

FWS Retirees Association

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2013

©

2013 Board of Directors

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Kalispell: The Best Ever??

As much fun as it was, our get-together in Kalispell is now history. But for those who made the trip to that spectacular locale, it was a reunion they will remember fondly for a long time to come. There were 121 of your fellow retirees who came together with nearly two dozen active Service personnel and others to celebrate retirement and each other, to keep informed on current issues, and to tour the magnificance of the northern Rocky Mountain area.

Feedback from those who attended has been universally and extraordinarily positive. Some 95% of the responses to our reunion evaluation form rate it "the best ever" while the remaining 5% called it "as good as Charleston" or "one of the top three'. Typical comments: "the hotel, the event, and the setting were perfect"; "one of the best we've attended"; "great job...the planning and execution were outstanding"; and the ever popular "Awesome".

More than 99% of the respondents rated the speakers as a 9 or 10 on a 1-10 scale. 100% rated the sessions as a 9 or 10 and the field trips as a 10. As Board member Jerry Grover opined after receiving lots of e-mail, it seems we "hit a home run". The only downside for the Board is figuring out how to maintain that standard at our next reunion

On the **Monday** evening before the reunion, we held the first ever "Greenwalt Walk for Wildlife" at Creston National Fish Hatchery. It was was a booming success. We had 42 participants for 1K walk along the recently completed outdoor classroom and interpretive trail through a peaceful wooded area at Creston. Hatchery Manager Mark Maskill and his crew provided a delicious barbeque dinner for all who took part. This event raised \$300 for the hatchery's Friends Group.

The official start of the reunion was on **Tuesday** morning. After a few brief introductions, Bob Streeter led off with a presentation describing a volunteer trip he and other FWS retirees took to a

game range in South Africa and he invited other retirees to consider going on a similar jaunt next year. Keynote speaker Ken Goddard from the Ashland Fish and Wildlife Forensics Lab followed with a great talk on his experiences at the lab and how his work there played into his other life as a crime story author of national repute. We then heard very timely and informative presentations by officers of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE). David Snell spoke to us via Skype (and you thought we had no technical know-how) on retiree benefits and how to apply for and obtain those to which we are entitled. Then Jessica Klement apprised us of legislative happenings in the works that would most certainly affect retirees. She provided an insider's analysis of what might pass and what is just political rhetoric. The morning was then capped off by a thoroughly researched and detailed presentation by Board member Dick Gritman on the history and management of the National Bison Range, a current and very hot-button topic.

Following an afternoon of free time to tour, shop, visit, whatever, attendees convened in the evening for our "Icebreaker Social". We all enjoyed some great hors d'oeuvres and local microbrews while visiting and exchanging lies with one another.

Wednesday was tour day and, after a 6:00AM breakfast at the hotel, about 100 of us piled on to tour buses for the hour and a half trip to the 18,500 acre National Bison Range. There we were met by Jeff King and his staff and shown a video on the reestablishment of the bison in the northern Rocky Mountain area and on the history of Bison Range itself. Together with professional FWS personnel as our guides, we climbed aboard smaller buses for a lengthy tour of the refuge. The species we encountered as we travelled from the headquarters to the highest point on the tract included not only bison we came to see but pronghorn, elk, mule deer and white-tailed deer and bighorn sheep as well. After a box lunch at the refuge, we got back on our tour buses for the return to Kalispell. It was a long but very enjoyable day.

The following day, **Thursday**, Deputy Director Rowan Gould filled us in on how they are dealing with issues and what the future holds in store for the Fish and Wildlife Service in the face of budget problems, the sequestration, and rapidly changing demographics. Board member Donna Stanek then informed the audience about various opportunities for retirees to volunteer on exciting and worthwhile projects both here and abroad. She also gave a status update on the MOA we have with the International Conservation Caucus Foundation for potential opportunities to work on projects overseas.

Next on the docket was a panel discussion on another polarizing subject, the restoration and future of the gray wolf in the northern Rocky Mountains. Panel moderator Ed Bangs, FWS retiree and former wolf recovery team member, led off describing the current status of the species in Montana before introducing the other panelists. They included a local rancher who had been significantly impacted by wolf depredation on his livestock, an outdoor reporter who talked about the impact wolves have had on hunting opportunities, a conservationist and wolf advocate who questioned some of the wolf management techniques being employed or proposed, and a professional biologist from the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks responsible for wolf management. Regardless of how you feel about wolves and the wolf restoration efforts, pro or con, the panel was extremely enlightening and very warmly received. As rancher John Herman said in his presentation, "wolves are here to stay" and he is learning how to live with them.

