's

Fisheries Division, served as Dingell-Johnson Act Coordinator and later transferred to the Education Division and produced many illustrations for *Wildlife in North Carolina* magazine, eventually becoming editor. While there he also did many illustrations for numerous other state wildlife departments across the country as well as a series of fish illustrations, mostly freshwater, during the 1970s that were commissioned by the FWS. All or most of the originals of those illustration are kept at

the DC Booth NFH and Archives in Spearfish, SD. He retired from the Commission in 1979 to continue his passion for creating



*Striped Bass illustration for FWS by Duane Raver Jr*

beautiful and detailed wildlife art. Duane received many honors over the years, including being chosen several times as the NC Wildlife Federation's "Artist of the Year" and was inducted into their

"Hall of Fame." He also received North Carolina's highest civilian honor, "The Order of the Long Leaf Pine." A funeral service to celebrate Duane's life was planned to be held at the Horne Memorial United Methodist Church in Clayton, NC on February 20 at 2PM. *Doug Frugé*

## Passing of Colleagues

*If you are aware of the passing of any retired FWS employees, including those who left the Service before retirement because of organizational or later career changes, please let us know so we can pass that information on to our readers. If you can provide us with links to online obituaries that would be most helpful and should be sent to [Doug Frugé at communications@fwsretirees.org](mailto:communications@fwsretirees.org).*



### Richard Charles "Dick" Banks (1931 – 2021).

Dick Banks died peacefully at home in Alexandria, VA on October 24, 2021 at the age of 90. He had been under hospice care for a few months following a two-week hospitalization in June. He was born April 29, 1931 in Steubenville, OH. His father, a steel mill construction engineer, was also an amateur naturalist who encouraged Dick's interest in the outdoors and birds in particular. He was an active birder in high school and an Eagle

Scout. He majored in wildlife conservation at Ohio State University, where he was also in the Army ROTC, hoping to be assigned to the Artillery Branch, but because of eyesight issues he was assigned to the Medical Service Corps instead and served in Korea for a year. After being discharged, he began graduate work at the University of California at Berkeley studying White-crowned Sparrows under Dr Alden Miller. He became interested in island speciation and ecology in Baja California and described three new bird subspecies from Cerralvo Island.

He became curator of birds and mammals at the San Diego Museum of Natural History in 1962 and in 1966 was appointed to the Bird section in the FWS's Bird and Mammal Labs in the National Museum of Natural History. There he worked on North American bird systematics. He later became head of the Bird Section and eventually headed the Bird and Mammal Labs. While in that position he was particularly interested in Canada Goose speciation.

Dick was named to the American Ornithologists Union (AOU) Checklist Committee in 1971 and later headed the Committee, leading publication of the Seventh Edition of the Checklist. He was also the impetus for the AOU publishing an Ornithological Newsletter and for many years was its editor. He served as Secretary of the AOU for four years and president in 1994-96. He was also active in the Cooper Ornithological Society and was President of the Wilson Society and the Washington Biologists' Field Club. He was a founding member of the Ornithological Council, a non-profit organization that provides scientific information on birds and ornithology to the government and public.

Dick was married to Gladys "Chuck" Sparks, who passed away in 2009. They had two sons, and he was stepfather to two of his wife's children from her previous marriage. He also had two grandchildren. *Information provided by Dr Matthew C Perry to FWSRA Database Manager Marc Epstein. Photo by Jay M Sheppard. Article drafted by Doug Frugé based on a memorial presented by George E Watson to the Washington Biologists' Field Club on October 30, 2021.*



