

FWS Retirees Association NEWSLETTER



Winter (February) 2026

2026 Board of Directors

| | | | |
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Message from the Chair



Greetings everyone!

As I write this article, I am looking at options for my airline reservations to attend the Anchorage Reunion in September! I hope you are doing the same, and encouraging others to join, as well. Planning is in full swing, and the reservation lines are open at the Captain Cook hotel (reunion details provided later in this newsletter). Remember the words of Dale Hall at our last reunion in Madison, “Bring along another FWS

retiree!”

This year we welcome Peggy Hobbs on our nine-member Board of Directors. Peggy hails from the Northeast, Region 5, and recently retired from Parker River NWR in Massachusetts. Our paths crossed when we both served on the FWS History Committee. I respect Peggy for her positive energy and great ideas. She is a welcome addition to our Board!

Before I sign off for now, I must remind you to support this Association by paying your dues. It’s only \$25/year, or you can pay for a Life Membership (like I did), so I don’t have to remember to pay my annual dues! Visit fwsretirees.org and click on **Join Us** to renew your membership.

Cindy Uptegraft Barry

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Business

Facebook Update

Please help spread the word about our Facebook page, "Fish and Wildlife Service Retirees" by inviting friends who are FWS Retirees to "follow" our page. You can do that by going to the page, clicking on the three dots in the upper right, and choose Invite Friends. Stay tuned for future content, and let us know what you would like to see by contacting Peggy Hobbs (peggyhobbs@msn.com). Look for information about the reunion and opportunities to connect for side trips around Alaska.

Alaska Reunion, September 21-25, 2026 Anchorage, Alaska

The reunion will be held in Anchorage, Alaska September 21-25. Robin West and Helen Clough, reunion co-chairs, are busy planning with help from other retirees who live or have lived in Alaska. This will be the first time we have met in Alaska. The late September date will coincide with the last part of the summer visitor season providing ample opportunities for retirees to plan other Alaska adventures before and/or after the reunion.

It is not too early to make your reservations. The Hotel Captain Cook located in downtown Anchorage is our host hotel. Here is the booking link: [Booking Link](#) and the group code is: **FWS Retirees Reunion**. If you want to stay longer, subject to availability, the group rate is available before or after the reunion. You can call the hotel at 907-276-6000. Be sure to ask for “FWS Retirees Reunion” when you talk to the hotel. The group room rate is \$199 per night plus taxes and fees. If you have any problems making reservations, please contact Helen Clough at 907-321-4004 or hcloughak@gmail.com.

We are looking at a similar format to our last reunion with registration and an opening reception on Monday, September 21, followed by meetings/sessions at the host venue on Tuesday and outside adventures on Wednesday and Thursday. A closing banquet will be held Thursday evening at the Hotel Captain Cook.

Anchorage is served by many airlines so we encourage you to look for deals that work for you. You may want to compare flights on individual airline websites and travel sites such as Expedia, Kayak, etc. in addition to individual airline sites.



Sea Otter. USFWS Photo

While details of field activities remain to be determined, we are looking at a number of field trips. As we are at the end of the summer visitor season, some activities we considered are not available or might not be a good time if the weather is not perfect so we are now looking at having one all-day trip on Wednesday.

All Day Marine and terrestrial scenic and wildlife tour: On Wednesday, September 23 we are planning an 11 to 12-hour round-trip Anchorage to Seward with a stop at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center <https://alaskawildlife.org/> and a

visit to the Alaska Sea Life Center <https://www.alaskasealife.org/> in Seward. Along the way we will see majestic scenery and likely iconic Alaska wildlife.



Horned puffin. USFWS photo.

Closer to Anchorage Local tours. On Thursday, September 24, we are looking at a number of half-day tours/activities closer to and in Anchorage including

- Alaska Native Heritage Center – Alaskanative.net
- Anchorage Museum – AnchorageMuseum.org
- Local Photo Safari with Alaska Photo Treks <https://Alaskaphototreks.com>

You can check out information on fall in Anchorage from the perspective of a local FWS retiree Donna Dewhurst at <https://www.anchorage.net/blog/post/autumn-in-anchorage/>

You might want to consider visiting Denali National Park you go before the reunion as it will be the end of the season but the park road may be open to private vehicles.

Thanks to Robin Major Marine tours is offering us a 20% discount on two tours. The % discount can be used for the 6-hour Kenai Fjords National Park Cruise September 18 - 20, and/or the 4-hour Kenai Fjords Wildlife Cruise September 18 - 26. [Note: the longer cruise discount is limited to immediately preceding the reunion while the shorter cruise is discounted both before and after]. Use the following link <https://majormarine.com/fws-reunion/>. These are amazing tours. If you are not prone to seasickness, it is great in any weather. If you are, suggest you check to make sure good weather is forecast.

Good information on the Anchorage area is available from “Visit Anchorage” which can be found at anchorage.net. Good information on visiting Alaska can be found at the State of Alaska’s visitor website <https://www.travelalaska.com/> You may wish to order their Alaska Travel planner which is loaded with information on Alaska travel options.

