

FWS Retirees Association

NEWSLETTER



August 2016

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Memphis 2016 – You Don’t Want To Miss This One But Time Is Running Out!

October is just around the corner, plans for events and speakers at our upcoming reunion have been completed and Memphis beckons like a warm fire and a hot toddy on cold winter’s night.

Yet many of you who would surely enjoy this reunion of your friends and former colleagues have not yet registered or made your hotel reservations. Time is running out and that’s no joke.

Your Board has arranged a fun-packed week at bargain prices. We’ve booked the hotel, developed a full and interesting agenda, scheduled the panels and speakers, set up the tours and events, the music, the socials and the banquet. The rest is up to you. Register for the reunion, make your hotel reservations and your travel arrangements **now** before you miss the opportunity and a memorable gathering.

The City. Located on the mighty Mississippi River, Memphis is a hustling, bustling metropolis that plays host to over 10 million tourists annually, drawn to the city’s and the area’s historic and scenic attractions. Touting itself as the “*Birthplace of Rock ‘n’ Roll and Home of the Blues,*” Visitors flock to Elvis Presley’s Graceland



mansion and to the jumping and jiving Beale Street. Old time paddlewheel riverboats ply the country’s largest and longest

river on tours both long and short. The Memphis Zoo is rated one of America’s ten best (Fodor Travel) and the city has numerous museums and historical sites to visit.

Another attraction is the Memphis Pyramid. This 550,000 square foot wonder is 321 feet tall, the 10th largest pyramid in the world. It is home to the Bass Pro Shops headquarters, a 222,000 square foot Bass Pro Shop store and the Ducks Unlimited Waterfowl Heritage Center, as well as several restaurants, a 100 room hotel and a 28 story free-standing glass elevator to a glass-floored observation deck with the most incredible view of the city of Memphis and the Mississippi River.



Not all of Memphis, however, is a busy city. Away from downtown are large areas of suburban parklands including the vast Shelby Farms Park. This 4500-acre reserve, 5 times the size of New York City’s Central Park, contains several lakes and areas of forest and wetlands that support an array of wildlife. It has well over 10 miles of trails for hiking and biking and even a 56 acre bison reserve. And it’s close to our hotel.

Hotel Reservations. Our venue for this reunion is the Crowne Plaza Memphis – East, conveniently located in suburban East Memphis, an area dotted with parks yet within 15 minutes of most of Memphis’s attractions. The hotel has an outdoor and indoor pool and hot tub, a well-equipped fitness room, free wi-fi, free parking and free local shuttle. We have booked a block of



rooms there at a most reasonable \$99/night lodging rate that includes a cooked breakfast every day. That rate will be honored three days before and for three days after our reunion dates of October 2 through October 6. This will allow you time to plan some side trips on your own.

However, the hotel and many of the surrounding hotels are fully booked for that time period, except for those rooms set aside for our reunion. You must register by September 21st in order to be guaranteed a room at those rates or any other. After that date, rooms will probably not be available at any price.

To make reservations, call the hotel directly at **901-362-6200** and tell them you are entitled to the rate for the “**Reunion of FWS Retirees Association**” and the booking code is **RFW**. You can also make reservations online at the hotel’s website. The link is below. Put your cursor on the link, hit CTRL and click on the



link simultaneously and it should take you to the registration page set up for our reunion.

<http://www.crowneplaza.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=cp&localeCode=en®ionCode=1&hotelCode=MEMCP&PMID=99801505&GPC=RFW>

You will first need to select the dates you want to stay and the type of room (two queen beds or king bed) and the \$99 rate will be displayed. This link is only for our group and for the dates we have negotiated. After selecting your room type, you will need to secure your reservation with a credit card.

Reunion Registration. In addition to making your hotel reservations, you will need to register for the reunion and its events. Again, we have an ambitious agenda replete with nearly a week of activities, tours, and social events **and** we have kept the registration cost to a minimum. The registration fee for our Memphis Reunion is a mere \$115/person. That will cover the evening social with heavy hors d’oeuvres, the banquet (including wine, music and speakers), refuge tour and lunch, transportation, daily coffee and refreshments, and a myriad of other expenses. That’s quite a bargain for four plus days of activities, entertainment and several meals.

The registration fee does **not** include the **Greenwalt Walk for Wildlife and Riverboat Cruise** set up by the Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee group. The fee for that will be \$30 per person with the proceeds, after expenses, to go to the West Tennessee Wildlife Refuge Complex Friends group.