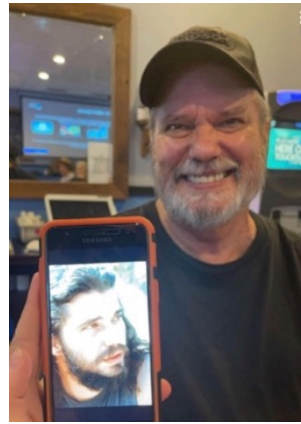
### **Lee Barclay Jr. (1944 –**

**2021).** Lee Armstead Barclay, Jr. passed away December 24, 2021 at Cookeville, Tennessee.

Lee was born May 23, 1944 in Opelika, Alabama, son of the late Lee Armstead Barclay, Sr., and the late Lucille (Lancaster) Barclay. Lee is survived by his wife of 49 years, Judy M Barclay. Lee received a Master of Science degree

from Samford University in Birmingham, AL in the 1970s and did work there on the fishes of the Locust Fork of the Black Warrior River in Alabama and served as the Field Supervisor of the Tennessee ES Field Office in Cookeville from the late 1980s until his retirement in 2009.

A celebration of Lee's life will be held on a date this spring not yet determined. Memorial donations in Lee's name may be made to Defenders of Wildlife, the Nature Conservancy or the Putnam County Animal Shelter Spay and Neuter Clinic. An online guestbook to send Lee's family a message can be found at [www.crestlawnmemorial.com](http://www.crestlawnmemorial.com). *Thanks go to Steven Alexander, Patricia Kelly and Gail Carmody for providing information for this article. Doug Frugé*



### **Charles "Chuck" Buzzard**

**(1953 – 2021).** Chuck Buzzard died on December 19, 2021. Chuck was born July 15, 1953 in Kansas City, Missouri. He grew up in Aurora, Missouri. His mother, Shirley, died when he was 10 and his grandparents raised him. He spent much of his teenage years in the woods and on the lake. His hobbies were hiking, hunting, reading, and music. He played trumpet in the Aurora High School band and graduated in 1971. He

attended Missouri Southern College and Southwest Missouri State University before receiving a draft notice in 1972, when he enlisted in the US Navy. Chuck spent two years aboard the USS Davidson as a Yeoman and was honorably discharged in 1975 and then served two years on active reserve duty. Chuck met his wife Tommie True when he applied for a job with the Louisiana Secretary of State's Office in 1975. They enjoyed a long, loving relationship and were married in Alaska in 1997. They lived in 12 different states and loved every minute.

Chuck worked as an Oil Rig Derrickhand in California from 1980 to 1983. The work was intense and dangerous. Chuck started his federal career in 1984 with the Department of the Navy, Personnel Support Activity Detachment in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He continued to serve in that role at duty stations in Orlando, Florida; Portland, Oregon; and Bremerton, Washington until 1996. He resumed working as an Oil Rig Derrickhand in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska from 1997 to 1999, before beginning work for the FWS in 2000 as an Administrative Officer at Merritt Island NWR in Titusville, Florida and worked there until 2004. He then worked as an Administrative Officer for the USDA Farm Service Agency in Reno, Nevada from 2004 to 2009. Chuck finished his federal service as a Visitor Use Assistant at Canaveral National Seashore in Titusville, Florida, from 2009 to 2013.

Chuck was always prepared and organized but loved getting out of meetings. He was always willing to help his co-workers, especially those who were not able to stand up for themselves. Chuck was an incurable romantic and loved literature, quotes, poems, and meaningful music. One of Chuck's favorite quotes was from William Faulkner: "If I were reincarnated, I'd want to come back as a buzzard: nothing hates him or envies him or wants him; he is never bothered or in danger, and he can eat anything."

Chuck is survived by his loving wife, Tommie. *Paul Tritaik*

**Eley "Lee" Parker Denson, Jr (– 2021).** Lee Denson Jr of Prescott, Arizona passed away at home on November 28, 2021. He is survived by his sons, Walter and Alan. Mr Denson worked in FWS Region 2. A veteran of the Korean War, he will be interred alongside his wife, Barbara, at Prescott National Cemetery. *Although few details are available at this time, if more complete information comes to light, a more comprehensive article may be included in a future newsletter. Information*



reported by Lee's son Alan Denson and forwarded by Pete Stine and Marc Epstein.



**Charles Edward Hasty (1937 – 2022).** Charles Hasty passed away January 22, 2022. He was born February 2, 1937 in LaGrange, Georgia, to Henry W “Buddy” and Flora Thompson Hasty. Charles is survived by his wife, Betty Testerman Hasty, two children and three grandchildren.