Feel free to contact Robin and Helen for their suggestions on things to do in Alaska. Helen lives in Juneau and is most familiar

with the southeast part of the state. Robin lives on the Kenai Peninsula and is very familiar with much of the state. Between the two of them, they have probably been almost everywhere in Alaska either for work or on personal adventures. **If you chose to call, remember Alaska has its own time zone which is 4 hours earlier than eastern time.**

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Robin West
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541-787-0938

Please check out our website FWSretirees.org and our Facebook Page “Fish and Wildlife Service Retirees” for updates. We will send an email blast when we open reunion registration so make sure we have your current email address.

Introducing New Board Member Peggy Hobbs

Peggy began her career with the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1988 in the Realty Division of Refuges at the Region 5 regional office in Newton Corner, Massachusetts, while working towards her Bachelor’s Degree in Biology (Wildlife). She later transferred to the Division of Ecological Services, but when the regional office moved to Hadley, she transferred to the newly established Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge in New Hampshire at the end of 1992 as the refuge’s first administrative staffer.

After getting married and having two children, Peggy transferred to the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Massachusetts to be closer to home and worked there until 2013, when she transferred to the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. There, she assisted in developing the regional NWRS Administrative Zone system where she was given the role of Zone Lead.

She also served on the FWS History Committee for eight years and is a Lifetime Member of the FWS Retirees Association. Peggy retired after a 37-year career in December 2025, and plans on spending more time with her family and friends at their lake house in Maine.\



Peggy

Info From the Treasurer

by Patrick Martin

Current Finances

The balance in our main operations checking account as of February 1, 2026: is \$28,030.17.

The balance in grants account as of February 1, 2026: is \$18,289.15

Additionally, funds are continuously accumulating in our PayPal account from membership dues. Based on the current accumulated balance, \$1,700 will be withdrawn from that account and deposited into our main operations account,

Grant Applications

We have regularly received two grants from USFWS: the history grant and the youth grant. Our last grants ended in FY25. Two FY26 grant proposals have been prepared and submitted to the National Conservation Training Center staff, the Service agency that manages and funds these two grants. We are waiting to hear if these grants will be funded.

Oral History Update

By Libby Herland, Chair, Oral History Subcommittee

2025 was a productive year for the FWS Oral History Program. Eighteen oral histories were recorded. Draft transcripts of 35 interviews were sent to the interviewers for review. 27 draft transcripts were sent to the interviewees for their review. An astonishing 38 transcripts completed the review process and were finalized! While we still have a backlog in our untranscribed interviews, significant progress was made in 2025.

Also last year, Alexandra Henry, who is the Oral History program manager at the National Conservation Training Center, continued to build the oral history collection on the FWS website. This collection makes it easier to find completed transcripts. The website is <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/oral-history-transcripts>. The vast majority of completed transcripts are accessible at www.fws.gov. However, it can be difficult to find them on this site because there are over 24,000 documents alone on the FWS site. It our hope that someday all transcripts will be in the oral history collection.

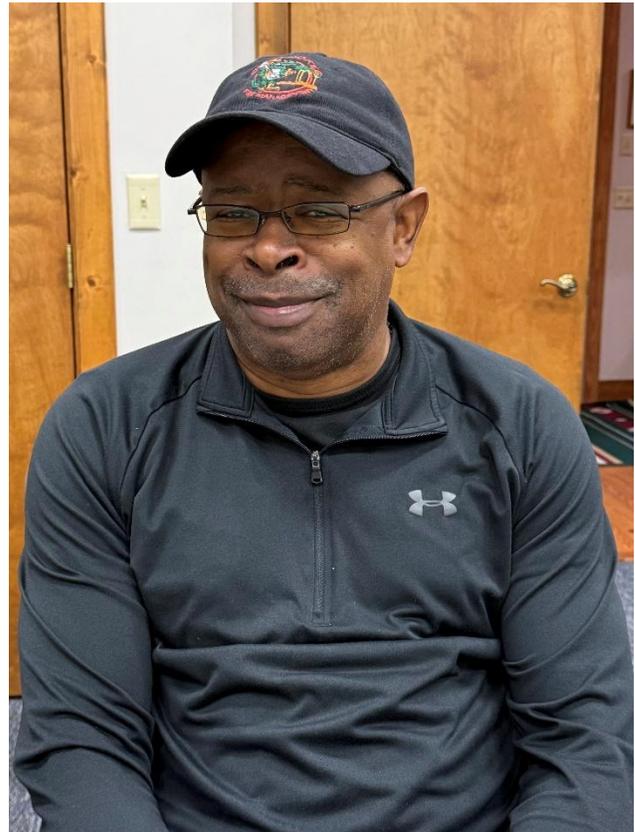


Jim Burkhart

The work of the oral history subcommittee and other folks continues. Last October, Jim Burkhart was interviewed by Paul Tritaik and Glen Elison was interviewed by Robin West. In January, Paul Tritaik interviewed Ron Phernetton and Reginald Forcine. Additional interviews are planned for February and March. Several transcripts were also completed since last October: Ray Panique, John Keeler, Terry Grosz, Glenn Elison and former Director John Turner. Craig Springer has indicated his interest in conducting oral history interviews (thank you, Craig) and Peggy Hobbs, who retired last year, is staying on to help with oral history transcripts.

Many folks have expressed an interest in being interviewed. Again, it takes time to match an interviewer with an interviewee.

If you agreed to be interviewed but haven't heard from us in a while, or if you have questions or an interest in this program, please reach out to me at 413-822-5026 or herland194@gmail.com. Thanks!



