

FWS Retirees Association NEWSLETTER



Spring (May) 2023

2023 Board of Directors

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Board Business

FWS Retirees Reunion 2023

NCTC, Shepherdstown, WV
November 27 – December 1, 2023

Planning continues for the 20th FWS Retirees Association Reunion at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) from November 27 to December 1, 2023 in Shepherdstown, WV. John Turner and the flyfishing festival are on tap for November 29 and historian Douglas Brinkley will speak on November 30.



Lodging and meal plan estimates are based on the current GSA fiscal year 2023 per diem. Because the reunion is in fiscal year 2024, the rates may slightly change. The estimate is

\$98 per night per room for lodging at NCTC and \$54 per day per person for meals. We will provide the NCTC shuttle service schedule from and to Dulles airport. We want to make sure that folks travel on Monday and Friday, as we will have a full 3-day agenda, including the Thursday night banquet.

Please don't call NCTC for lodging. We have a block of 100 rooms, and we will soon send more information. NCTC has asked the Association to provide the list of registrants. We'll provide more details in future newsletters and our website at <http://www.fwsretirees.org/PastReunions/UpcomingReunion.html> as planning proceeds. Please plan your travel early and lock in your travel dates, as this is right after Thanksgiving.

We just learned that under current federal ethics guidelines, **"it would be inappropriate for any entity having an event at the NCTC to hold either a raffle or a silent auction."** Please contact a board member if you have any ideas for fund raising that does not involve doing something at NCTC.

Message from the Chair



One of the purposes of the Retirees Association is to *"facilitate camaraderie among U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service retirees..."*

Therefore, with this edition of the newsletter, I am encouraging everyone to send in stories and photos from your recent trips with other FWS retirees, and we'll

include them in future newsletters. Send them to our newsletter editor, Helen Clough, at the email address provided above.

I'll kick this off by including my recent photos from a road trip that I took last month to the Olympic peninsula to visit Bruce and Mary Ellen Halstead, Lenny and Carla Corin, and Jim and Rhonda Turner (with Bill and Deanna Shake). We've been having unusually dry and sunny weather this Spring in the Pacific Northwest!



Bruce and Mary Ellen Halstead, from their deck overlooking the Strait of Juan de Fuca, near Protection Island and Dungeness NWRs, Sequim, WA



Rhonda and Jim Turner (from Port Ludlow, WA) with Deanna and Bill Shake (Tigard, OR) for wine tasting at Marrowstone Vineyards, Nordland, WA.



Lenny and Carla Corin, when we walked through the Skagit Valley tulip fields. They live on Whidbey Island, and I interviewed Lenny for his oral history.



BONUS photo! I took this photo from a group trip to South Padre Island, TX, for Super Bowl weekend! With Dave Frederick and Joyce, Jeff Haas and Deidre, Bernice Todd and Roger, Dawn Whitehead, and friends Lisa and Joey. Denise Baker arrived the next day.

Please enjoy this newsletter, and I hope you will contribute your stories and photos for future newsletters! Have a great Summer, wherever you are! *Cindy Uptegraft Barry, Chair*

Announcement of the 2024 Election for the Board of Directors

Each year, the terms for three of the nine Board members expire and their seats come up for election. We are looking for candidates for the 2024 Board. It's important that we have a good and active Board to keep this Association running, and we need people with new and diverse ideas and viewpoints to step forward. The 2024 elections will be held this fall, with new or re-elected Board members taking their seats in January 2024.

Every dues-paying member gets a chance to run for one of these seats or nominate someone else to run. Once a slate of candidates has been identified, every dues-paying member has the opportunity to vote for the candidates of their choice. This year, terms will expire for Denise Baker, Deborah Holle, and Paul Tritaik. We are grateful to hear that Deborah and Paul may again stand for election to the Board. This is the opportunity for others interested in being active and influential in the Association to throw their hats into the ring. To be qualified to seek nomination and vote members must be current and paid up with their dues by October 1. Names and biographical summaries of candidates must also be submitted by October 20 to Denise Baker at secretary@fwsretirees.org.

Ballots with the names and bios of all qualified candidates will be electronically available or mailed to eligible voters by November 1 to begin voting. Voter returns will be accepted through November 22. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please let us know directly. Or if you know of someone else that you believe would make a good board member, please confirm their interest first before submitting their name for consideration. Nominations and bios should be sent to Denise Baker at secretary@fwsretirees.org or phone 602-796-0769 by October 20.

By the way, if you're not sure of your membership/dues status, to find out you can go to https://www.fwsretirees.org/Documents/FWS-Retirees-Paid_current.pdf.

Sincerely, Denise Baker, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Previous Treasurer, Steve Rideout, worked with incoming new Treasurer, Doug Frugé, during January and February to transfer responsibilities and access to various accounts to Doug, who gained full access to the most critical accounts by the end of March. Those critical accounts included the main and grants checking accounts, PayPal, Jotform and the ASAP (Automated Standard Application for Payments) system used for transferring funding to the Association from the two grants we receive from the FWS. Transition and establishing access by Doug to some other less critical systems will probably be an ongoing process for a few more months. In addition to the checking accounts, two new credit card accounts (main and grants) were established in the name of the Association.

Operating Accounts. For the first quarter, as of the end of March, our total operating income was \$2,434.94, including \$2,400.00 in dues payments by 34 new or renewing members plus two new Lifetime members. The balance of the income included a reimbursement from PayPal for a new point-of-sale (POS) device that we purchased last year, but which is already obsolete and will be replaced and configured for use at the reunion this fall. Expenses totaled \$2,146.00, including various website-related expenses, PayPal fees, some minor office supplies and postage, plus a new Lifetime Member plaque to replace the one currently on display at the NCTC. Our third

quarter operating income less expenses was \$288.94, and our operations checking account balance at the end of March totaled \$21,371.48.

Grants Accounts. Of the \$11,327.64 remaining in the 2019 History Grant, we had spent \$975.75 by the end of the first quarter. Expenses included the annual renewal of the Simon Says subscription that is used for online virtual transcription of oral history recordings, some oral history travel, fees for filing Forms 1099 for contract work, and payment to Friends of Heinz Refuge for an anniversary celebration of the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. There were no expenditures during the first quarter from the \$24,287.25 remaining in the 2020 Conservation Career Awareness (CCA) and Youth Programs grant. At the end of March, we had a total of \$10,520.26 in the Grants checking account.

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, activities supported by the two grants from the FWS were quite minimal during 2020-2021, primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we were able to get extensions of the Periods of Performance for both grants, and activity began ramping up again during 2022, the History grant will reach a spending deadline on June 30 this year, and the CCA/Youth grant funds will expire on September 30. We are working on a new proposal for the History grant and hope to have the new 2023 funding approved and available by June 30 or soon after. We will also apply for a new CCA/Youth grant for 2023 as well. *Submitted by Doug Frugé.*

FWS Retiree Shirts

There was overwhelming support at the recent reunion in South Dakota to sell Retirees Association polo shirts as a fundraiser. The FWS Retiree Association is going to sell polo shirts with an embroidered FWS facsimile logo of the Service emblem and the word *Retiree* underneath. The logo will be centered on the upper lefthand side of the shirt. Mens and Women's shirts will be similar and in coastal blue. We should have a mockup of the shirt available soon. We will send out a separate email with an order form included and pricing. We will also have some shirts available for purchase at our upcoming reunion at NCTC in West Virginia.



Association Bylaws Updated

After notification was sent to all association members, the revised bylaws of the association were signed by Chair Cindy Uptegraft Barry on May 15 and are now posted on the web page at https://fwsretirees.org/Documents/FWSRA-bylaws_2023.pdf.

Membership

Starting the Spring Quarter, January –April we gained 1 more Life Member, Paul Tritaik, # 58 on January 5th! His picture and short biography are in the previous, Winter Newsletter. This quarter was like our winter quarter with 10 new member, 1 Life member for a total of 44 sustaining members.

Congratulations and a big “Thank You” to Paul Tritaik. We appreciate all our sustaining members and welcome our 10 new members to the Retirees Association! Without your continued support through joining and renewing your memberships we would not have reunions, travel opportunities with other FWS retirees, funds for field station projects, and an easy way to keep in touch with our former colleagues and friends in the FWS. Thank you again for your support! If you have any questions concerning your membership, please email Deborah Holle at miamibig99@aol.com or call her at 512-507-1436.