At the end of this newsletter is a Reunion Registration Form. We strongly encourage everyone to please register before the reunion to be sure that we can provide for you and to help us complete our planning. You can fill it out and send it in by snail mail **or**, if you are among the more technically proficient, you can fill it out and submit it online at our website <http://www.fwsretirees.org/MemphisReunion.html>

Regardless of how you submit your registration form, you can also pay online by using the Pay Pal feature.

Agenda Highlights. A complete copy of the current agenda is appended. This year our reunion focuses on migratory birds and big river fishes but includes other happenings sure to interest FWS retirees **and** their spouses. While many activities are planned, most days will have ample *Free Time* to allow you to do things on your own or with fellow retirees.

Sunday, October 2nd: Registration will commence in the afternoon but the highlight of the day will be the ***Greenwalt Walk for Wildlife and Riverboat Cruise***. We will also have a historian onboard the cruise to tell us stories about the area. This special event has been arranged largely by the Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee group. The walk is optional but you surely won’t want to miss the one-hour cruise on the Big Muddy with food provided and drinks available. “Old Man River” is calling but you won’t have to “tote that barge” or “lift that bale”. Just sit back and enjoy.

Monday, October 3rd: The official opening of the Reunion and registration will continue. After welcoming introductions and a celebration of the life of Association founding member Denny Holland, we have set up two very interesting and enlightening panels: the first entitled ***Migratory Birds: Celebrating 100 years of the Migratory Bird Treaties*** and the second on the ***National Wetlands Inventory and FWS Wetlands Policy and Management Actions***. We will also have a brief presentation, one of several by your fellow retirees, on interesting things they have undertaken since leaving the active Service. This one will be on a ***Birdwatching Tour of Cuba*** undertaken by several of our Board members. The highlight of the evening will be our ***Social and Reception*** hosted by **Ducks Unlimited** and will include a tour of their headquarters. This was set up by Dale Hall, former FWS Director and current CEO of Ducks Unlimited. Dale has been a great help in our planning for this reunion and we owe him a great debt of thanks.

Tuesday, October 4th: Tuesday’s highlight will be our field trip and tour of ***Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge*** part of the West Tennessee National Wildlife refuge Complex. The field trip will include a barbeque lunch and the opportunity to be a part of a special program for children at the refuge. It will be a workshop on career development and personal development connecting kids to nature. We get back to the hotel in late afternoon and dinner and/or side trips will be on your own.



Wednesday, October 5th: More on the lives of retirees as Jerry and Judy Grover describe their recent *Vacation in a French Polynesian Paradise*. We follow that up with three panels you don’t want to miss. First, Jessica and David Snell from the National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) and Denise Sheehan and/or Rebekah Giddings from the FWS Office of Human Capital will provide updates and answer questions on ***Retirement Legislation, Policy, and Benefits***. This has always been one of our most popular

presentation and this year should be no exception. Next we expect to have a discussion of **FWS Leadership Highlights and Priorities** with FWS Deputy Director Jim Kurth and Southeast Regional Director Cyndy Dohner. There's a lot that has happened since we met at Corpus Christi and we're sure you want to hear and ask questions of those in charge. Finally, after lunch we will have another great panel, this one on **Big River Fishes** where you will hear about FWS priorities and fishery resource issues along the lower Mississippi River.

On Wednesday evening, we will have our traditional **Retirees Banquet and Silent Auction**. Before and during the Banquet, music by a local jazz combo will be provided. Our after-dinner speaker will be Mark Plotkin, noted ethnobotanist, author and co-founder of the Amazon Conservation Team, whose lengthy career in the Amazonian rainforest has won him renown, including a presentation by Jane Goodall of the award for International Conservation Leadership. And as usual, our **Silent Auction** will have a good many items of value to us fish and wildlife types, so be sure to bring your checkbooks. This is one of our most important fundraising events.

Thursday, October 6th: Wrap-up and closeout day. For those sticking around after the closeout, we are working on arrangements for an afternoon at the Memphis Pyramid. This 550,000 square foot building is 321 feet tall, the 10th largest pyramid in the world. We are proposing lunch on your own at the 'Pyramid' and shopping/sightseeing where ever your feet decide to take you. Check this place out online by googling "**Memphis Pyramid presented by Bass Pro Shops.**"

Who's Gonna Be There. See who has already said they were going to be at the party in Memphis this October in the list below. Friends of yours? If so, join them. Don't see your buddies on this list? Sign up and encourage them to join you. With a month to go before the reunion, we expect to see many more names on this list. Don't wait. Register now.