Came eventide and our banquet and silent auction. The food was great and the wine, courtesy of FWS retiree and vintner Steve Parry, the perfect prelude to our banquet speaker. Joel Sartore, conservationist, author and photographer extraordinaire and a Fellow of the National Geographic Society, was at once informative, entertaining, and humorous as he described his work and travels for NatGeo. As you might have expected, the photographic images he presented were impressive but his presentation was equally fascinating.

The items in our silent auction drew a great deal of attention and, fortunately, a fair amount of good old American capital. As you may know, this is the Association's second largest source of income and this year's profit surpassed all our previous auctions.

Friday was the day to say "Goodbye", goodbye to Kalispell, to friends and former colleagues with whom we had reunited, and just as importantly lest they be forgotten, to those of us who have departed this world. Many then left on individual side trips and tours of nearby attractions while a couple dozen of us joined together for an 8-hour guided tour of Glacier National Park after the closeout. There we did get up close and personal with a fine specimen of Ursus arctos horribilus who, fortunately, was too busy digging for ground squirrels to pay us any heed.

Thus ended Reunion 2013. There will soon be a gallery of photos from the reunion posted on our website. Be sure to drop in and have a look-see at some of the sights we saw and the people we joined with, all of which combined to make Kalispell a great success.

Next stop: undecided, but we are looking into possibly convening again at or near San Antonio, Houston, or Galveston in the spring of 2015. If you have any thoughts or suggestion, let us know. Maybe we can conjure up something as good as this year's reunion. Hope so and hope to see you there (or wherever).

A Special Thanks to Supporters of Reunion 2013

No summary of the Kalispell reunion would be complete without recognition of those who made it all possible.

First, we want to recognize those who provided monetary or other material support to help us put together the tours and events. These are:

Ducks Unlimited
The National Wildlife Refuge Association
The Leupold – Stevens Company,
AARP (Chief Operating Officer Jo Ann Jenkins),
The National Geographic Education Foundation (Gil
Grosvenor and Pat Noonan),

The National Geographic Society, and Parry Cellars (Steve Parry, Proprietor)

We also want to thank all those who donated items for our silent auction.

Rob Akey Leupold & Stevens Mark Ogle **Ducks Unlimited** Allen Jimmerson Western Heritage Denny Holland Matt Perry Dillards Department Store Steve Rideout Steve Parry of Parry Cellars Rob Hazelwood Donna Menke Dave Hilley James Parker Tom Duncan Wayne Ridenour Michael Hervey Terry Grosz **Bob Fields** Spearfish National Fish Hatchery Richard & Nancy Coon Marvin Plenert Larry Shanks Barbara & Jerry Ritter Federal Duck Stamp Office Jim Posewitz Ken Schwindt Earnest Dauzat Frank Cockrell Tackle Direct Mark Kornick Luann & Don Fortenberry Cathy & Bob Stevens

And lastly, for their time, planning, and logistical support, a "Very Special Thank You" to the staff and volunteers of The Creston National Fish Hatchery and The National Bison Range.

Have You Moved?

To keep you in the loop on relevant happenings and events and to send you the latest newsletters, we need to have up-to-date contact information. If you have a new mailing address, phone number, or e-mail address, please let us know. You may use the form at the back of this newsletter or you can phone or e-mail the new information direct to our database manager, **Kelle Quist**; **Phone: 1-413-339-4718**; **e-mail: wquist1@verizon.net**

Election of Board Members

Each year, the terms of three members of the Association's Board of Directors expire. And each year, every dues paying member gets a chance to run for one of those seats or nominate someone else to run. And once a slate of candidates has been identified,

every dues paying member has the opportunity to vote for the candidates of their choice. Elections are normally held in the fall or early winter, with new or re-elected Board members taking their seats in January.

This year, ballots with the names and bios of qualified candidates will be mailed to eligible voters around the 15th of November. Voter returns will be accepted through the 13th of December. This means that a slate of candidates needs to be identified soon. If you yourself are interested in serving on the Board, please let us know directly. Or if you know of someone else that you feel would make a good Board member, contact them first to confirm their interest before submitting their name for consideration. To make the ballot, names for candidacy must be submitted by November 9th. Send them to Jim McKevitt at jimmymac@usamedia.tv or phone 530-878-7883.