- ADAMS, Francis “Jeff” (Mary Burtness), Fairbanks, AK, Retired 2017, R7, Fisheries, Fairbanks Office, **New**
- BIDWELL, John (Bonnie), Easton, MD, retired 2010, R9 (WO) Migratory Birds/Pilot
- BIERCE, Pamela, Sacramento, Ca, R8 (CA&NV), RO, External Affairs
- BOATENG, Stephen, Laurel, MD, Retired 2022, R5, RO, Ecological Services, **New**
- BOWDEN, Sally (Bennie), Wallops Island, VA Retired 2017, R5, Refuges & Wildlife, Chincoteague NWR
- CULLINAN, Steve, Albuquerque, NM, Retired 2012, R2, RO, Refuges & Wildlife, Water Resources
- DEWHURST, Donna, Anchorage, AK, R7, RO, Migratory Birds
- ESSIG, Ron (Susan), Shutsbury, MA Retired 2018, R5, RO, Wildlife & Sport Fisheries Restoration. **New**
- FETHERMAN, Sheri (Ray), Lakewood, CO, Retired 2013, R6, RO Refuges & Wildlife
- FRUGÉ, Doug (Joyce Forebush), Whitingham, VT, Retired 2017, R6, RO, Fisheries
- GAMBLE, Lawrence (Jane), Morrison, CO, Retired 2017, R6, RO, Fisheries
- GLADWIN, Terry, (Mary), Pocatello, ID, Retired 2001, R1, Refuges & Wildlife, SE Idaho Refuge Complex
- GLOMAN, Nancy, Rio Rancho, NM, Retired 2010, R2, RO, ARD Ecological Services
- HAGEDORN, Gary (Susan), Yacolt, WA, Retired 2007, R1, Refuges & Wildlife, Mid-Columbia NWR
- HASKETT, Geoff (Nikki), Grants Pass, OR, Retired 2016, R7, RO, Regional Director
- HAYS, Karen (Mark), Norfolk, VA, Retired 2008, R5, Ecological Services, Virginia Field Office
- HENSON, Colleen, (Paul), Portland, OR, Retired 2023, R1, RO, Ecological Services **New**
- HERNANDEZ-FRISKE, Julia (Michael Friske), Inver Grove Heights, MN, retired 2019, R3, RO, Law Enforcement
- HILLEY, Dave (Marty), Kingman, KA, Retired 2008, R6, Refuges & Wildlife, Quivira NWR **New**
- HOOPER, Brenda, Charles Town, WV, Retired 2021, R9(NCTC), Division of Training **New**
- HULTMAN, Don (Lauri Munroe-Hultman), Williamsburg, MA, Retired 2009, R3, Refuges & Wildlife, Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
- JACOBSEN, Susan (Mark), Rio Rancho, NM, Retired 2020, R2, RO, Ecological Services
- JUNG, Susan (Henry), Clackamas, OR, Retired 2019, R1, RO, Administration, CGS
- KELLY, Diane, Apple Valley, MN, R3, RO, Migratory Birds
- KING, Cecilia, Fairfax, VA, Retired 2022, R9, (WO), Administration- Division of Human Capital **New**
- KNAUER, William, Lampasas, TX Retired 2007, R7, RO, Subsistence Management
- KUNCIR, Frank, Leesburg, FL, Retired 2005, R4, Manatee Protection Office, Office of Law Enforcement, Groveland, FL
- McCUE, Robert, (Patricia), Dover, DE, Retired 2004, R6, RO, Ecological Services
- MEDLIN, Joel (Sherry), Jemez Springs, NM, Retired 2002, R1, Ecological Services, Sacramento Office
- MOTT, Seth (Sarah), Herndon, VA, Retired 2018, R9(WO), Science Advisor, Science Applications
- OSTROFF, Ruth, Rio Lina, CA, Retired 2019, R8(CA/NV), Migratory Birds, Sacramento **New**
- PARISI, Maria, Shepherdstown, WV, Not Retired, R9(NCTC) **New**
- PORTWOOD, Ray (Kim), Wilder, ID, Retired 2022, R1, Refuges & Wildlife, Deer Flat NWR **New**
- SAUSEN, Gretchen, La Grande, OR, Retired 2022, R1, Ecological Services, LaGrande Field Office, **New**
- SCHAEFER, Ben (Dorothy), Fairfax, VA, Retired 1998, R7, RO, Refuges & Wildlife, Realty
- SCHAFFER, Elaine (Lucien), League City, TX, Retired 2013, R2m Ecological Services, Coastal Program, Houston, TX
- SHAMGOCHIAN, Marguerite, Rockport, MA, Retired 1996, R5, RO, Migratory Birds

- SMITH, David, Sharpsburg, MD, Retired 2007, R9 (W0), Migratory Birds
- STINE, Pete (Marlene), Albuquerque, NM, Retired 2004, R2, RO, Fisheries
- TAYLOR, Janith (Graham), Worthington, MA, Retired 2018, R5, Refuges & Wildlife, Division of Natural Resources and Planning
- TODD, Cecilia (James) Annandale, VA, Retired 2022, R9 9(WO) International Affairs, New
- TRITAIK, Paul (Rachel), Sanibel, FL, Retired 2020, R4, Refuges & Wildlife, J.N. "Ding" Darling NWR **LIFETIME**
- WEBBER, Ralph (Marsha) Troy, MT, Retired 2011, R1, Refuges & Wildlife, Tualatin River NWR
- ZAPOTOCKI, Nancy Ann (Mathew Graves) Dryfork, WV, Retired 2019, R9 (NCTC) Division of Training

Sandy also provided us a moving tribute to his wife, Sally, and a description of what life as a "Service wife" was like for Sally during his career.



Fun Facts & Family Ties

Obviously, this is one of my favorite sections. Our colleagues share humorous moments, interesting facts about their jobs or field stations, and sometimes embarrassing stories that make us laugh. Laughter brings our friends and co-workers together. It really helps when you send me Fun Facts too. I can keep it anonymous if you wish, but putting a name with a story is always nice.

Besides, some of the stories are more interesting and humorous to Fish & Wildlife Service employees because so many of us have been there done that. When I was much younger I "recycled" Brown-headed Cowbirds, a nest parasite, with the local bird rehabilitation center. It worked well and the rehabilitators froze the Cowbirds and used them as they needed. The following story is a much more interesting. *Deborah Holle.*

LOOKING UP

Sanford "Sandy" Wilbur began working for the Service in 1960 and retired in 1994. He worked in a lot of places, mostly in Refuges, Research, and Federal Aid. For about 10 years in the '70's he was the biologist-in-charge of Patuxent's California Field Station, working of various endangered birds.

When they released California Condors back into the wild, they set up feeding stations and provided carrion for them to eat. They stored animal carcasses at the local Fish Hatchery (we've had a couple of great stories about feeding fish carrion and maggots). The Biologists generally used a wheeled stretcher (like a hunter would use) to carry the bigger carcasses, but occasionally they just hoisted one on their shoulders. Sandy said he liked to imagine the condors circling overhead, watching their dinner arrive as he went to their feeding stations to deliver their dinner.

Reminiscences of Sally Wilbur

By Sanford "Sandy" Wilbur

Years before there were women refuge managers, there were refuge wives. Let me tell you a little about my mate. Sally Harris Wilbur, my friend for almost 65 years and my wife for 61 of them, died at Legacy Hospital, Gresham, Oregon on December 25, 2022. She was 85. Daughter of Stuart K. "Slim" Harris and Calista (Crane) Harris, she was a native of Massachusetts, and lived most of her life through high school within 30 miles or so of Boston.

Sally spent her youth hiking, camping, birding, and studying nature with her father (a professor of ornithology and botany at Boston University) and mother (with a Master's degree in geology). Had it been the middle '60s, rather than the middle '50s, her life might have gone a different direction. As she told me the story, in her high school in Massachusetts, she took some sort of test to determine her career interests and aptitudes. After viewing the results, her counselor's opinion went somewhat like this: *"Well, if you were a boy, I'd say you should be a forest ranger. As a girl... I don't know, maybe a flower arranger in a florist's shop?"*

"Flower arranger" didn't intrigue her, but she didn't know of any outdoor options available to young women at that time. She

graduated from Bryant & Stratton Business College in Boston, then enrolled in a business curriculum at Boston University. But the university seemed just too big for her at the time, and she went West to the redwood region of northern California, to visit with relatives. Apparently almost on a whim, she enrolled at Humboldt State College in Arcata, California, and there met her future husband, me. I was studying for a Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife management, and – just like her – I enjoyed hiking, camping, birding, and nature study. The fit seemed pretty good. When she was able to identify a flower in the redwoods near campus that I didn't know (and I considered myself a pretty good botanist), the deal was settled for me. We were married in Ferndale, California, on 26 August 1961.

At Humboldt State in the early 1960s, there were lots of marriage-eligible males – most of them pretty nice guys - but almost all of them were working toward careers in forestry, fisheries management, or wildlife management. Sally remembered talk in the women's dorm about futures with such people. More than one young woman was heard to say, *“Well, we'd probably have to live in the boondocks for a few years, before being able to return to civilization.”* She hoped that her stay in “the boondocks” would last a good long time.