Reginald Forcine



Ron Phernetton

Membership

Membership chair Deborah Holle reported the following new/renewed members for the end of calendar year 2025. If you have questions about your membership please contact Deborah Holle at promote@fwsretirees.org. **FYF stands for first year free.**

ANDREW, Jonathan (Sue); Signal Mountain, TN; 2016; Office of the Secretary, DOI; Southeast (R4), National Wildlife Refuge System.

BAKER, Denise; Albuquerque, NM; 2018; Southwest (R2), RO, Ecological Services.

BIERCE, Pam; Sacramento, CA; 2021; South Pacific (R8), RO, Office of External Affairs.

BILLS, Debra; Arlington, TX; 12/2024; HQ/(R9); Ecological Services. **FYF**

BIRGER, Richard (Nancy); Roseville, MN; 2006, Pacific Southwest (R8), National Wildlife Refuge System, Desert NWR Complex. **FYF**

BLOW, Mike; Eugene, OR; 2025; Pacific (R1), RO, Oregon Fish & Wildlife Office; **FYF**

BRYANT, J.C. (Catherine); Poplar Bluff, MO; 1996; Midwest (R3), Refuges and Wildlife, Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

CAMBELL, Vicki; Sacramento, CA; 2025; Pacific Southwest (R8), RO, Ecological Services; R1 & R8–15 years and retired with BLM. **FYF**

DAMBERG, Doug (Carol); Anchorage, AK; 2023; Alaska (R7), RO, National Wildlife Refuge System.

FETHERMAN, Sheri (Ray Fetherman); Lakewood, CO; 2013; Mountain–Prairie Region (R6), RO, National Wildlife Refuge System, Division of Education and Visitor Services.

FORD, Patricia; Alexandria, VA; 03/2025; HQ(R9); International Affairs – Division of Scientific Authority, Botany–Plant Conservation. **FYF**

FRAZER, Gary; Herndon, VA; 2/2025; HQ(R9), Directors Office, Deputy Director of Operations; Ecological Services. **FYF**

FREDERICK, Dave (Joyce); Pagosa Springs, CO; 2006; Southwest (R2), RO, Ecological Services.

GLENN, Betsy; Corvallis, OR; 12/2025; Pacific (R1), RO, Ecological Services. **FYF**

GRANILLO, Kathy (Luis); Los Lunas, NM; 2021; Southwest (R2), National Wildlife Refuge System, Sevilleta NWR.

HAGLAN, Bill (Betty); Lancaster, VA; 2007; Northeast (5), National Wildlife Refuge System, Chincoteague NWR.

HASTIE, Kyla (Keith Hastie); Shutesbury, MA; 05/2025
Northeast
(R5), RO, Directorate, Deputy RD. **FYF**

HARKE, Eileen (Vince); Olympia, WA; 2024; Pacific (R1), Ecological Services.

HEFFERNAN, David (Catherine); Littleton, CO; 2003; Mountain–Prairie (R6); RO, Refuges and Wildlife

HEGLUND, Patricia (Kirk Lohman); Homer, AK; 04/2020, Midwest (R3), RO, National Wildlife Refuge System, Natural Resources and Conservation Planning.

HUNTER, Chuck; (Peg Gallagher); Lilburn, GA; 06/2025; Southeast (R4)
FYF

JACOBSON, Susan (Mark); Rio Rancho, NM; 2020; Southwest (R2), RO, Ecological Services/Endangered Species.

JESSE, Peggy; Boone, NC; 2015; Associate member; Southeast (R4).

KITCHENS, Diane (Art); Beaver Dam, WI; 2013; Midwest (R3), National Wildlife Refuge System, Horicon NWR.

LEGARE, Michael (Stephanie Legar); Titusville, FL; 04/2025, Southeast (R4), National Wildlife Refuge System, Merritt Island NWR. **FYF**

LINDVALL, Mark; Rapid City, SD; 2014; Mountain–Prairie (R6), Refuges and Wildlife, Valentine NWR; **FYF**

MEYER, Miles (Angela); St. Cloud, FL; 2025; Southeast (R4), Florida Ecological Services, Vero Beach Field Office. **FYF**

MORRISON, Hugh (Jenny Morrison); Portland Oregon; 04/2025; Pacific (R1), RO, Regional Directors Office, RD. **FYF**

MOTT, Sarah (Seth Mott); Herndon, VA; 2018; R9 (WO) Science Advisor, Science Applications.

MURPHY, Daniel (Cindy Roberts); Annapolis, MD; 01/2025; Northeast (R5), RO, Ecological Services, Coastal Program, Chesapeake Bay Field Office. **FYF**

RILEY, Larry (Colleen); Carmichael, CA; 2023; Pacific (R8), RO, Federal Aid/Conservation Investment, WSFR Chief.

SCHAFF, Bill (Chris); Vancouver, WA; 2013; Alaska (R7), Alaska Peninsula & Becharof National Wildlife Refuge.

SCHWINDT, Ken (Janice); Fort Collins, CO; 1999; Southwest (R2), National Wildlife Refuge System; Washita/Optima Refuge Complex.