Retirees

Gail Baker and Doyle Bruner
Nell and Joe Baldacchino
Gail Carmody
Richard and Nancy Coon
John Cornely
Tom Dahl
Greg Dehmer
Bob and June Fields
Robin Fields
Don and Luann Fortenberry
John and Terri Gallegos
Lynn and Judy Greenwalt
Jerry and Judy Grover
Warren and Sharon Hagenbuck
Bruce Halstead
Geraldine (Gerry) Hearn
Kathy Holland
Derba Holle-Friggel and Terry Friggel
Jack and Yvonne Key and Marianna Sathrum
Tannor and Marion Kopp
Skip Ladd
Bob and Bonnie Jacobsen
Tom and Joan McAndrews

June McIlwain and Tim Jackson
Jim McKeivitt
Bob and Irma Miller
Dick and Sheila Moore
Nancy Morrissey and Patti Vick
Mamie Parker
Matt Perry
Dennis and Renee Peters
Marv and Carol Plenert
Kelle and Walt Quist
Marguerite Shamgochaian
Larry and Carleen Shanks
Dave and Tammy Sharp
Jim and Rose Shaw
Rollin Siegfried
Franklin and Robin Smith
Donna Stanek
Bob and Cathy Stevens
Charles Storrs
Bob and Candy Strader
Bob and Karen Streeter
Jim and Jacque Tisdale
Sandy Tucker
Rolfe and Ginnie Wallenstrom
Linda and Russell Watters
Bill Wilen

Others

Director Dan Ashe and/or Deputy Director Jim Kurth,
Regional Director Cyndy Dohner
Deputy Regional Director Mike Oetker
Denise Sheehan/Rebekah Giddings, FWS Human Resources
Randy Cook, FWS – Mgr, Western Tennessee Refuges
Kevin Foerster, FWS - R-1 Refuge Chief
Mark Madison, FWS - NCTC
Jay Slack, FWS - NCTC
Amy Zimmerman, FWS
Dale Hall, ex-FWS Director and President, Ducks Unlimited
David Houghton, National Wildlife Refuge Association
Scott Yaich, Ducks Unlimited
Doug Brinkley, Author
Mark Plotkin, Speaker
Michael Johnson
Keith McKnight
Angie Rodgers
Gretchen Benjamin, The Nature Conservancy
Jessica Klement, Legislative Director, NARFE

So what are you waiting for? You've got the lowdown on what's planned, who's going to be there, and how to make reservations and how to register. Now's the time to move on this. Get off the couch and away from the TV, you're your travel and hotel reservations, register, and, while you're at it, get some of your other buddies to do the same. **It's Party Time!**

See you in Memphis.

Articles for the Silent Auction. We need your help! As you may know, the Silent Auction is our biggest fundraiser. We don't ever intend for our reunion registration fees to be a money maker and the dues we collect barely cover the costs associated

with membership services. So the Silent Auction is extremely important for us to be able to continue our efforts on your behalf. We need nice stuff, something you would buy for yourself or as a gift to someone close. Rummage through the attic, basement, garage or your closets to see what you might find. Consider donating that wildlife print hanging on your wall (which your better half hates) or take something off your shelf or out of your bookcase. But no junk, please. If you have something of value to contribute, contact Board Member Larry Shanks to make arrangements to get it to us.

Oral History Interviews. Retired FWS employees have some of the best career experiences imaginable and have informative and entertaining stories that need to be told. Our association and the FWS Heritage Committee, through the Oral History Project, are preserving important parts of the history of the Service as seen through the eyes of its employees, past and present. Our Reunion at Memphis provides an outstanding opportunity to obtain some of those stories. We will have interviewers, recording equipment, and space available at the Reunion to record YOUR stories. If you are planning to join us at Memphis and wish to share your FWS experiences and opinions, please let our Oral History Committee Chairperson, John Cornely, know so that he can schedule an interview. It matters not what your positions were, what program or at what level you served. We are interested in everyone! Contact John at johncornely@msn.com and be prepared to tell all.

Resource Issues

In this edition, these will be intentionally very brief and not a complete rundown of issues in order to focus primarily on the reunion. More detail in our next newsletter..

Gray Wolf. Washington state wildlife officials plan to exterminate a pack of 11 endangered gray wolves – six adults and five pups - after the animals were determined to have been preying on cows. There are only 19 confirmed gray wolf packs in all of Washington state, comprising just 90 wolves, according to a June census by the state Department of Fish and Wildlife. Killing the so-called Profanity Peak pack would remove more than 12 percent of the confirmed state population.

For a more detailed report from the Seattle Times on the proposal and its causes and ramifications, use the following link: <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/profanity-peak-wolf-pack-in-states-gun-sights-after-rancher-turns-out-cattle-on-den/>

Mexican Wolf. In our February newsletter, we reported on the controversy surrounding FWS plans to release additional captive-bred endangered Mexican wolves into New Mexico to increase the gene pool and aid in recovery. New Mexico refused to issue a permit for the release and in late May a federal judge issued a temporary injunction halting the release until FWS obtains said state permit. That's not likely to happen.