She loved our first station, Minidoka Refuge in south central Idaho. Our morning walks before I went to work for the day included trees full to overflowing with migrant songbirds, being dive-bombed by great horned owls defending their nest, grebes “dancing on the lake,” and the rusty hinge notes of our local yellow-headed blackbird colony – always one of her favorite nature sounds. In winter, there were deer on our snowy lawn, and coyotes howling on the ice-covered lake. A Christmas bird count was memorable for producing exactly one bird in several hours of walking. Even delivering hay to our snow-bound horse herd (property of the predator control group, but housed with us for the winter) was great fun for her.



Sally, with son Shawn, on horse feeding detail

Family living at Sacramento Refuge was not great, with summer heat, year-round mosquitoes, and venomous blackflies. Still, where else could you live and have several thousand cackling geese in your back yard, and burrowing owls nesting in holes in the middle of the refuge roads? Many birding groups made pilgrimages to Sacramento Refuge in winter, and she often joined them. She found that the shy participants hesitated to ask “the expert” (me) questions, but they could ask her. Often, she could give them an answer. If not, she would casually get the information from me, and relay it back to them.



Sally, and baby Sara, with birding group at Sacramento Refuge

Alas, after five years on refuges, we did find ourselves back in civilization, first in the Portland, Oregon, regional office, then in Atlanta. Not as good as living with the wildlife, but she did get to visit many refuges in the West and the South. She was able to renew her refuge visits when, after 15 years when I was with our Research and Endangered Species programs, we returned to Refuges in Portland for the last ten years of my career.

Despite many good times and good friends in the West, the hot, arid places where my work often took us were not Sally's favorite environments. Oregon was better, but she was still a New Englander at heart. She was able to spend time almost every year with her mother in New Hampshire, but the visits were usually short. When I retired in 1994, we began to divide our year between East and West, living in Oregon in the winter and at our off-the-grid cabin in northern New Hampshire in the warmer months. This arrangement came to an end in 2008, when Sally suffered a stroke that weakened her lower body, making it difficult and unsafe to live in the rustic conditions of our summer camp. We returned to living full-time in Gresham, Oregon, in the home we purchased in 1982.

She is survived by me and our son, Shawn, who lives with me in Gresham. Our daughter and son-in-law, Sara and Jeff Ambarian, are retired near Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Grandsons John and Tom Ambarian, live at Helena, Montana, and Bonners Ferry, respectively. Sally has a brother, Kim, in Massachusetts.



Sally, in her preferred environment

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

Izembek Update

On March 14, 2023 Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland withdrew a land exchange between the Interior Department and King Cove Corporation authorized by Secretary Bernhardt in July 2019. The Department determined the 2019 land exchange contained procedural flaws and was not consistent with departmental policy. It was entered into without public participation and did not analyze potential effects on subsistence uses and habitat. The Department intends to initiate an environmental analysis that will include robust nation-to-nation consultation and consider, among other things, the 2013 land exchange considered by Secretary Sally Jewell and a subsistence evaluation under Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).

A notice of intent to prepare a supplemental environmental statement was published in the *Federal Register* on May 18, 2023 with scoping comments due June 20, 2023. See <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2023-05-18/pdf/2023-10621.pdf>.



In 2019 Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to analyze a land exchange through the Izembek Refuge and the Izembek Wilderness. The proposal would have transferred approximately 200 acres within the refuge to the State of Alaska for a single-land gravel road between the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska that “shall be used primarily for health and safety purposes and only for noncommercial purposes. In exchange, the Service would receive approximately 43,000 acres of land owned by the State

of Alaska (to be designated Wilderness) and approximately 13,300 acres of land owned by King Cove Corporation. King Cove Corporation would also relinquish 5,430 acres of selected lands with Izembek Refuge. In December 2013, Secretary Jewell issued a Record of Decision declining the land exchange. On July 3, 2019, Secretary Bernhardt signed a memorandum approving a different land exchange between the Interior Department and King Cove Corporation. The 2019 exchange did not prohibit commercial use of the road, authorized gravel mining within the Refuge, and had far less land coming to the Refuge in the exchange. A federal district court in Alaska vacated the 2019 exchange due to several legal flaws, including that Secretary Bernhardt failed to properly justify his change in policy and rejection of Secretary Jewell’s prior conclusions. For more information see an article in the *Anchorage Daily News*. <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/rural-alaska/2023/05/21/feds-launch-review-of-land-exchange-proposal-needed-to-build-road-in-alaskas-izembek-refuge/>.

Service Issues Final Mitigation Policies

The revised Mitigation Policy and Endangered Species Act (ESA) Compensatory Mitigation Policy provide a broad and flexible framework to facilitate mitigation that more effectively avoids, minimizes and offsets the negative impacts of development activities. Through collaborative mitigation planning, the revised policies will help reduce human impact on the environment. “The impacts of development on fish and wildlife resources are myriad and complex, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution,” said Service Director Martha Williams. “Effective mitigation is a powerful tool to reconcile necessary development while sustaining and recovering species and the habitats upon which they depend. Through well-designed and sited mitigation, we can reduce the human impact on the environment and provide a sustainable future for our wildlife and their habitats.”

The Service’s final revised Mitigation Policy seeks to improve the design and placement of mitigation on the landscape and, by doing so, maintain the overall health of species and habitats at risk. The policy will apply to all authorities under which the Service can require or recommend mitigation, including the Service’s role in administering the ESA.

The ESA Compensatory Mitigation Policy puts into action the Service-wide Mitigation Policy to provide more specific guidance relating to mitigation under the ESA. The impacts of development activities on the environment are most acutely felt by wildlife already on the brink of extinction. These impacts, if unaddressed, can cumulatively push those species to the point of no return. The Service anticipates benefits to project proponents and mitigation sponsors, who can refer to the policy as they plan development or mitigation projects and ensure appropriate consideration of threatened and endangered species.

The final policies reflect input from other federal and state agencies, conservation partners, developers, the mitigation industry and the public. The Service published final revised policies in 2016 but later withdrew them in 2018. The policies are informed by input received on the 2016 policies during multiple public comment periods. The final policies were published in the *Federal Register* on May 15, 2023, and are available at <https://www.regulations.gov/document/FWS-HQ-ES-2021-0014-0002>.

Five species on California's San Clemente Island declared fully recovered

Decades of collaborative conservation efforts on U.S. Navy-owned San Clemente Island resulted in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's announcement that five species – San Clemente Island paintbrush, lotus, larkspur and bush-mallow plants and San Clemente Bell's sparrow have fully recovered and no longer require Endangered Species Act protection.

San Clemente Island is one of eight islands that comprise the Channel Islands off the coast of Southern California. The successful recovery of four plants and one bird adds to the list of species that have now successfully recovered across the islands, including the island night lizard, island fox, and the Santa Cruz Island dudleya and island bedstraw. Bald eagle and peregrine falcon populations decimated by impacts from DDT have also rebounded nationally and are successfully breeding on the Channel Islands.

San Clemente Island is the primary maritime training area for the Navy Pacific Fleet and Sea, Air and Land Forces. Before the island was transferred to the Navy, intensive grazing by nonnative herbivores largely denuded it of its habitat, causing declines in numerous native plants and animals. The Navy placed a priority on removing all non-native herbivores from the island, allowing the habitat to recover. What was once a largely barren landscape now supports numerous endemic species of plants and animals, including the five species being removed from the federal lists of threatened and endangered species.

Additional efforts to aid recovery of the species include the Navy's development of an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, a long-term planning document that balances the installation's mission with conservation and management of its natural resources, and implementation of erosion and fire control measures, surveys and monitoring.

Secretarial Order on Bison Management

Secretary's Order 3410 formally established a Bison Working Group (BWG) which will be composed of representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Park Service, and U.S. Geological Survey. The BWG will develop a Bison Shared Stewardship Plan. Central to the plan

will be robust engagement with Tribes, including prioritizing Tribally led opportunities to establish new large hers owned or managed by Tribes and Tribally led organizations. The Order also directs the BIA to establish a Bison Management Apprenticeship program, in collaboration with the FWG, FWS, and NPS This new program will work to ensure that Tribes that manage bison herds on their own lands or through co-stewardship agreements will benefit from training and knowledge sharing to support talent and capacity in their communities including opportunities for hands-on experience supported by national parks and national wildlife refuges.



Treaty to Protect Ocean Life

More than 190 countries have reached a landmark deal for protecting the biodiversity of the world's oceans, agreeing for the first time on a common framework for establishing new protected areas in international waters. The treaty will not automatically establish any new marine protected areas, but it creates a mechanism for nations to begin designating them in international waters. Already being referred to as the "High seas Treaty," the legal framework would place 30 percent of the world's oceans into protected areas, put more money into marine conservation, and covers access to and use of marine genetic resources. Despite U.N. members agreeing to a final version of the text, it is still expected to take years for the treaty to be formally adopted by member states and come into force. Once it takes legal effect, nations can then begin proposing the establishment of new marine protected areas.