Charles was a graduate of LaGrange High School in 1954. He began his federal career in 1955 with the US Postal Service, which he left in 1956 to pursue his college education at night at Georgia State University while working private sector jobs. He met his first wife, Norma in 1960, and they were married in May that year. He completed a bachelor's degree in Personnel Administration in 1962 and resumed his federal career, first with the Internal Revenue Service and later transferred to a position with the FWS in 1972 as a Personnel Management Specialist.

Charles was frequently the welcoming voice that employees heard when receiving a job offer in the FWS Southeast Region. When he retired in September 1993 he was the Federal Benefits Officer for the ten-state region. Charles met his second wife, Betty, in 1994, but a chance encounter in Chicago a year later sparked their relationship and they married in June, 1999 at Pleasantdale Church of God in Doraville, Georgia.

After retiring, Charles went to work for LifeSpan Services in Atlanta as a Federal Benefits Consultant and worked for them until his second retirement in 2010. After that he continued private consulting on his own throughout the US until 2013. He was well known to FWS retirees through his popular retiree seminars, including those he conducted with Betty at every FWS Retiree Reunion beginning in 1999 until he could no longer travel. Charles was especially helpful to those retirees who had never received any retirement benefits counseling during their careers and those whose benefits were affected by life changing events.

Throughout his career Charles conducted well over a thousand retirement seminars for federal agencies. It was through these seminars and his private consulting that Charles' expertise became nationally known. He was constantly sought out by employees for advice and assistance as they neared retirement. Charles was highly respected and was always ready to help with whatever problem employees might have. He would even take time away from dinner to help a colleague. He had a can-do attitude in overcoming bureaucracy and was instrumental in helping hire many of the past, present and future leaders of the FWS.

Charles was a quiet man, but exceptionally knowledgeable. When he conducted his seminars, he commanded a room with his expertise and kindness. Charles' service to others extended to his faith community as well. He was a retired licensed minister of the Church of God and was actively involved in several ministries of

the Fayette Family Church in Fayetteville, Georgia. Charles will be deeply missed by his many friends, both active and retired from the federal government and all who knew him. *Paul Tritaik*

**Craig Hulse (– 2021).** Craig Hulse, who worked as a chemist at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center during the 1980s and 90s passed away December 23, 2021, but no obituary is available. Craig's wife Debbye Thommen also worked at Patuxent. *Although few details are available at this time, if more complete information comes to light, a more comprehensive article may be included in a future newsletter. Reported to Marc Epstein by Dr Matthew Perry.*



**Ernest Samuel “Ernie” Jemison (1932 – 2021).** *The following article was written by Ernie's good friend and colleague Jim Neal. It is presented here mostly as Jim wrote it with only a few minor edits.*

Just before the holidays, we learned of the loss of Ernie Jemison on October 23, a friend and mentor to many who worked with him during the 40 years of his tenure with the FWS. Ernie is fondly remembered and missed by all who knew him.

I remember Ernie as a bear of a man who never failed to provide encouragement and support for the many younger employees who worked with him. He was quick witted and a jokester who delighted in skewering his friends but could just as easily laugh when he was the butt of a barb. He was a superb camp cook who seemed to be able to whip up a tasty meal with very few ingredients with which to work. Ernie and Claude Lard, who died years ago, were famous for their nightly games of “Booray” (Bourré), a card game of French origins adopted by Louisiana Cajuns. They never tired of playing the game, especially with the uninitiated, as the game seemed to be without a set of standard rules, at least the way it was played by Ernie. He was unflinching in his support of younger employees with whom he worked.

Ernie was born in Slidell, Louisiana on January 8, 1932 and spent his early and formative years hunting and fishing in the bayous and marshes around southeastern Louisiana where he developed his love for the coastal and bottomland biota. He met Dolly Whitfield, the love of his life and his wife of 64 years, in the Slidell area and was married on June 8, 1951. He served in the US Navy in California. His academic education was at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge where he received a BS in Forestry in 1960 and a MS in Game Management in 1961, working under the famed waterfowl biologist Dr Robert Chabreck, a renowned expert on Gulf Coastal wetlands and wildlife management.