STROEBELE, Jerry (Mary Leykom); Anchorage, AK; 2006; Alaska (R7), RO, National Wildlife Refuge System. **FYF**

UNBEHAUN, Nancy; Edmond, OK; 2025; Southwest (R2), RO, Division of Realty, stationed at Balcones Canyonlands NWR. **FYF**

Westfall, Karen; St. Paul, MN; 2016; Midwest (R3), RO, National Wildlife Refuge System.

WILLIAMS, Robert (Lee Ann Williams); Spotsylvania, VA; 05/2025, HQ/R9, National Wildlife Refuge System, Infrastructure Management Division. **FYF**

Wooley, Charlie (Julie); Lakeville, MN; 2023; Midwest (R3), RO, Regional Director.

Worthington, Tom (Melissa); St Louise Park, MN; 2018; Midwest (R3), RO, Refuges and Wildlife.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has eight numbered geographic regions: Region 1 (Pacific), Region 2 (Southwest), Region 3 (Midwest), Region 4 (Southeast), Region 5 (Northeast), Region 6 (Mountain-Prairie), Region 7 (Alaska), and Region 8 (Pacific Southwest), each covering specific states and territories to manage conservation efforts for fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats.

Natural Resource Issues

Wood Stork Delisted

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has announced removal of the U.S. distinct population segment of wood stork from the federal list of endangered and threatened wildlife. “The wood stork’s recovery is a real conservation success thanks to a lot of hard work from our partners,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Brian Nesvik. “The Trump administration is working quickly to remove federal protections from species that no longer need them, and I’m proud that the wood stork is another example of that.”

When the wood stork was listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1984, it was on the brink of extinction. As the only stork species that breeds in the United States, its population had plummeted by over 75% since the 1930s. This sharp decline was largely due to habitat loss, especially in South Florida, where vital wetland areas for breeding and foraging had been severely diminished.



Wood stork spreading its wings. USFWS Photo.

Today, the wood stork breeding population is estimated at 10,000-14,000 nesting pairs across roughly 100 colony sites — more than twice the number of nesting pairs and more than three times the number of colonies compared to when the species was listed. Wood storks now inhabit the coastal plains of Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. They have adapted to new nesting areas, moving north into coastal salt marshes, flooded rice fields, floodplain forest wetlands and human-created wetlands.

The Service has a 10-year post-delisting monitoring plan to ensure the species’ recovery is maintained. The proposed and final rules, post-delisting monitoring plan, supporting documents and public comments are available at <https://www.regulations.gov> under docket number FWS-R4-ES-2022-0099. The delisting of the wood stork will be final on March 9, 2026. *From FWS news release.*

Notes From the Field and Other Things

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.

Mini Grants Report

Ice Fishing Mentor Adventure, Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge. January 11, 2026, Detroit Lakes, MN

Friends of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge successfully implemented the **Ice Fishing Mentor Adventure** on January 11 at Long Bridge. The program provided youth with hands-on outdoor skills training, conservation education, and mentorship consistent with the objectives outlined in the approved USFWS Retirees Association Youth Mini-Grant proposal. The event was structured into three one-hour instructional sessions serving 18 youth per session, for a total of 54 participants.

Youth participants learned essential ice fishing and outdoor safety skills, including jigging techniques, use of tip-ups, baiting methods, safe fish handling, and ice safety awareness. Instruction incorporated discussions on fish behavior, winter habitat considerations, and introductory concepts related to aquatic ecosystems and water quality. All equipment was provided, including rods, reels, bait, buckets, towels, pliers, ice scoops, tip-ups, and lead-free tackle, reinforcing ethical and conservation-minded angling practices.

Participants gained exposure to conservation careers through direct mentorship. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Officer Brent Taylor provided one-on-one instruction while sharing insights into natural resource protection and law enforcement. Mentors discussed professional roles in wildlife management, fisheries biology, refuge operations, and environmental education, helping youth connect outdoor recreation with attainable career pathways.

Providing all equipment and instruction at no cost reduced barriers to participation and supported accessibility for rural youth, first-time anglers, and families with limited access to winter recreation resources. The Ice Fishing Mentor Adventure complements Friends of Tamarac’s broader Environmental Education initiatives. Youth participants are regularly engaged through seasonal refuge-based programming, strengthening sustained connections to outdoor learning and conservation awareness.



Youth ice fishing. Photo by Kelly Blackledge

The event was supported by 10 volunteers, including adult mentors, youth volunteers, and members of the Detroit Lakes High School Fishing Club. Mentors provided individualized guidance, reinforced safety practices, and fostered participant confidence and skill development. This event supports ongoing Environmental Education programming serving youth from Becker and Mahan Counties. Participants are encouraged to continue engaging with Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge through recurring educational opportunities.

Friends of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge sincerely thanks the USFWS Retirees Association for its support of youth outdoor education and mentorship. This Retirees Association Youth Grant of \$1,500 enabled meaningful conservation-based learning experiences and strengthened connections between youth and conservation professionals.

Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Sponsored Youth Waterfowl Hunting Workshop

Despite the challenges presented by the federal shutdown, the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Workshop successfully demonstrated the strength of community partnerships and the shared commitment to conservation education in northwest Ohio. Originally scheduled to take place at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, the October 5 workshop was relocated to Magee Marsh Wildlife Area thanks to the generosity and flexibility of our state partners. This quick pivot ensured that young people and their families did not miss a valuable hands-on opportunity to learn outdoor skills, conservation ethics, and responsible hunting practices during the peak of the fall migration season.