Kenai Refuge Regulations

The Supreme Court on March 6, 2023, denied the State of Alaska's writ of certiorari that sought a review of the Ninth Circuit's decision that upheld the District Court decision that supported FWS hunting regulations. FWS withdrew the June 11, 2020, Trump administration proposed rule to amend the refuge-specific regulations for Kenai Refuge. Based on the extensive public comments, FWS reviewed the new information provided and determined that the best course of action was withdrawing the proposed rule.
From Alaska Refuge Friends Newsletter

Notes From the Field and Other Things

This is the section formerly called "Miscellaneous". We welcome your contributions on just about anything that may be of interest to FWS Retirees. Just send them to Helen Clough at communications2023@fwsretirees.org.

Share Your Knowledge

Michael Doyle is a reporter for E&E News/Greenwire and would welcome the opportunity to speak with FWS retirees about the agency and the various issues it confronts. He welcomes anyone to contact him at mduoye@eenews.net. He has recently been writing a series of articles about the Endangered Species Act. You can find one of the articles at <https://www.eenews.net/articles/the-endangered-species-act-at-50-from-popular-to-polarizing/>

Over 55 Fish and Wildlife Biologist Job Opportunity in New Jersey

The position is currently funded for approximately 880 hours at 40 hours per week. Telework is an option for project specific tasks that do not require fieldwork or in-person meetings. It is expected that during field season, work in the field or leaving from the office will be more frequent. Candidate must be within a commuting distance to NJ field office. The ESP will be provided with office space, a computer and use of one of the station's field vehicles.

Duties: Assist in project review for NEPA and ESA. Assist in on-going habitat restoration work with private landowners and NRCS. Assist in on-going Sikes Act work at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

Qualifications: Minimum of 10 year(s) of experience in Environmental Review and Habitat Restoration or BA/BS or Previously completed training in National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Bird identification and monitoring capabilities and Experience required with Windows, MS Word.

For additional information contact Eric Schradling at eric_schradling@fws.gov. The announcement is on Monster.com at [Fish and Wildlife Biologist \(FW1560-NJ-001\) - National Older Worker Career Center \(monster.com\)](#). The position is open for 2 weeks.

Adventure Travel with FWS Retirees

As we emerge from our COVID cocoons and get back out into the world, we would like to tell you of a couple of FWS Retirees travel opportunities. Many of us have wanted to journey on a safari to Africa. Today's safaris are not of the

Out of Africa mold – but are still filled with adventure and fantastic wildlife viewing. Both trips are booked with Africa Through Your Lens, a company that has been hosting FWS Retirees in South Africa for over 10 years.

We have two such adventures to share with you scheduled for 2023 and 2024.

KwaZulu Natal, St. Lucia Wetlands, Indian Ocean, and ChaZen Game Reserve

Dates: Depart US October 2 and return October 14, 2023

Price: \$4,100 plus round-trip airfare to Johannesburg.

Includes: all lodging, in-country transportation, meals, wine/beer with lunch and dinner, entry fees, and tips

Itinerary: Upon arrival we will venture to ChaZen Game Reserve (a private game reserve owned by our hosts the Viljoens) for the first half of our safari. This 40,000-acre reserve is home to a

breeding program for the African lion and endangered Africa painted dog. Also, there is an amazing array of South African ungulates impala, kudu, eland, cape buffalo, black and blue wildebeest, sable and many more. We will return to Johannesburg to catch a short flight to Durban (included in cost) to the east coast of South Africa and the KwaZulu Natal region. Potential activities include plenty of wildlife viewing with daily game drives to nearby wildlife reserves Hluhluwe/iMfolozi Park, swim/picnic at the Indian Ocean, St. Lucia Wetlands, night game viewing in Isimanagaliso, and Hippo cruise.

ChaZen Volunteer Safari/Pilanesburg National Park

Dates: Depart US January 22 and return February 2, 2024 **Price:** \$2,750 plus airfare to Johannesburg **Includes:** all lodging, in-country transportation, meals, wine/beer with lunch and dinner, entry fees and tips. If you want to do some good with your travel time and dollars, plus enjoy a wonderful safari experience, this is the trip for you! Since 2011, FWS retirees have participated in this do-good adventure. Volunteer work is at ChaZen Game Reserve (a private reserve owned by our hosts the Viljoens).

Past projects have included habitat restoration, relocating wildlife, assisting in the breeding programs, trail maintenance, and general repairs. The workday is usually in the mornings with the afternoons spent in free time before a late afternoon game drive and sundowner. The last few days of this volunteer experience is spent in the Pilanesburg National Park area north of Johannesburg. Here we should see elephants, hippos, and possibly a leopard!

If you are interested in either of these trips, contact Donna Stanek at dstanek0418@hotmail.com or give her a call at: 505-917-2023. *Contributed by Donna Stanek.*

Amazon Basin Trip

FWS retirees and friends or family of (22 total) spent 10 wonderful days on a riverboat in the Amazon Basin of Brazil. We started and ended in Manaus, spending time on the Amazon River and the Rio Negro. Highlights were macaws, sloths, a harpy eagle and the national drink of Brazil, caipirinhas.



Provided by Donna Stanley

Refuge System History and Future

Interested in the history of the Refuge System? You may enjoy the recently completed document “History and Future of our National Wildlife Refuge System” now available at [File:History and Future of our National Wildlife Refuge System.pdf - Wikimedia Commons](#). Completed by FWS retiree Ken Grannemann, it gives an overview of the Refuge System throughout its history with references to numerous publications, actions, or events important to development of the System. An updated version of this document will be assembled in the future so if you have any additions or corrections, please send them to NWRS.history.future@gmail.com for inclusion in the next edition.



The Endangered Species Act at 50: More Important Than Ever

Fifty years ago, the Endangered Species Act (ESA), one of the most significant pieces of environmental legislation, was signed. When Congress passed the Endangered Species Act in 1973, it recognized that our rich natural heritage is of “esthetic, ecological, educational, recreational, and scientific value to our Nation and its people.” The ESA protects ecosystems, conserves species, and enforces treaties related to wildlife preservation. It has been highly effective and credited with saving 99 percent of listed species from extinction. Today, in the face of climate change and biodiversity loss, the Endangered Species Act is more important than ever. The Service is celebrating this iconic Act throughout 2023. The celebration campaign kicked off with the [delisting of five species on San Clemente Island in January](#) and will continue throughout the year. The campaign is focused on highlighting the importance of the Act to at-risk and imperiled species, the remarkable successes over the past half century, the value of partnerships to those success stories, as well as the long road to recovery that many species still face, and the vision for the next 50 years of the Act. The celebration features social media posts, storytelling, webinars, posters, events, and many other activities.

Here are some ways that you can participate in the celebration!

- Check out the [ESA 50th anniversary webpage](#)
- Participate in the social media campaign through the hashtag #ESA50
- Follow the USFWS social media accounts
 - USFWS Main Twitter - @USFWS
 - USFWS News Twitter - @USFWSNews
 - USFWS Facebook - @USFWS
 - USFWS Instagram - @USFWS
 - USFWS LinkedIn – USFWS
- Download the commemorative [posters](#)
- Are you working with endangered species? Share your stories with us!
- Do you know about any ESA 50th anniversary events? Let us know!

The Service is also excited to collaborate with retirees on an oral history project to collect stories and experiences from former ESA practitioners. Throughout the year, Service employees will be reaching out to retirees from their offices, requesting to record the retirees’ experiences implementing the ESA. Oral histories will be transcribed, and the recording and transcript will become part of the Service’s oral history project. Additionally, some stories could be shared throughout the year in social media posts or internal communications and may become part of a “history of the ESA” project. Please contact Gina Coral (gina_coral@fws.gov) for questions related to the ESA 50th anniversary campaign or with any events or stories and Kristi Young (Kristi_young@fws.gov) for participation in the oral history project.

Film Path of the Panther Highlights Florida Panther Recovery

In the southern Everglades, a wildlife photographer, veterinarians, ranchers, conservationists, and indigenous people join forces to track and protect the endangered Florida panther. In this documentary, stunning images of the big cats spur the movement to restore a majestic keystone species as well as dwindling wilderness. While National Geographic’s Carlton Ward, Jr. employs camera traps to capture thrilling video and still portraits of panthers and other marshland creatures, biologists track the elusive wild felines, vets rehabilitate them after car strikes, and ranchers preserve working land and prevent overdevelopment. Creating wildlife corridors through ranch lands and nature preserves is the long-term plan. The film is currently streaming on Hulu and Disney+.