We need a good and active Board to keep this Association running smoothly. The duties of Board members are not onerous. Members meet via conference call every month and a modest commitment of time devoted to Association business is frequently required of members between each conference call. So, if you think the functions of the Fish and Wildlife Retirees Association in continued involvement in natural resource issues, preserving the heritage of the Service, and fostering camaraderie among retirees is something that appeals to you, consider running for a seat on our Board of Directors.

Preserving our History and Heritage

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

The Retirees Association has made collection of oral histories one of our top priorities for the next year or so. We don't want to leave to chance the collection of the unique stories of those who have witnessed and influenced the evolution of the Service and the conservation movement over the years. And each of us has been a part of that evolution.

But we can't do it alone. We are looking for volunteers to assist us in conducting interviews of those who have dedicated their careers to conservation of our nation's natural resources and who helped shape today's Fish and Wildlife Service. It requires a very modest amount of training (available online at the NCTC website) after which you could be of great service in this very worthwhile endeavor. If you think you might want to help to gather these stories, or if you have some suggestions on whom we should be seeking to interview, let us know. Just contact any of our Board members (e-mail and phone numbers on the first page of this newsletter) to find out more about the program and how you can get involved.

Miscellaneous

<u>A Little Help for NCTC.</u> John Fisher in the Publications Office at NCTC is looking for an old publication on the lesser-prairie chicken. The title is "The Changing World of the Lesser-Prairie Chicken." A Special Report to Division of Wildlife Refuges, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The report was authored by A.F. Halloran, is dated 1966, and is 11 pages plus appendices.

If any of our readers has a copy and/or knows where one can be found, get in touch with John. His mailing address is

John Fisher

USFWS/NCTC

Publication Office

698 Conservation Way

Shepherdstown, WV 25443

His phone number 304-876-7659. Any help will be appreciated.

Closing of National Fish Hatcheries. Based on a report by the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council and others, we recently sent out an information alert about the possibility of the Fish and Wildlife Service closing several "mitigation" fish hatcheries, including the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives. We are still not sure if this threat was real or what has transpired in Washington since we sent the alert and many supporters of the hatchery system got involved. Nevertheless, we are now informed that there is no current proposal on the table for closure of any mitigation hatcheries.

Passing of Colleagues

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

<u>James M. Dale (1922 – 2011).</u> Retired Fish and Wildlife Service employee James Dale passed away at his family home in

Buchanan, TN on July 16, 2011. Born on March 23, 1922, James was a U.S. Army veteran who served during World War II. His first assignment with the FWS was as Assistant Refuge Manager at Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge headquartered in Paris, TN. He later transferred to Russellville, AR where he developed the Holla Bend NWR and



served as its first manager. After over six years there, he transferred to Plymouth, NC as manager of the Pungo NWR, now known as the Pocossin Lakes NWR. His next assignment was in Hollandale MS where he managed the Yazoo and Hillside NWRs.

James retired to his family farm in Buchanan, TN in 1979 after 30 + years with the Service. He was recognized as an excellent agricultural leader, teacher, conservationist and refuge manager in the early days of the National Wildlife Refuge System and was a mentor to many of the younger refuge managers over the years. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Opal, by his daughter, Barbara, and his son James Jr., by four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Glenn William Kinser, Jr. (1940 – 2013). Glenn Kinser, 73, passed away on August 12, 2013, at his home in



Shepherdstown, West Virginia. He is survived by his wife, Lillian (Hatcher) Kinser; son, Glenn Kinser III and wife Debra; daughter, Kirsten Dickason and husband, Robert; three grandchildren; two step-sons; eight step-grandchildren; brother, Robert Kinser; and the many employees he mentored. Glenn retired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2003 after 29 years of service.

A native of Canton, Ohio, Glenn received a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Kent State University and his Master and PhD degrees in zoology and ecology from Indiana University. Glenn taught at Rider University in New Jersey, and Cedar Crest College Environmental Center in Florida, before joining FWS.