A total of 100 participants—50 youth, each accompanied by a parent and/or mentor—rotated through a series of instructional stations designed to build skills, confidence, and conservation awareness. The workshop emphasized safety, responsibility, stewardship, and ethical outdoor recreation, while also introducing participants to career pathways and opportunities for long-term engagement in conservation. For many participants, this was their first structured exposure to hunting, wetland conservation, and wildlife management, making the experience both educational and transformative.

The workshop provided hands-on instruction in multiple outdoor skills and areas of nature knowledge. Youth participants learned:

- Waterfowl identification and basic ecology
- Firearm safety and ethical hunting practices
- Wetland habitat use and stewardship principles
- Gear selection and outdoor preparedness
- Wildlife conservation laws and regulations
- The role of hunting in wildlife management
- Responsible harvest, game preparation, and cooking

These stations were led by experienced professionals and volunteers, ensuring that participants received accurate, practical instruction grounded in conservation values. Instruction emphasized not only technical skills, but also situational awareness, personal responsibility, and respect for wildlife and habitat. The program intentionally focused on both the “how” and the “why” of hunting—connecting outdoor skills to habitat conservation, wildlife management, and ethical recreation

Participants engaged directly with staff and volunteers from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ohio Division of Wildlife, Ducks Unlimited, and other conservation partners. Through informal conversations, demonstrations, and guided instruction, youth

were introduced to careers in wildlife biology, refuge management, conservation law enforcement, nonprofit conservation work, and habitat restoration. These interactions helped demystify conservation careers and allowed participants to see professionals in action, often learning that many of today's conservation leaders began as young people with similar interests in the outdoors. This exposure reinforced the idea that conservation is not only a personal ethic, but also a viable and meaningful career path.



The project followed the approved spending plan within the \$1,500 grant budget and was supported by a total program investment of just over \$5,000. This experience was made possible through a collaborative funding approach involving the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Retirees Association, Ducks Unlimited, the Lake Erie Marshes Association, and Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. While partner contributions and in-kind support covered many core program needs, the Retirees Association grant was the critical catalyst that made the workshop possible—particularly by funding the take-home educational items that reinforce learning beyond the event and help inspire lifelong conservationists.

The program emphasized ethical and sustainable hunting as a core conservation tool. Youth learned how regulated hunting supports habitat restoration, species management, and long-term wildlife conservation. Instructors connected field-based skills to broader conservation science, helping participants understand how wildlife populations are monitored, managed, and protected. By linking hands-on activities to conservation outcomes, the workshop reinforced the idea that responsible hunters are not

only recreationists, but also active stewards of wildlife and wetlands.

Outreach prioritized rural and economically underserved youth in northwest Ohio. By offering the workshop at no cost and providing access to mentors, equipment, and instruction, the program reduced common barriers to participation. Community partners helped ensure broad awareness of the opportunity and encouraged participation from families who might not otherwise have access to this type of outdoor educational experience. This approach helped create a more inclusive learning environment and broadened the reach of conservation education within the region.

The workshop was designed as part of a multi-step learning experience rather than a standalone event. Participants were invited to apply their new skills during the Youth Waterfowl Hunt at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge and Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, reinforcing learning through real-world experience. Youth were also encouraged to participate in future programs, workshops, and volunteer opportunities with Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Friends of Ottawa NWR, and partner organizations. This continuity helps strengthen learning outcomes and supports long-term engagement in conservation and outdoor recreation.

Each new hunter was paired with a trained mentor or guide, many of whom were affiliated with Ducks Unlimited, Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, and partner conservation organizations. Mentors provided one-on-one guidance, ensured safety, and modeled ethical behavior in the field. This individualized support was especially important for first-time participants, helping them build confidence while reinforcing best practices in safety, sportsmanship, and conservation ethics.

The workshop was intentionally designed as an entry point into a longer relationship with nature and conservation. Participants were invited to return for future youth programs, workshops, and volunteer opportunities. By creating a clear pathway for continued involvement, the program helps foster a lasting connection to outdoor recreation, conservation learning, and stewardship, rather than treating the workshop as a one-time experience.

This program was made possible through an exceptional network of partners, including: Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Magee Marsh Wildlife Area (Ohio Division of Wildlife), Ducks Unlimited, Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Lake Erie Marshes Association, United Call Works, Wild Game Cook, Winous Point Marsh Conservancy, Ottawa Soil & Water Conservation District, Pheasants Forever, North Bay Hunt Club, Toussaint Shooting Club, Bohling Marsh, Toussaint Fur Club, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Retirees Association.

In addition, dedicated volunteers contributed their time and expertise to ensure the program's success. This broad partnership network reflects strong community investment in youth, conservation, and outdoor education, and was especially critical

in navigating last-minute logistical changes due to the federal shutdown.

Notes from Participants

- “Everyone was really friendly with the kids, especially the dog demonstration with realistic scenario! Hands down the best workshop I have ever been a part of!”
- “Hope this workshop continues on for many years. The hunting part is a good way to keep kids and adults involved in teaching the importance of these large pieces of wildlife refuge.”
- “We appreciate all that helped out—it was a good day and the people that donate their time and hunt fields especially—it meant a lot to my son.”
- “My son, Warner, harvested his first duck... a mature drake wood duck. It was a great moment for the both of us that afternoon!”
- “Thanks for staff and all the donors. Jeff was fantastic via email making sure my daughter had a good experience, even followed up to see how hunt went.”