Link for the film: <https://pathofthepanther.com/>

New story about the film:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/video/florida-panther-on-the-brink-of-extinction-makes-a-comeback/>

Thanks to Marc Epstein for sharing this

CITES Turns 50

In March of 2023, the world had something to celebrate. March 3rd marked the 10th birthday of World Wildlife Day and the 50th birthday of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). CITES is an international treaty managed and enforced by 184 Parties (183 countries and the European Union) to ensure that the international trade in plants and animals does not threaten their survival in the wild. In the United States, it is enforced under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the Federal Government’s lead agency tasked with implementing the treaty.

With the [CITES Secretariat](#), the USFWS co-hosted the Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation event to recognize the

importance of CITES, working with partners to conserve wild species and their habitats, and engaging youth. During the event, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland said, “We can honor CITES’ 50th anniversary by keeping the next 50 years in mind because we have an obligation to our world. Together, we can build a future in which we respect nature, restore balance to our environments, and value every living creature on this planet. That’s the way I was raised. My parents and grandparents taught me how valuable nature is to our survival and to our spirits. Without nature, we have nothing.”

More info at: [https://www.fws.gov/story/2023-03/its-cites-celebration#:~:text=In%20March%20of%202023%2C%20the,Fauna%20and%20Flora%20\(CITES\).](https://www.fws.gov/story/2023-03/its-cites-celebration#:~:text=In%20March%20of%202023%2C%20the,Fauna%20and%20Flora%20(CITES).)

Red Wolf Recovery

The Red Wolf Recovery Program recently announced the birth of a new litter of wild red wolf puppies, three females and two males. These pups, along with a cross-fostered male pup born at Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium in Tacoma, Washington, will join the Milltail Pack in Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in Eastern North Carolina bringing the pack numbers to 13 wolves. This is impressive growth considering the pack last year saw the first red wolf litter born in the wild since 2018.

“This is extraordinary news for red wolves in the wild. This family group is now a large, fully-functioning pack with these new pups and the yearlings,” said Ben Prater director of Defenders of Wildlife’s Southeast Program. “We are so grateful for the FWS biologists that made this happen. We’re hopeful this is a sign of things to come in the species recovery.

In addition to the Milltail family group, two litters of four red wolf puppies each reside in acclimation pens with their parents and will be released in the coming weeks. With these litters and additional releases of captive-bred wolves, the wild population could total 35-37 by the end of May. *From Defenders of Wildlife website update.*

Ivory Bill Controversy Continues

A recent article in the *New York Times* referenced a paper, “Multiple lines of evidence suggest the persistence of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) in Louisiana” by [Steven C. Latta](#), [Mark A. Michaels](#), [Thomas C. Michot](#), [Peggy L. Shrum](#), [Patricia Johnson](#), [Jay Tischendorf](#), [Michael Weeks](#), [John Trochet](#), [Don Scheifler](#), [Bob Ford](#). Their abstract is presented below with links to the full paper in *Ecology and Evolution* and a link to *New York Times* story.

“The history of the decline of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker is long and complex, but the status of the species since 1944, when the last widely accepted sighting in continental North

America occurred, is particularly controversial. Reports of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers have continued, but none has reached the threshold of quality for general acceptance by ornithologists or the birdwatching public. In 2021, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service opened for public comment a proposal to declare the species extinct. Here, we present evidence suggesting the presence of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker at our study site, based on a variety of data collected over a 10-year search period, 2012–2022. These data are drawn from visual observations, ~70,000 h of recordings by 80–100 acoustic recording units, ~472,550 camera-hours by as many as 34 trail cameras, and ~1089 h of video drawn from ~3265 drone flights. Using multiple lines of evidence, the data suggest intermittent but repeated presence of multiple individual birds with field marks and behaviors consistent with those of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers. Data indicate repeated reuse of foraging sites and core habitat. Our findings, and the inferences drawn from them, suggest that not all is lost for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and that it is clearly premature for the species to be declared extinct.” *From Ecology and Evolution May 18, 2013 at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ece3.10017>. See also summary article in the New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/18/climate/ivory-billed-woodpecker.html>*

ESA Lawsuit Affects Alaska Salmon Fishing

A federal judge in Washington state recently issued a ruling that threatens to shut down trolling for king salmon in Southeast Alaska this summer. The ruling in a lawsuit filed three years ago by the Washington state-based Wild Fish Conservancy aims to protect a small population of orcas. The lawsuit centers on whether Alaska fishermen should be allowed to harvest king salmon, which are considered essential prey for the Southern Resident killer whales.



Commercial fishing boats, Sitka Alaska

The Wild Fish Conservancy argued that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) had violated sections of the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act in failing to fully account for the impact of the Alaska Chinook fishery on this very seriously threatened population of killer whales in Puget Sound. The judge ordered the National Marine Fisheries Service to fix the flaws. The judge also said that he was also vacating the Incidental Take Statement. And an Incidental Take Statement is essential to open a fishery that might impact an endangered species.

The state and the Alaska Trollers Association, who are intervenors in this lawsuit, filed a notice to appeal to the Ninth Circuit Court. And they'll probably ask for a stay of the order until the appeal is heard. A spokesperson for the National Marine Fisheries Service, which is named as the primary defendant in the case, said the agency is still reviewing the order.

Editor's note: This complex ESA litigation involves many more components and it was hard to find factual information. The best information I could find were public radio stories (KTOO.org) and in the National Fisherman.

Legislation to Watch

Recently, one of the most unthinkable and unprecedented attacks on the Endangered Species Act, S.J Res. 9, was brought to a full vote on the Senate floor. In a stunningly disappointing move, Sen. Roger Marshall's (R-KS) resolution under the Congressional Review Act to politically strip federal protections from threatened and endangered populations of the lesser prairie-chicken and firmly snub the science-based decision and legal mandate the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has to save them was passed narrowly in a 50-48 vote. As of this date, the House has not passed the bill.

From the Defenders of Wildlife. Information also available on the Wildlife Society Website.

Retired Refuge Manager Kelby Ouchley's book wins John Burroughs Medal:

In his book "Bayou D'Arbonne Swamp: A Naturalist's Memoir of Place," Ouchley reflects on nature in and near D'Arbonne National Wildlife Refuge. This spring the book was awarded the prestigious John Burroughs Medal as the most outstanding natural history book published in 2022. The Medal, named for nature writer John Burroughs (1837-1921), is awarded each year by the John Burroughs Association to the author of a book that the association has judged to be distinguished in the field of natural history. Previous winners include Aldo Leopold ("A Sand County Almanac") and Rachel Carson ("The Sea Around Us") among others with Fish and Wildlife Service connections.

Thanks to Ken Grannemann for this information.

Passing of Colleagues

If you are aware of the passing of any retired or active FWS employees, including those who left the Service before retirement, 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 Helen Clough at communications2023@fwsretirees.org.

George Devine (1932 – 2023)



George Earl Divine was born on February 22nd, 1932, in Splitlog, Missouri. Born to Lawrence and Maude Divine, George was the youngest of 5 siblings. George and Billie Ruth Divine (passed away in July 2003) moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico in late 1976. George left this earth on Saturday, January 14, 2023, while residing at Beehive Memory Care Facility, one month shy of his 91st birthday. George is survived by his sons, Kevin and Darren, his daughters-in-law, Robin and Theresa, and his granddaughters, Kaitlynn, Morgan and Riann. George's life was defined by faith and family, and his memory and his impact will live on in through his family.

The above makes no mention of George working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. George has *WAAAY* too many friends from his years in the Service for it to be left unmentioned. Hence, I'd like to remember him here: I first met George when I was transferred from the (closing) Phoenix Area Office to the Division of Fisheries in the Albuquerque Regional Office. George was my boss. He also supervised all the Fisheries field stations in Region 2 (AZ, NM, OK, TX).

There was nothing that he wouldn't do for any of us under his supervision. Later, he transferred upstairs to the Division of Endangered Species where he spent the rest of his career. After retirement, he faithfully attended our local semi-annual FWS Retirees luncheons. A year or two ago, one of his sons alerted me that George had severe Alzheimer's and could no longer accept our invitations. Sad to hear.

Pete Stine.

Burr Dane Fisher (1955-2023)



Burr Dane Fisher, age 67 died Tuesday April 4, 2023 in Bath Township, Michigan at his home of natural causes. Burr was born on October 8, 1955 in Lewisburg, PLKA to the late Joyce R. Fisher and Abram PL.W. Fisher. He was raised in Northumberland, but prior to that lived in Selinsgrove for a few years. Burr graduated from Shikellamy High School in 1973.

He went on to further his education at California of Pennsylvania, graduating with a BA in in Biology in 1979. Following college, he went on to serve in the Peace Corps for two years on Fiji in the South Pacific to build fish hatcheries.