Glenn served in the Biological Services and Ecological Services programs in the Washington Office from 1973 to 1977, where he was a specialist on the ecological impacts of nuclear power plants; headed a team of scientists who investigated the impacts of the proposed Storm King hydroelectric facility for the Assistant Secretary: and served as acting Branch Chief of Permits and Licenses during a period when the large wetland fill project at Marco Island, Florida was under review. In 1977, Glenn became the Field Supervisor of the Annapolis, Maryland office of Ecological Services. While there, Glenn helped establish the Service's Chesapeake Bay Estuary Program, having direct ties to the EPA's interagency Chesapeake Bay Program, and which also served as the model for the Service's national Glenn became Field Supervisor of the coastal program. Chesapeake Bay Estuary Program Office in 1988, when it was separated from the Ecological Services field office. From 1992 to 1993, Glenn served a detail with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in Washington, D.C., working on the establishment of a challenge grant program for habitat restoration. Glenn became the first Chief of Training for the Training National Conservation Center (NCTC) Shepherdstown, WV, from 1993 to 1998, and retired as the Special Assistant to the Director of NCTC in 2003.

Glenn was an accomplished wildlife wood carver and painter, primarily of birds. Glenn was respected by his colleagues as an excellent scientist, independent thinker and innovator, mentor to many Service employees, and a great humorist. Many of Glenn's colleagues and former employees maintained enduring friendships with him long after he retired – quite a testament to Glenn's stature and influence within the Service. Glenn was always a fighter for the resource and embodied the unofficial Ecological Services' slogan "Save the Dirt."

A memorial service was held for Glenn on September 14, 2013, in Shepherdstown, WV. Cards of condolence to the family may be sent to P.O. Box 814, Shepherdstown, WV, 25443.

Donald Gene Kuntzelman (1927 - 2013). Don Kuntzelman passed away at his home in Rio Rancho, NM on August 21, 2013 at the age of 85. Don was born on September 15, 1927 in Oregon, Ill. His was a large family including 11 brothers and sisters. After graduating from Leaf River High School in Illinois



in 1945, Don joined the Navy just in time to be a World War II veteran. As a hospital corpsman, Don was an operating room technician who was commended for assisting with 219 surgical procedures. That experience made him want to be a doctor.

After discharge, Don attended the University of Wisconsin where he received a B.S. in Zoology. Later he earned a Master's Degree at the University of

California. Most of his working life was in the field of wildlife and fisheries management, both for state and federal governments. He set up many game preserves and fish hatcheries. He was also employed for several years by the EPA working to remove harmful chemicals from the environment.

Don retired after 32 years of federal service, most of that with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. When he retired, Don was chief of the Division of Federal Aid in Albuquerque, New Mexico, overseeing money dispersed to state fish and game departments. Not only was he a scrupulous financial watchdog for the government, he also did all he could to help qualified but sometimes passed over workers get ahead.

After retirement, he and his wife, Tersela, were active volunteering at their church as well as in the American Legion Post 118 where they served as chaplains for 5 years. Don and Tersela regularly sang and played guitar at the VA hospital for the patients as well as residences at area nursing homes.

Don is survived by his wife, Tersela, "his angel", whom he married December 15, 1989. He is also survived by 5 brothers and sisters as well as their 4 children, and many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

<u>Carlos Mendoza (1940 – 2013).</u> We are informed that Carlos Mendoza passed away on August 16, 2013 in Clear Lake, TX. Carlos' career included stints in Washington, D.C. and as Supervisor of the Reno, NV and Clear Lake, TX Ecological Services Field Offices. No other information is currently available.

Joan Skogseth (1936 - 2013). Joan Skogseth passed away on

August 10, 2013 in Minneapolis, MM at the age of 77. Joan was Secretary in the Human Resources Division at the Fish and Wildlife Service's Regional Office in Minneapolis until her retirement about 10 years ago. She was well known and loved for her good humor, smile and willingness to help others.



Joan was pre-deceased by her husband, Arnold, and survived by her children Susan, Mark, and

Thomas and by six grandchildren. She was laid to rest alongside her husband at the Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

Robert I. Smith (1929 - 2012). Bob Smith died on May 2, 2012 at The Pines at Whiting in New Jersey. Bob was born in Nashville, TN, and graduated from Duncan Preparatory School

in Nashville. Bob received a BS degree in Forestry Managements from Auburn University; attended Utah State University and graduated with a PhD in Wildlife Biology. He conducted field work at Delta Waterfowl Station for his dissertation, which preceded a 31 vear-long career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that began in 1961 as a Wildlife Biologist in



Laurel, MD. From 1965-1972, he was Associate Professor of Zoology, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, where he taught graduate and undergraduate courses in Wildlife Management and advised students at the Master's and Doctoral levels. During his tenure as Special Projects Coordinator for the Service's Office of Migratory Bird Management, Bob helped facilitate important and often contentious discussions on the nontoxic shot issue, ultimately resulting in the successful implementation of regulations requiring the use of non-toxic shot for waterfowl hunting in the United States. He later served as Chief of the Branch of Surveys, Office of Migratory Bird Management, in Laurel, MD. He retired from the Service in 1992 but continued his work by serving as Doctoral Committee Consultant for Wildlife and Environmental Studies with The Union Institute, Cincinnati, OH.