Lions

Our friends at Africa Through Your Lens are offering us a safari to Tanzania to see all the famous sites in the fall of 2027. This 11-day in country safari starts in Arusha and will include: Tarangire National Park, Manyara National Park, the famous Ngorongoro Crater, Ndute, and the Serengeti itself! Since we are scheduled from September 28 to October 8, we will be in the middle of “wildlife baby” season, and will experience remarkable wildlife viewing, dramatic views, and premium safari camps where we can often see wildlife from our decks and viewing platforms while enjoying an adult beverage!

There is a good chance that you will possibly see the great wildebeest migration. As we travel west, we will see fewer and fewer people and more and more wildlife! This is road trip like none other!

This is a once in a lifetime adventure! For more information contact: Donna Stanek at dstanek0418@hotmail.com.



Fun Facts & Family Ties

Some of you may know that Fun Facts was the idea of Mark Madison, FWS Historian and his staff. Employees sent them to Mark by the dozens. Most were about the FWS. The Retirees Newsletter Fun Facts deal with the experiences of the people—YOU. Deborah Holle. Send your submissions to me at promote@fwsretirees.org

Retiree Travel

Tanzania Adventure

Have you watched shows about Africa and the Serengeti and dreamed of actually being there? Well, here is your chance to live that dream!



Zebras

Author Author

Rebirth of the Human Race

Synopsis By Conrad A. Fjetland

The Rebirth of the Human Race is a series of four books, Morgan, Ellsworth, Nels, and Grace Alone. The series is a Christian based story of a possible near future for the human race. The books mix Christian and traditional family values into an adventure into space seeking a new home for the human race. The science fiction aspects of the series are based on many of the common problems facing humanity from advanced computers and energy to life in a closed ecosystem spaceship. The Christian aspects follow the characters from a simple belief in good versus evil to an understanding that it is through God's grace alone that we may have eternal life.

Book One, Morgan, starts about fifty years in the future aboard the Mayflower at the second planet of Epsilon Eridani. They have named the planet Ararat. At first it looks like a possible new home to start a new population according to their values called the Moral Code. But it looks like Ararat will not allow them to survive for generations. They must make a decision. Should they return to Earth, expecting to find billions of people living under decadent conditions, or stay with little chance of survival? Ultimately, most decide to return to Earth with a small group abandoning their Moral Code in favor of staying on Ararat. When their ship finally arrives back at Earth, the planet is far different from what they expected. All human life appears gone, but the infrastructure seems largely intact. A message is sent to Ararat that the future of humanity may depend on them.

Book Two, Ellsworth, chronicles the efforts of the Mayflower crew to determine what happened and whether it will kill them as well. All power is off and all activities dependent on energy have ceased functioning. Eventually, an exploratory team finds that the several hundred souls aboard the Mayflower can safely return to the surface. The next problem to solve is where they will settle and how they can survive with most of their supplies left behind at Ararat. The small town of Ellsworth, in Iowa, is selected because it has great agricultural land and the town is equipped with an enclosed energy system that generates hydrogen from wind power. After several problems and difficulties, the crew is brought to the surface and principals of operation as a society are established.

Book Three, Nels, concerns the few people left in a colony on Ararat. They quickly abandon what's left of their moral values in favor of draconian attempts for survival. Nels, who stowed away to reach Ararat and is not part of the colony, is determined to live off what Ararat's nature has provided. Several colony members escape and join Nels. A second colony is formed that wants to live according to their traditional values. Problems develop for both colonies. The women are unable to reproduce. The only children born on Ararat are Grace and Caleb who were conceived aboard the Mayflower. A message is received from the Mayflower that indicates the future of the human race

depends on the colony. Does this mean all human life will soon be gone?

Book Four, Grace Alone, begins on Earth another twenty years later. A message is received from Ararat that they are all dying. Should they try to rescue those that remain alive on Ararat? It would mean sending the Mayflower and all its computer capabilities on a crewless generation long trip. As a further problem the agent that killed all the previous Earth population reappears. The mission is undertaken in spite of some adversity. Meantime Grace has an interesting interaction with creatures on Ararat named Pangos. She is told to bring a message back to Earth that humans must turn from temptations of the past and follow the teachings God has given them. Grace delivers that message. Will humans hear it?

Conrad has a 5th book coming out called Boomerang. It is a stand-alone sequel to the four-book series Rebirth of the Human Race, a Christian science fiction book. It is set 200 years after the starship Mayflower returned from Ararat.

Rachel Carson's Hidden Treasures

*The following article was written by David Klinger who worked in public affairs and the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). Originally it appeared in a Service publication called **Fish Tales** which was to promote an ongoing series of stories and profiles honoring a wide community of individuals who have improved the understanding of fish and aquatic species. This article was published in 2007*

Call her our patron saint—without portfolio. While she left behind four major works of nonfiction and an abundance of magazine articles, essays, and personal correspondence, the record of Rachel Carson's years within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is remarkably slim. "There's no legacy of field notebooks, specimens, the things we tend to collect," says Service historian Mark Madison. "Carson didn't retire from the agency, but left in mid-career. Since personal records didn't qualify as permanent records, there was no place to put many of her agency papers. And Carson suffers from not having had an immediate family, to which many of her personal things could be passed.