Upon returning to the U.S., he took a job with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a biologist in East Lansing, Michigan. Burr worked as a senior biologist for 20 plus years for the Service. He took pride in working as a conservationist and for the FWS; he proudly wore the uniform. His work always remained focused on fish and wildlife and their habitats. He was instrumental in working with partners to help protect birds that strike structures, like communication towers. His passion also found day-to-day expressions, such as when colleagues would bring him injured wildlife that he would nurse back to health and release.

Burr is survived by his six siblings, Jo A. Fisher and life partner Dennis L. Wyne; Toni A. Snyder and Quinn A. Fisher; Keene C and wife Debra E. Fisher; Tread W. and wife Beate I. Fisher; Travis P.W. and wife Jennifer V. Fisher; all of Northumberland, He is survived by many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother-in-law John R. Snyder of Northumberland.

Burr loved the outdoors, fishing, hunting, and hiking. He enjoyed Penn State football, his Cleveland Brown, which is what he painted his house after, and the Cincinnati Reds. He loved listening to a variety of rock-n-roll, but especially the Beatles.

William Giese, Jr. (1953 - 2023)



William Michael Giese, Jr., of Cambridge, MD, died on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 in the University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Easton. He had recently developed acute complications stemming from his lengthy battle with the very rare Ogilvie's syndrome.

Known to his family and many friends as Bill, he was born on December 4, 1953 to the late William

M. Giese, Sr. and Clara Louise (Gootee) Giese, later Lowe. He was educated in the Dorchester County public schools. Bill grew up hunting and trapping with his father, and developed a deep love of the outdoors, which informed his lifelong work in conservation.

Bill married Elizabeth "Beth" Malkus on December 8, 1973, forming a devoted partnership that had entered its 50th year at the time of his death. They shared a love of history and nature that prompted extensive family road trips to nearly every state and many wildlife refuges, forests, parks, and other cultural attractions.

Bill began working at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge as a teenager, and it formed the center of his 40-year professional career with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. At Blackwater, he worked in the visitor center, biological research, farming, and fire management programs, performing nearly every task imaginable in refuge management. He also served as a collateral federal law enforcement officer for 30 years. He served details for various FWS initiatives in law enforcement and fire management to many states and Puerto Rico. He was the national FWS employee of the year in 2007. He retired in 2012 but continued to volunteer at Blackwater as his health allowed.

Bill loved his family farm, which he inherited at the age of 17 upon his father's passing. It was the key site for his hunting, fishing, trapping, and gardening hobbies. Bill was an active conservation steward of his farm's soil, forestry, and water resources, as well as on the farms of his late mother-in-law Helen Malkus. Bill and Beth were the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Bay Advocate of the Year in 2006 for their work to protect critical areas in vicinity of Cambridge, MD. Among many other roles, Bill was a two-time gubernatorial appointee to the Maryland Critical Areas Commission, founding member of Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth, longtime Maryland hunter safety instructor, 4-H leader, and at the time of his death was serving on the Dorchester County Planning and Zoning Commission and Dorchester County Soil Conservation District.

Bill is survived by his wife and 3 children, Michael Giese (Danielle) of Cheverly, MD; John Giese (Julie) of Reisterstown, MD; and Cheryl Tomey (Adam) of Cambridge, MD; six grandchildren; his half-brother Lloyd Gootee, Sr. (Margaret) of Easton, MD; a nephew, niece; and numerous cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents and infant son Philip Giese.

There was no funeral service. Memorial donations in Bill's memory may be made to Friends of Blackwater N.W.R., Inc, P.O. Box 1231, Cambridge, MD 21613, or online via www.friendsofblackwater.org.

Beth Goettel (1954 – 2023)



Beth Goettel lost her battle with multiple system atrophy (MSA) on January 16, 2023. Although this cruel disease took away her ability to walk, and affected her eyesight, coordination and ability to talk, she never lost her sense of humor or her bright outlook on life. Beth was born on July 10, 1954, in Kansas City, Kansas, to Ralph and Mildred Henderson.

Her family moved around the country as her dad climbed the corporate ladder and they remained tight knit throughout the years. She studied wildlife management at the University of Maine at Orono, graduating in 1976. She met her future husband, Tom, on the first day of their first "real job" in 1977, and they were married at Fort Hill on Cape Cod National Seashore on June 29, 1979. They were married for 43 years.

Beth and Tom worked at several national wildlife refuges over the years, Beth as a tireless volunteer and Tom as the employee. Their children were born while Tom was stationed at Moosehorn NWR and Maine Coastal Islands NWR: Russell in 1981 in Calais, Daniel in 1983 in Machias, and Kate in 1986 in Machias. After the children became older, Beth restarted her career, first as a biologist at Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Massachusetts, and later as the Refuge Manager. She became the Refuge Manager at Maine Coastal Islands in 2008, and they settled in South Thomaston. She retired in 2016, but shortly thereafter began to experience the health effects of MSA. They moved to a retirement community in Bar Harbor in 2021, where she could get advanced care for her physical problems.

Beth loved her family and dogs above all, but next came her love for the out-of-doors and conservation. Riding her two horses, hiking, canoeing, gardening, playing with her dogs- she loved it all. She was never bored; she was always planning our next adventure, starting a new knitting project (she taught herself to knit!), reading a good book or cooking a delicious meal. She was one of those wonderful people who always put others before herself.

Beth leaves behind her husband of 43 years, Tom, of Bar Harbor; and her children, Russell (Jenna) of Arlington, MA, Daniel of Maplewood, NJ, and Kate of Hancock, ME; her two wonderful grandchildren, Lily and Owen of Arlington, MA; her sister, Meryl Learnihan (Jim) of Catskill, NY; brother-in-law, Andy Cowan of Lucas, TX; sister-in-law, Kim Henderson of Pickerington, OH; mother-in-law, Grace Richardson of New York City; several cousins, nieces and nephews; and her friends in conservation throughout the country. She was predeceased by her parents, Ralph B. Henderson II and

Mildred (Morgan) Henderson; her brother, Ralph B. Henderson III; and her sister, Susan Cowan.

Richard Hensel – (1930 – 2023)



Richard Jeremiah Hensel, age 93 and a 67-year resident of Alaska, died at home on Feb. 5, 2023. He was born in Weatherly, PA on Jan. 2, 1930, the town's first baby of the new year to Florence and Emory Hensel. As a young boy, he spent long summer days at the swimming hole. In winter, he ran a trapline in the Poconos

and started earning money before he was 12. He learned to hunt and provided food for his family. He achieved the star rank in Boy Scouts. After high school he enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving in Heidelberg, Germany, close to four years. An early interest in wildlife led to a degree in wildlife management from Utah State University. He spent summers working as a smoke jumper. Seasonal work in Alaska progressed to graduate studies at University of Alaska Fairbanks. His long and storied career began as assistant then manager of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge for 10 years, where he did pioneering Kodiak brown bear and bald eagle research which led to the publication of several scientific articles.

He met Mary on a blind date in Anchorage, soon married, and they started their family in Kodiak, Alaska, after transferring to Anchorage in 1970, his meaningful career included working with Alaska Native village residents on Land Claim Settlement. Subsequent employment with the National Park Service and State of Alaska involved designating wilderness lands, polar bear studies, oil spill damage in Prince William Sound and rocket launch impact on Kodiak Island. He served on the Alaska Board of Game. He loved his life in Alaska and spent much time over the years fishing, hunting and berry picking. He had an immense appreciation for the natural beauty that surrounded him. He was especially proud of his log cabin he built by hand, with the help of friends and family, to leave for his children and grandchildren.

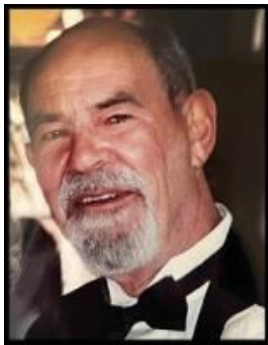
He was an avid reader and lifelong learner. Over the years, he had a multitude of varied hobbies including beekeeping, training Labrador retrievers, bird watching, gardening, cooking and piloting small aircraft. He loved to sing. He had a particular interest in American Indian history, among his many heroes were Chief Seattle and his daughter Angeline.

He was passionate about service and volunteerism. He contributed many years of leadership to the Boy Scouts of America. He enthusiastically prepared and served food at a local homeless shelter and participated in several Global Volunteer trips. He was a founding member of the Quiet Rights Coalition in addition to membership in many environmental conservation organizations. An environmental

activist for years, he became more politically active toward the end of his life. He often wrote letters to the editor at the Anchorage Daily News and was proud of his most recent op ed, published a few weeks ago before his death. He was researching the next.