Just out of college in 1961, Ernie began his long and distinguished career with the FWS at Lacassine NWR where he served as a biologist working on waterfowl management and the farming program. He then transferred to Wheeler NWR in 1963 where he worked on co-op farming and public use. He had an extended



temporary duty assignment working with geese at Swan Lake NWR. He became the Assistant Refuge Manager at Sabine NWR in 1964 and worked mostly as a wetland manager and early practitioner of moist soil management, with oil and gas operations, and in law enforcement. While at Sabine, he was also Acting Refuge Manager for Catahoula NWR.

In January of 1967, he was appointed Refuge Manager of Tishomingo NWR. Besides the usual duties of a Refuge Manager at Tish, he served as an instructor at the first Refuge Academy in 1969, was tasked with instruction at YCC training, and lead a waterfowl habitat reconnaissance effort in Oklahoma.

Ernie became a Staff Specialist for Wildlife Resources in the Austin Area Office in 1978 where he supervised refuge programs in Oklahoma and Texas, worked on water rights issues in Texas, and was the area office coordinator for acquisition on the Texas coast and bottomland hardwood forests in eastern Texas. He assisted in the acquisition of over 150,000 acres along the coast. Ernie returned to work out of his old duty station at Tishomingo NWR for Refuges and Realty in the mid 1980's. There Ernie worked with Claude Lard and I under the supervision of the long-time Chief of Realty in Region 2, Tom Smith (recently deceased). Ernie worked with Tom, Claude, and me as an ascertainment biologist on acquisition projects along the Texas coast, including at Matagorda Island, on the Chenier Plain, and at various mid-coast refuges. He also worked on the establishment of many of the bottomland hardwood refuges in eastern Texas and Oklahoma and was instrumental in the establishment of Deep Fork, Little River, and Trinity River National Wildlife Refuges. He received several outstanding performance awards and was named Conservationist of the Year by the Oklahoma Wildlife Federation in 1991, the year he retired from the Service.

One interesting story that fits into the other duties as assigned category occurred while he was an ascertainment biologist. After a bow and arrow hunt at Laguna Atascosa NWR, two alligators were shot with arrows that remained in the live gators, an 8- and a 12-footer. Because of his background, Ernie was assigned the task of removing the arrows from the live alligators which he successfully accomplished.

Ernie was proceeded in death by his beloved wife in 2015. He is survived by his three children: Barbara Levins of Cedar Park, TX, Russell Jemison of Georgetown, TX, and Robert Jemison of Tishomingo, OK and numerous grandchildren. Thanks to Robert for suppling information for this eulogy. The children hope to organize a memorial service for their father in Tishomingo, perhaps in the spring. *Special thanks to Jim Neal for drafting this article and Ernie's son Robert Jemison, for first alerting us to his passing and providing information to Jim. Also, to Pete Stine, Bill Seawell and Billy Hawthorne for providing information about Ernie's career and life.*



**John Robert Maestrelli (1941 – 2022).** John Maestrelli passed away peacefully in Piedmont, California on January 22, 2022, surrounded by family. John was born May 11, 1941 in Spring Lake, New Jersey. He was

the son of Giordano Bruno and Marie (Russomanno) Maestrelli. He attended Spring Lake Grammar School (now known as HW Mountz School) and graduated from Manasquan High School. After graduation John had numerous jobs including pin boy at a bowling alley, grocery delivery boy, pool boy, gas station attendant and more. In 1963 he enrolled at Snow College in Ephraim, Utah but later transferred to Utah State University in Logan, graduating in 1967 with a BS in Wildlife and Fisheries Management.

John's first job after college was as a Research Wildlife Biologist at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland. While there, he studied the effects of DDT and other pesticides on the reproduction of birds of prey, which helped lead to the banning of those chemicals from the marketplace. He also worked with captive bald eagles and was successful in breeding them in captivity and releasing them in New England, where the wild eagle population had been decimated by pesticides.