During his career, Bob published works on migratory bird management for both FWS and the Auk. His participation at conferences and workshops around the world created a heightened awareness of fragile ecosystems, which call for special attention to dire effects of climate change on all life. He is remembered fondly by those who worked with and knew him in Laurel, MD. Bob is survived by his wife, Penny, son Dale, daughter Teresa, Stepson Dexter, stepdaughters Jennifer and Hillary, 2 grandchildren and 12 step-grandchildren.

Raymond Leroy Wilmot (1922 - 1992) Kelle Quist, our database manager, received a phone call from Margie Curry, Ray Wilmot's widow, to tell us that she is still receiving our newsletter even though Ray was deceased. She said he died in 1992 from complications of MS. Ray had a 40 year career with the Fish and Wildlife Service, much of it in the northern Rocky mountain area and she asked that we put something about him in our next newsletter. If any of you out there knew Ray and would care to contribute to a more meaningful obituary, please let us know. Although it has been some time since his passing, some of his former co-workers are still out there and would undoubtedly like to see him recognized in this newsletter.

Attendees at Kalispell

The following retirees, active Service members, and significant others came together for the 2013 Reunion at Kalispell

Dave and Gerri Allen

Ed Bangs

Jerry and Jane Bentley Paul and Wini Benvenuti Evie Bradley (Active)

Gail Carmody

Frank and Elaine Cockrell Guy and Helen Connelly Richard and Nancy Coon Earl and Ann Cunningham John and Peggy Doebel Bob and June Fields

Don and Luann Fortenberry

Ron Fowler

Larry Gamble (Active)

Jim Gillett

Ken Goddard (Active) Dick and Pat Gritman Jerry and Judy Grover Rowan Gould (Active) Gary and Susan Hagedorn Mike and Ann Hendrix Chuck and Susan Henny Denny and Kathy Holland

Sharon and Dwight Hooley (Active)

Mary Kaschke Jack and Yvonne Key

Dudley and Leslee Korth John and Susan Kurtz

Jim and Cynthia Krakowski

Skip Ladd

Curt Laffin and Carol Wallace

Rick Lemon

Dave and Judy Lenhart

John Malcolm Jim McKevitt

Bill and Nancy Meyer Robert and Irma Miller

Dick and Sheila Moore

Marvin Moriarty

Richard and Lynn Nelson Jim and Verne Oland

Mamie Parker Steve Parry Matt Perry

Bob and Gerry Phillips Mary and Carol Plenert

Richard and Christie Pospahala Don Redfearn and Peggy Galbreath Frank and Dottie Richardson

Steve and Carol Rideout Barb and Jerry Ritter

Gerry Roehm

Ken and Janice Schwindt Larry and Carleen Shanks

Jim and Rose Shaw

Franklin and Robin Smith

Tom Smith

Dave and JoAnna Stanbrough

Donna Stanek

Bob and Cathy Stevens Pete and Marlene Stine

Larry Stolte

Bob and Karen Streeter Jim and Jacque Tisdale Herb and Theresa Troester Terry Villaneuva/ Gid Honsinger

Larry and Arlene Visscher Rolf and Ginnie Wallenstrom Bill and Mary Walsdorf

Dave and Chris Wesley John and Barbara Winship Bruce and Nicki Wiseman

Membership	Application/I	Renewal/Update
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Fill out and mail OR, for membership applications and renewals only, you may use PayPal on our website at http.www.fwsretirees.org

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This is a: New Application	Renewal Info	rmation Update	(CHECK ONE)
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For membership applications and	l renewals, make check pava	ble to and mail complet	ted applications to:

F

Treasurer, FWS Retirees Association, PO Box 27896, Panama City, FL. 32411

For assistance, e-mail Gail Carmody at fwsretiree@gmail.com or phone Gail at 1-850-235-9012