He was known and loved by many for his humility, intelligence, courage, common sense, perseverance, faith, storytelling ability, loyalty and sense of humor. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Mary; six children, Richard (Cindy), Jillaine, Michelle (Robb Reeg), Kurt, Derek Hensel and Ann (Tony) Giacomini; 11 grandchildren, Edward, Koa, and Eliana Hensel, Madeleine and Lauren Smothers, Malia and Kaia Reeg, Joseph and Jack Hensel, and Jeremiah and Julia Giacomini; and many nieces, nephews and their families.

Philip Alden Lehenbauer (1929 - 2023)



Phil Lehenbauer died at the age of 93 on April 22, 2023 in Vancouver, WA. He was born in Reno, NV, to Hannah and Dr. Philip Lehenbauer in 1929. After graduating from Reno High School in 1948, he attended Oregon State University (OSU) 1948-1950 and was a member of Theta Chi fraternity. He was a Korean War veteran who served in the U.S. Navy 1950-1954. Phil

returned to OSU and completed his BS in Fish & Wildlife Biology in 1956. Upon graduation, he worked as a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service managing national wildlife refuges, living in Fort Peck, MT, Othello, WA, and Corvallis, OR, before moving to regional offices in Portland, OR in 1966. His accomplishments included adding species to the federal endangered lists and developing recovery plans for endangered species until his retirement in 1984 after 33 years with the USFWS.

Throughout his life Phil enjoyed golfing, duck hunting, fishing, clamming, gardening and birdwatching. In his later years he was still an avid OSU Beaver fan, Trailblazers fan, active in the American Legion, and spent time with his grandkids.

Philip is survived by his daughter, Cara Schmitt (Ed) of Vancouver, WA; daughter, Lyn Ortiz (Patrick) of Camas, WA; and son, Ted Lehenbauer of Moses Lake, WA; and four grandchildren: Dr. Alexa Ortiz (Joe) Durham, ME; Melani Ortiz (Alex) Chicago, IL; Andrew Schmitt, Seattle; and Katelyn Schmitt, McMinnville. Phil was preceded in death by his loving wife Helen of 56 years. A private service will be held at Willamette National Cemetery.

Ralph W. Page, Jr. (1936 - 2023)

Ralph Winston Page, Jr., age 86, of Littleton, Colorado passed away on Saturday, February 18, 2023, at his residence. He was

born on April 1, 1936 in Manchester, New Hampshire the son of Ralph and Bertha (Fuhrel) Page.

Ralph attended the University of New Hampshire from 1955 to 1958, where he received his BS degree in forestry. After graduating from UNH and serving in the U.S. Army, he accepted a job with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He was transferred multiple times before he made Colorado his permanent residence. Ralph could often be found on a hunting or fishing trip if he wasn't already doing so for work. Along with his passion for hunting and fishing, he devoted his life to the beauty of music. He had a love for LPs and CDs; until his dying day, he purchased, collected, listened to and discussed music.

Ralph often referred to himself as a "conundrum" and laughed when he would say it, and although he wasn't wrong about the statement, he also knew he was loved and cared for by all around him. He leaves behind a legacy of collected music from his lifetime, and memories that can both confuse you and make a room full of people laugh. Though he is gone, he will never be forgotten.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Edith Ann "Sue" Lacroix. *Provided by one of Ralph's caregivers.*

Connie Rutherford (1943 – 2022)



Connie Rutherford of Fountain Hills, AZ passed away unexpectedly on November 15, 2022, at the age of 79. She was born on March 23, 1943, to James and Lenore Gunning, in Chicago, Illinois. Born and raised in Chicago, Illinois and after graduating from Lake View High School in 1961, Connie

moved with her family to Schiller Park, Illinois where she held a variety of positions with local businesses in the clerical field. She married Joseph Kosek in 1964 and they welcomed their son James in 1968. After several years, Connie's journey through life took a few twists and turns and she faced new challenges along with her growing son. In 1983, she married Darrell Rutherford and they resided in Des Plaines, Illinois, and moved to Rio Rico, Arizona in 1996.

In 1977, Connie made a career move and accepted a position with the Federal government, working for the Defense Contract Administration Services Region, located on the military base at O'Hare IAP. After a short period of time, she transferred to the Department of Labor, and then to the Department of Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service, as an Inspector in the greater Chicago area.

While working full-time, Connie continued her education and earned her BA degree in Interpersonal Group Communication

from Trinity International University in 1995. A job opportunity was extended to Connie to move to Arizona where she continued as an Inspector on the U.S. Mexico border in Nogales, Arizona. She retired from that position after 29 years of service with the Federal government in 2007

In 2018, Connie moved to Fountain Hills, Arizona to be close to her sisters. She joined the “Friends in the Hills Welcome Club” where she enjoyed participating in monthly luncheons, along with some of the many activities offered to members. Connie thoroughly enjoyed making new friends and having fun with her family.

Connie is preceded in death by her parents James and Lenore Gunning, along with her husband Darrell. She is survived by her loving son, James “Jim” Kosek, Algonquin, Illinois; step-children Debbie (Dan) Prochnow, Cary, Illinois; Scott (Catherine) Rutherford, Palm Harbor, Florida; and Cami (John) Bajek, Lake Villa, Illinois; granddaughter Aubrey Kosek, step-grandchildren Caitlin (William) Baronti, Adam Prochnow, Patrick (Reina) Rutherford, Natalie Rutherford, Kenneth Quiram, Jessica (Chris) Marko, Kristin (Nick) Kolev, Nash Bajek, and step-great-grandchildren Reagan Rutherford, Henry Marko, Oliver and Calvin Kolev, and by a host of beloved cousins, nieces and nephews. Connie is also survived by her best friends and sisters Linda Gunning and Susan (Bill) Luzinski, Fountain Hills, Arizona.

Dr. Robert (Rob) J. Schallenberger (1945 – 2023)

Robert (Rob) J. Schallenberger, PhD of Kamuela, Hawaii died at Mercy San Juan Hospital in Sacramento, California on March 15, 2023. Born on May 14, 1945 in Worcester, Massachusetts, Rob moved to the west coast when he was two and grew up in Palo Alto, California. His father was a professor at Stanford University and Rob spent a lot of time around the campus. Rob got interested in the outdoors through his father, an avid striped bass fisherman, who often took Rob and one of his brothers camping in the Sierras.

Rob graduated from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, before attending graduate school at UCLA. Rob received his Master’s and PhD. in Ornithology and Animal Behavior in 1973, conducting research on Hawaiian forest birds, seabirds, dolphins, monk seals, reef fish and aquaculture species.

Rob started his own natural history film company and worked for the Army Corps of Engineers as an ecologist in the Pacific before joining the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1980 as the Refuge Manager of the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands NWR Complex in Honolulu, Hawaii. Rob’s outstanding work was quickly recognized when he received the Arthur S. Flemming Award in 1981, which is given annually to ten government employees under the age of 40. Rob was the first Fish and Wildlife Service employee to earn it.



After four years Rob went to Washington D.C. for the Departmental Manager Development Program (DMDP), for a year, and then worked in the Division of Migratory Birds in D.C. for a year, followed by a year in the Refuge Division. During this time, he worked with the Audubon Society on their Adopt-a-Refuge Program. Rob then served as Deputy Assistant Director, Refuges and Wildlife for Region 1 in Portland, Oregon and then the same position in Region 2 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Rob returned to Washington to serve as the Chief of Refuges for seven years where he worked on the Refuges 2003 initiative, which morphed into the Refuge Improvement Act. Rob also helped establish the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (the CARE Group), that unified such disparate groups as the National Audubon Society, Safari Club International, National Rifle Association and Defenders of Wildlife around the common goal of increasing the Refuge System budget. Rob also put out a report called Banking on Nature, documenting the beneficial economic effect of refuges, as well as starting the publication Refuge Update.

Rob also worked on the transition of Midway Atoll from the U.S. Navy to the Fish and Wildlife Service. He then went out there to be the first official refuge manager returning to the place he spent time as a student and researcher. Rob was instrumental in restoring habitat and nesting seabird populations, despite conflicts with the Navy and government contractors. Rob then moved back into the Deputy Refuge Complex Manager in Honolulu where he started his career and found himself doing what he did 20 years before, completing the most unlikely of career circles. Rob worked on the planning of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument before retiring in 2002.

Rob then went to the Nature Conservancy to become their Hawaii Island Conservation Director. He also served on the boards of the Friends of Midway Atoll and the Friends of Hakalau Forest, as well as the Hawaii Legacy Land Conservation Commission and the Hawaii Wildlife Center.