In other action, New Mexico congressman Steve Pearce (R-Hobbs) added an amendment to a House appropriations bill last

that, if signed into law, would cut all funding from the Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program. Countering this, U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich, D-N.M. proclaimed that the anti-environmental language in the bill was part of a "pattern of very problematic anti-conservation riders," over the last few years in the House and that he would work with U.S. Senator Tom Udall, D-N.M., to ensure those amendments are removed from the final bill.

Bald Eagle Deaths in Maryland. As we reported in May, thirteen bald eagles were found dead in a field near Federalsburg on the eastern shore of Maryland and it was subsequently determined that the cause was poisoning. However, FWS investigators have been unable to identify the culprit(s) for lack of evidence and the case will soon be closed.

Miscellaneous



2017 South African Safari and Volunteer Opportunity Announced!

February 5 – 17, 2017. This will be a conservation work trip. Depart Sunday February 5, arriving in Johannesburg February 6. Tentative schedule - February 6- 12 at Chazen Game Reserve. February 13-16 at Pilanesburg National Park; includes lectures on Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site (Chazen is located in the dome area), visit to nearby town of Parys and a visit to Marapeng and/or Sterkfontein Caves. You can find more information about Chazen on their website [Africa Through Your Lens](#). Return flights depart Johannesburg February 17, arriving back on the 18th. Many travelers opt for additional trips to Cape Town or additional safaris.

Cost: \$2500 plus airfare. (\$2500 is all inclusive, including all transport, meals, lodging, entry fees). Group is limited to 10 people.

For more information, contact: [Donna Stanek](#) at dstanek0418@hotmail.com

Memphis 2016

FWS Retirees Reunion, Memphis, Tennessee, October 2 - 6, 2016

REGISTRATION FORM

I/We plan to attend the Reunion:

Name: _____

Spouse/Other(s): _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone # _____

e-mail: _____

Registration Fee: \$115 per person

Registration fee includes break refreshments, the icebreaker social with hors d'oeuvres, the banquet including wine, transportation, and the tour of Hatchie NWR.

I/We plan to go on the all-day tour of the Hatchie NWR (cost included in registration)

Yes _____ Number going on tour _____ No _____

I/We plan to participate in the Greenwalt Walk for Wildlife and Riverboat Cruise (cost \$30 extra)

Yes _____ Number going on walk _____

No _____

Total Amount Due: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

(Make checks payable to: FWS Retirees Association)

Mail checks and completed registration forms to:

Jim McKeivitt, 3220 Christian Valley Road, Auburn, CA 95602

Mailed registration forms and checks must be received by

Alternatively, you may register and pay at our website: www.fwsretirees.org

**The Association of Retired
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Employees
Annual Meeting and Reunion**

**October 2-6, 2016
Memphis, Tennessee**

Draft Agenda



Sunday, October 2, 2016

Morning	FWS Retirees Association Board Meeting
1:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Opens
4:00 pm	Depart Hotel for Greenwalt Walk For Wildlife
5:00 pm	Greenwalt Walk for Wildlife and Paddlewheel Cruise w/ Snacks
7:00 pm	Opening Social (with DJ and dancing at host hotel)

Monday, October 3, 2016

7:00 a.m.	Registration Desk Opens
8:30 am – 9:00 am	Moderator- Jerry Grover, Reunion Co-Coordinator Housekeeping items Mamie Parker, Reunion Co-Coordinator Program Highlights Bob Streeter, FWS Retirees Association Board Chairman Greetings and introduction of the Retirees Association Board of Directors
Raffle Ongoing	Greetings and Regional Highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dale Hall, Former FWS Director and President, Ducks Unlimited ➤ Randy Cook, Manager, Western Tennessee National Wildlife Refuges ➤ Bill Reeves, State of Tennessee Wildlife Resources ➤ -Mayor Jim Strickland, City of Memphis
9:00am – 9:15 am	Celebrating the Retirees Association Founding Member, Denny Holland, Departed Colleagues and Widows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lynn Greenwalt, Former FWS Director