"Most of her career, before she became famous, was as an editor, editing other people's work. Her work is hidden—literally—in the thousands of other scientific papers she edited for others."

Though Rachel Carson's spirit legacy endures, physical reminders of the woman at her centennial observance remain lamentably few. Her famed "Conservation in Action" pamphlet series, photocopies of her wartime press releases on budget-stretching seafood meals, menhaden landings, her wobbly magnifying glass preserved and passed along by noted

long-time Service editor Bill Dryer, a Main Interior office jealously guarded, until dispossessed a few years ago, the public affairs employees who were her bureaucratic successors.

But perhaps the most interesting relic is a forlorn memo salvaged from the waste bin many years ago that surfaced just recently and, through a twist of fate, reacquainted two of the Fish and Wildlife Service's most storied female employees.



Rachel Carson, FWS Photo

It began one afternoon in 1970 when a third female employee, program analyst Claire Banakos, was told to dispose of old correspondence and memos her superiors had culled from refuge division files in 1951. Banakos, 79, now retired and living in Bowie, Maryland, remembers that even as a greenhorn staffer, she recognized the value in what she was being asked to toss. Intermingled in the tissue-thin copies of office memoranda and detritus by obscure and long-forgotten employees were letters composed and signed by Rachel Carson who, at that time was six years dead and 18 years resigned from the Fish and Wildlife Service. Banakos saved a few choice morsels for posterity, one of which—a March 1951, habitat management. The single—page, two-paragraph memo recounts progress on a manuscript outline about trumpeter swans that Carson was editing with a cryptically-referenced “Miss Beard.” The memo was typed on blue government stationery and signed in Carson’s careful, finely-crafted penmanship.

“This sounds good,” Carson wrote in the memo. “Even in the outline, there are encouraging signs that Miss Beard will be able to translate the language of the reports into readable English. I feel that an important aim in writing it is to hold the interest of people who are not management specialists—the people whose support of our program is very important.”

While Carson in 1951 had one book under her belt and was on the verge of literary superstardom later that year with her publication of *The Sea Around Us*, a mammoth bestseller, who was the elusive “Miss Beard”? In 2003, upon rediscovery of the original memo, “Miss Beard” reemerged at a Fish and Wildlife Service Retirees Association conclave in Florida, in the personage of Elizabeth Browne Beard Losey of Germfask, Michigan—a 90-year-old woman very much with her own story to tell. It was Losey’s reworking of some classic ornithological texts at Red Rock Lakes Refuge that rose to Rachel Carson’s editorial review in the early 1950’s.

Losey was first hired into the Fish and Wildlife as waterfowl research biologist in 1947 by agency luminary J. Clark Salyer. She became its first female field research biologist. Well into her ninth decade, she served as a waterfowl survey volunteer and resident historian at Michigan’s Seney Refuge, inspiring several generations of young women to make their own mark in biology. “Our 20-year-old interns flocked to her like bees to a fragrant flower,” reported Seney manager Tracy Casselman when Losey died in 2005 at the age of 92.

The Losey memo—rescued from a trash car—remains the agency’s only original piece of government paper on which Rachel Carson signed her name and that is known to have survived from a tenure in the Fish and Wildlife Service we celebrate today.

More from Deborah

If you have written any books or articles your peers would love to hear from you. Email me at promote@FWSretirees.org and we can talk about your publication. We are also interested in fun and interest stories for the newsletter. Looking forward to hearing from many of you.

Thanking you in advance,
Deborah Holle

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.

Ed Crozier (December 4, 1934 - December 11, 2025)



Edward Sherman Crozier Jr. passed away at his residence on December 11, 2025, following a very short illness. Ed was born on December 4, 1934 in Russell, Minnesota to Edward Crozier Sr. and Ella Crozier. Ed grew up in Jasper, Minnesota, where the family lived in the lumberyard house at the far end of the town's main street.

He graduated from Jasper High School in 1952 and then attended South Dakota State University in Brookings and graduated in 1956 with a degree in wildlife management. Inspired by outdoor writers and stories of his great-grandfather, an Austrian gamekeeper, Ed spent his youth hunting and fishing in the creek and fields around Jasper. As a youth, Ed was employed in the lumberyard and local stone quarry, then as fire tower lookout in western Montana, firefighting crew in Yellowstone National Park, as student biologist at Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge in Minnesota, then canoe guide for Northwest Gunflint Outfitters.

After a brief stint in graduate school, Ed began his career with the Service in 1957 as a Refuge Manager trainee at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in southern Illinois. After only a month, his career was interrupted when he was drafted into the US Army, serving in Germany as an infantry squad leader and marksman for two years. Upon his military discharge from the Army, he was assigned to be the District Manager of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge at Cassville, Wisconsin.

In 1960, he married Caryl R. Kinker, from South Dakota. Their honeymoon was a canoe trip in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, her first of many outdoor adventures with Ed. After a second year on the river, he and Caryl and new daughter, Michelle moved to Jamestown, North Dakota where Ed was a Wetland Delineation Biologist for the Small Wetland Acquisition Office, selecting wetlands to be purchased as federal Waterfowl Production Areas. In quick succession, he became the Refuge Manager of the Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge in North Dakota, Refuge Manager of the Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge in Illinois, and Master Planner at the Regional Office in Minneapolis.