Rob's two constants in his life were photography and flying. Rob photographed wildlife on five continents and dozens of Pacific islands. He produced award winning documentary films and visited several countries as a nature tour leader and nature photography instructor. A commercially rated pilot and flight instructor, he compiled a large library of aerial photos of the Hawaiian Islands. His photographs have appeared in numerous books and magazines including *National Geographic*, *National Wildlife*, *Audubon*, *Aloha*, *Bioscience* *Ranger Rick* and *U.S. News and World Report*.

Rob is survived by his wife Annarie (Meyer) Shallenberger of Kamuela, Hawaii; three children: Jefferson Shallenberger of Portland Oregon, Jill Shallenberger of Sacramento, California, and Matthew Shallenberger of Altadena, California and two grandchildren, Ruby Price of Seattle, Washington and Bruna Shallenberger of Altadena, California.

Written and compiled by Paul Tritaik

Thomas Marvin Smylie (1937 - 2023)



Tom Smylie died peacefully at home in Edgewood NM. His good humor, dependability, insatiable curiosity and kindness will be sorely missed by all who knew him. He leaves behind Cherie Rife Smylie, his

wife of 42 years; their daughter, Jamelle Peregrine Smylie; his children, Kathleen Phillips and Tom Smylie, Jr. and their families; his sister, Susan Chavez and her husband Don and son Sean; and his falcons and faithful dogs.

Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Tom graduated from the University of New Mexico (UNM) in 1960, served in the U.S. Marine Corps, taught science at Albuquerque public schools, coached wrestling and football and worked for the U.S. Forest Service. The last 25 years of his career were spent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, retiring as Assistant Regional Director of Public Affairs. Tom had an uncompromising love for the outdoors. Yet, he also had a realistic viewpoint as to what could be done and what should be left to another day. In his position he always gave realistic opinions as to how difficult issues should be addressed. Tom was one of those people who could think 'outside the box' sometimes well outside it. His advice was appreciated by all who served with him.

One thread has woven itself through his life experiences since college – his fascination, respect, and devotion to raptors.

While playing football with UNM against the Air Force Academy, Tom saw the Academy's peregrine falcon swoop down during halftime. He was hooked and devoted the rest of his life to falcons and other raptors. In 1961 Tom was one of the founding members of the North American Falconers Association (NAFA). He never wavered from his love of these magnificent birds and stayed active in NAFA for over 60 years. In November of 2021, Tom received a special honorary celebration from the NAFA as the last surviving founding member of the organization. His research, training, stalwart support and breeding efforts took him from the U.S. to Europe, Greenland and the Dry Tortugas. He and a small group of dedicated falconers provided their peregrines as breeding stock to The Peregrine Fund, which ultimately contributed to the removal of the species from the endangered species list.

Tom believed education was key to saving our planet and living in harmony with the creatures of the world. As an educator and spokesman for conservation, Tom was a consummate teacher, drawing upon his knowledge of the outdoors to kindle a life-long appreciation for wildlife and wild places for those he met. He taught this through his stories, presentations, articles, and live demonstrations throughout the country, especially his well-attended raptor shows at the Rio Grande Zoo and Wildlife West nature Park where he shared his unbridled passion for birds of prey.

Tom ended his presentations with a quote from Baba Dioum, "We will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught.": *From the Albuquerque Journal provided by Pete Stine with additional information from Conrad Fjetland.*

Thomas (Tom) E. Westmoreland. (1930 - 2023)



Tom Westmoreland passed away on March 22, 2023 in Lawton, Oklahoma. He was 92 years old. He was a Korean War veteran and was interred at Fort Sill National Cemetery, Elgin, Oklahoma with military honors with his family present.

Tom was born in Greenville, Texas on April 6, 1930. After graduating from Baytown High School, he enlisted in the US Army. After completing that enlistment, he re-enlisted in the US Air Force and served in Korea during that conflict. After returning home, he became a police officer in Baytown, Texas for 5 years where he also met his wife Martha A. Dixon. He decided to use his GI Bill for a higher education and graduated from Stephen F. Austin University with a major in history and a teaching certification. He taught school for several years in LaMarque, Texas before entering civil service as a counselor at Job Corp Centers in New Waverley, Tx and Catoctin, Maryland. After the Catoctin Job Corp Center closed, Tom transferred to the National Park

Service as a Park Ranger. He worked as a Ranger on the Petersburg National Battlefield, Petersburg, Virginia, the the Natchez Trace National Parkway, Tupelo, MS and at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Baltimore, MD. Seeking a new adventure and change in scenery

Tom accepted the position in 1977 as Supervisory Public Use Specialist with the USFWS at Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma where he supervised refuge recreation programs, environmental education and refuge law enforcement. He retired in 1994 after 17 years living on the refuge. He and Martha then bought a home in Cache, OK approximately 6 miles from the refuge South Entrance.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents Marvin and Thresa Westmoreland, and sister Betty Albright. He is survived by his wife Martha, daughter Jo (Dave) Stanbrough, son Troy (Sally) Westmoreland, daughter Mary (David) Towe; grandchildren Jared (Mai Ly) Stanbrough, Tabitha and Dennis Pletcher, Aidan Beydler, Rachael Beydler, and great grandson Thomas Pletcher.

David Wisar (1949 - 2022)



David W. Wiswar died on November 11, 2022, (Veteran's Day) after a valiant battle with pancreatic cancer. Born in 1949, David grew up in Elmhurst, Queens and West Islip, Long Island, New York. David came to Alaska in January 1969, served in the U.S. Air Force during 1969–1974, then received a B.S. from the University of Alaska Anchorage in 1975. During 1977–1979,

David studied seabird feeding ecology in the western Gulf of Alaska. From 1979 to 1983, he lived in Corvallis, Oregon, taking stream and wetland ecology courses from Oregon State University while working seasonally for the U.S. Forest Service to inventory salmon habitat. David was also seasonally employed with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to study salmon escapement and lake productivity while taking more stream and wetland ecology courses at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

During 1983–2006, David was a fishery biologist with the Service Fisheries Resource Office in Fairbanks. For eight of those years, David conducted fisheries investigations on the

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge 1002 Area streams, nearshore marine waters, and lagoons. He participated in a U.S./Canada study of Dolly Varden in the transboundary Firth River, and supervised salmon escapement projects on Yukon River drainage tributaries (Gisasa, Henshaw, Kateel, and South Fork Koyukuk rivers). He served on the Joint Technical Committee for the U.S./ Canada Yukon River Panel reviewing scientific proposals for restoration and enhancement funds.

David's skill at operating small watercraft was enlisted on projects to capture oiled sea otters after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. He discovered part of the job was to help dip-netting highly agitated 35-kg sea otters into a small skiff and put them into dog kennels for transport to cleaning stations. Quite an experience for a fish squeezer! David was an American Fisheries Society Alaska Chapter member since 1984, making presentations at several Chapter meetings, the Northeast Pacific Pink and Chum Salmon Workshop, and other venues. He shared his knowledge and stories with audiences from grade schoolers to professionals, always with the enduring brand of humor he carried from his youth.

David retired from the USFWS in 2006, but continued his educational interests, pursuing a master's degree in UAF's Northern Studies Program focusing on northern and polar history by taking courses, researching historical accounts, attending many presentations, and sharing information and stories with friends. In 2010, he presented "Commercial Bowhead Whaling in the Eastern Beaufort Sea, 1889–1911" to the Alaska Historical Society in Fairbanks. In September 2022, David was inducted into the Pioneers of Alaska, an honorary fraternal organization whose mission is to collect and preserve the history of Alaska. David enjoyed traveling, experiencing new environments, and making friends from one coast to the other of Alaska and throughout the lower 48 states. He could also often be seen happily riding his bicycle around Fairbanks in the summer.

He is survived by his son, Walter Wiswar of Fairbanks, AK and daughter, Serena Wiswar Gil (David) of Las Cruces, NM; his sisters, Karen Cook (Rene) of Houston, TX and Susan Dougherty of Lincoln, NE; his nieces, Anga Smith (Ryan) of Omaha, NE, Ariana Cook (Branden Kosch) of Dallas, TX, Avalon Rehn of Los Angeles, CA; and nephew, David Cook of San Francisco, CA.

Shared by Jeff Adams.

Are You up to Date on Your Dues?

The Fish and Wildlife Service Retirees Association depends primarily on dues and income generated at our reunions to maintain its operations. We receive no funding from the federal government or outside sources of funding for the day-to-day activities of keeping the organization functioning. Please help keep YOUR Retirees Association going and active by paying your dues each year. If you're not sure whether you've paid your dues yet for this year or not, click on [Membership List and Dues Status](#) to find out.

This Newsletter was compiled by Newsletter Editor Helen Clough with contributions from other Board, Association members and others.

If you have information or would like to contribute articles that would be of interest to Association members for inclusion in future newsletters, please contact Helen at communications2023@fwsretirees.org.

Also, be sure to visit our website for more up-to-date information at www.fwsretirees.org