It was at Patuxent where John met Mary Munson. They fell in love and began a happy union that went on for the next 54 years. Those years included John's professional work for the federal government as a wildlife biologist, with projects including wildlife hazards at airports, endangered species protection, and wildlife damage problems. The last 11 years of his career were as State Director of the USDA Wildlife Services program in Wisconsin, where he oversaw numerous wildlife projects, including the relocation of 5,000 nuisance black bears to wild habitat.

John had countless curiosities and hobbies, including tinkering and creating devices for his home and cars, hunting and fishing, and travel to countries around the world. He owned and restored an airplane – a 1941 Taylorcraft. When John and Mary retired, they sold their home in Wisconsin in 2004 and bought an RV to explore the country, including a 15,000-mile road trip to Alaska. They finally settled in Lee County, Florida, where they lived the last 16 years. All of their adventures provided rich material for the stories John was famous for telling – stories his family will continue to tell in his memory, though not nearly as well as he did.

John is survived by his wife Mary, their two daughters, a sister and brother, three grandchildren and his faithful cat, Pumpkin. John's final years involved facing a disease that tried to silence him and dim his bright light. Despite Alzheimer's best efforts, John's contagious smile, his optimistic outlook, and his zest for life never wavered.

A Celebration of John's life will be held in Fort Myers, Florida on March 12, 2022. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Alzheimer's Association or Ducks Unlimited in his honor. *Thanks to Dr Matthew Perry for providing information on John's passing to Marc Epstein and to Marc for forwarding it. Doug Frugé.*



**William M. 'Bill' Striplin (1933 – 2021).** A private graveside service was held at Mount Calvary Catholic Cemetery in Portland, OR for Bill Striplin who died November 7, 2021, at age 87.

Bill was born December 31, 1933 in San Francisco, CA. As a youth Bill participated in Boy Scouts and earned the highest rank, becoming an Eagle Scout. He graduated from Oregon State College in 1955 as a

civil engineer. In 1956 he married Thelma Rask.

He was employed as an engineer for 37 years with the FWS and was the Regional Engineer in the Portland office when he retired. He was always considered helpful in his professional roles in the Engineering Division with the FWS and was also greatly respected amongst his peers. Bill was definitely "one of the good guys" according to co-workers.

In addition to his FWS career, Bill also served in the US Army Reserve, 104th Division for over 40 years including a two-year tour at Fort Belvoir, VA. During his career with the Army Reserve he rose to the rank of Colonel.

Bill is survived by his wife, Thelma; sons, Harry and Michael; daughters, Theresa Nisbet and Shelley Striplin; nine grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. Remembrances can be made in Bill's name to the Tunnel to Towers Foundation (<https://t2t.org>). *Jerry Grover*



**Rolf Wallenstrom (– 2022).** We

learned on February 15 of the passing of Rolf Wallenstrom at his home in Houston, TX. According to family, "he did pretty well after Ginnie

passed in December but after that he started declining. No, real special illness or suffering, just faded away. He would have been 90." Rolf was born in Syracuse, NY and graduated from the University there with a degree in Forestry. He worked in the Dakotas in the 1960s in the Service's land acquisition program and would later return as the Area Manager in Pierre, SD. He was selected for the 1971-72 Departmental Manager Development Program in Washington, DC and served in several leadership positions there before his assignment in Portland as the Regional Director. He retired to his home on the Columbia River, but in 2019 moved permanently to his and Ginnie's other home in Houston to be near his daughter. *Few details are available at this time, and a more comprehensive article will appear in the next newsletter. Jerry Grover.*

***This Newsletter was compiled by Newsletter Editor Doug Frugé with contributions from other Board members. If you have information that would be of interest to Association members for inclusion in future newsletters, please contact Doug at [communications@fwsretirees.org](mailto:communications@fwsretirees.org). We also welcome any articles you may wish to contribute!***

***Also, be sure to visit our website for more up-to-date information at [www.fwsretirees.org](http://www.fwsretirees.org)***