9:15 am- 11:30 am	<p>Panel: Celebrating 100 years of the Migratory Bird Treaty</p> <p>Michael Johnson: Moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legacy & Foundation of Foundation of the MB Treaty - Dave Sharp ➤ Joint Ventures: Putting Migratory Bird Plans on the Ground - Keith McKnight
11:30 am - 1:00 pm	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Interview with a Duck Stamp Winner - Suzanne Fellow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Update on USPS Duck Stamp
1:00 pm	
2:00 pm	<p>FWS Approach to Conservation and the National Wetland Inventory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 40 years of NWI - Bill Wilen, Former FWS NWI Chief ➤ Role of Status and Trends Reports in Influencing Policy and Actions - Tom Dahl, Former FWS Status and Trends Leader ➤ Use of NWI to fulfill DU's Conservation Mission - Scott Yaich, Ducks Unlimited
3:00 pm	<p>A Day in the Life of a FWS Retiree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cuban Bird Watching Tour - Matt Perry, Gail Carmody, and Bob Streeter
Variable	<p>FWS Retirees Association Board Meeting</p>
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm	<p>Evening Reception with Heavy Hors d'oeuvres and Tour of DU Headquarters sponsored by Ducks Unlimited</p>

➤ **Tuesday, October 04, 2016**

8:30 am	<p>Fish and Wildlife Service Heritage Committee Meeting</p>
8:45 am	<p>Field Trip – Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge</p> <p>BBQ Pork Sandwich Lunch at the NWR</p> <p>Greetings from Refuge Manager and Friends Group</p>
4:00 pm	<p>Estimated Arrival back to hotel</p>
Evening	<p>Dinner - On Your Own (Invite someone to dinner that you don't know well)</p>

➤ **Wednesday, October 05, 2016**

8:30 am	<p>A Day in the Life of a FWS Retiree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ French Polynesia - A Vacation in Paradise, Jerry Grover
9:00 am - 10:30 am	<p>Update on Retirement Legislation, Policy, and Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FWS Assistant Director Denise Sheehan/ Rebekah Giddings, FWS ➤ Jessica Klement, NAFRE Legislative Director, Washington, DC ➤ David Snell, NAFRE, via <i>Skype</i>, Washington, DC
10:30 - 12:00 noon	<p>FWS Leadership Highlights, Priorities, and Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Director Dan Ash or Deputy Director Jim Kurth ➤ Regional Director Cyndy Dohner and Deputy RD Mike Oetker

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch- On Your Own
1:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Big River Fisheries Highlights Gail Carmody, Moderator ➤ Lower Mississippi River Coordinating Committee: Angie Rodgers ➤ The Nature Conservancy – An NGO’s Prospective: Gretchen Benjamin
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Malheur NWR Kevin Foerster , National Wildlife Refuges Chief, Pacific Region ➤ Lesson learned from the occupation ➤ Next Steps
5:30 p.m.	Silent Auction Opens Reception with Cash Bar and local R& B band
7:00 pm – 9:30 pm	Reunion Banquet ➤ 2015 Heritage Award to Douglas Brinkley - Historian, Author Presented by FWS Director ➤ Presentation by NWRA David Haughton ➤ Keynote Speaker & Video Presentation Noted ethnobotanist, author and co-founder of the Amazon River Basin Conservation Team
10:00 pm	End Silent Auction

➤ **Thursday, October 6, 2016**

8:30 am - 9:00 am	Opening and Announcements Show and Tell: Still having fun: A day in the life of a FWS Retiree
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Open Forum
9:30 am - 10:00 am	Report from the Association Board Meeting Chairman, Bob Streeter
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Reunion Evaluation and Next Reunion Ideas Invited to 25 th Anniversary NCTC, September 21-25, 2017
10:30 am - 10:45 am	Closing Remarks: Conference Co-Coordinator
Post Reunion Event	Luncheon and Tour of the Pyramid and Bass Pro Shop [Tentative – a work in progress]

FWS RETIREES ASSOCIATION



*Why join?
Keep connected to USFWS, renew friendships,
make new friends with similar interests,
travel to unique wild places, and/or
do volunteer work for fish and wildlife conservation.¹*

Membership Application/Renewal/Update

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

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

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

Name: _____ Spouse/Partner: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ email _____ @ _____

FWS Program (at retirement) _____

Office and Region _____ Retirement Date _____

YOUR INTEREST AREA(S), PLEASE CHECK:

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

DUES (TAX DEDUCTIBLE): 1-yr - \$25.00 2-yr - \$50.00 3-yr - \$75.00* 5-yr - \$100 Lifetime - \$500

Get me in the database! I'm a new retiree! No dues needed!

Send a membership pin (one per member only)

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

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

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

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

¹ By adding your name to the Retirees database, you will continue to enjoy FW News and Refuge Update and will receive announcements of other fun and rewarding Retirees activities. No dues are required to be added to the database. You will have voting membership privileges for one year. Dues are voluntary and support Association activities. We hope that you will join in the future!