The family, now with daughter, Cherise, settled into the Twin Cities. The Regional Planning Team was nationalized and, with Ed's leadership as Chief of the National Planning Team, he worked on national wildlife refuges from New Jersey to California, Hawaii, Alaska and a wildlife area in Costa Rica. For the Alaska assignment, Ed, Caryl and daughters Michelle and Cherise drove the Alcan Highway 3600 miles (when it was still gravel) to Fairbanks, Alaska. After the National Planning Team completed their work, Ed became the Chief of Interpretation, Recreation, and Planning for Regional Office in Minneapolis.

In 1976 Ed was instrumental in the passage of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Act. This was one of Ed's biggest achievements. He became Minnesota Valley's first Refuge Manager and remained in that job for nine years. Ed then became the Regional Refuge Supervisor for all national wildlife refuges in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin before retiring in 1994 after nearly 38 years of Government service. He stayed active in the Friends of Minnesota Valley, which he helped establish.

Ed received many awards and honors throughout his career including the U.S. Interior Department's highest honors, the Meritorious Service and Distinguished Service Awards. Ed has an auditorium named in his honor in the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. He was a founder and former vice chairman of the National Wildlife Refuge Association, a founder and former president of the Friends of Minnesota Valley, a charter member and a former president of the Minnesota Valley Trust, Inc., a former president of the Friends of Minnesota Valley, a charter member and a former president of the Minnesota Valley Trust, Inc., and a founder and board director of the Blue Goose Alliance. He was a mentor to Friends groups of national wildlife refuges and a member of the FWS Retirees Association.

In 1970, Caryl and Ed had built a home in the woods in Burnsville at the water's edge where they remained for 50+ years. After retirement Caryl and Ed began a marathon of writing – resulting in his memoir- "Dream Hunter" and hers - "Waking to Mourning Doves." At the same time, they were researching their family histories and traveling extensively in the U.S. and Europe. This effort resulted in seven family history books and reconnecting with family branches in Czech, Germany and Switzerland.

Throughout his life, Ed maintained an active outdoors life of bird hunting, fishing and occasional backpacking. He and Caryl enjoyed a 190-acre grouse and woodcock camp in Pine County, and later, a lake cabin on the Minong Flowage in Wisconsin. In addition to bird hunting in Minnesota and Wisconsin, Ed hunted pheasant on Caryl's family farm and with friends on an annual hunting trip. Ed enjoyed hunting over his trained hunting dogs. Maize, a golden retriever, was his first, a 1,000-bird dog. Patch, a French Brittany, was as good at retrieving pheasants as he was able to point hidden pheasants.

In recent years, Ed often remarked that he had a great life, including a wonderful family and a rewarding career with highly valued coworkers. His life was filled with the things he loved and he aspired to pay back to society in equal measure. Memorials should be directed to a conservation or environmental organization of the donor's choice. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at a later date.

Ed was preceded in death by his wife, Caryl Crozier, his parents, Edward Sr. and Ella Crozier, and sisters Maxine Jacobson and Candace Crozier. He is survived by daughters Michelle (Scott) Kegler and Cherise (William) Barnes and grandchildren, Rachel (Nico) Andrade, Finley (Shelby) Barnes and Nathan Barnes.

Prepared by Paul Tritaik, Tom Worthington, Dorothe Norton, Kate Winsor, Tom Larson, and the Crozier Family

Carl R. Madsen (December 16, 1937 - January 4, 2026)



Carl Roland Madsen, age 88, of Brookings, SD, passed away surrounded by his family January 4, 2026 at United Living Community in Brookings, SD.

Carl was born on December 16, 1937, in Racine, WI to Rudolph and Margaret (Pedersen) Madsen. He was the 4th of 9 children. He spent time enjoying the outdoors, gardening, cooking, and collecting eggs as a child. These were some of his first jobs which

influenced a lifelong mission of serving others. He graduated high school in Racine, WI in 1956. He was later inducted into the Washington Park High School Hall of Fame.

He served in the United States Army, from 1957 to 1959. After completing basic training, he was stationed in Lebanon and Germany.

While he was in college, he met the love of his life, and married Aileen on July 22, 1961, at the St. John's Lutheran Church in his hometown of Racine, WI. The couple went on to have 3 children; Daniel, Kristine, and Kathryn.

He attended the University of Wisconsin-Platteville for one year, then attended the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Biology. He then attended Michigan State University where he earned a Master's Degree in Waterfowl Management. He made lifelong friends during his college years.

Carl worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a Wildlife Biologist for 37 years, starting in 1967 in the Twin Cities Regional Office. Carl was then assigned as a Wetland Habitat Preservation Biologist in Fergus Falls, MN. Carl developed and

implemented the new Mid-Continent Waterfowl Management Project in western Minnesota to restore wetlands and grasslands to benefit nesting waterfowl. Carl helped develop the first Wildlife Extension Agreement so that the Service could spend federal funds to restore wetlands on private lands. Carl then moved back to the Regional Office in the Twin Cities, to work on the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Carl was offered an assignment in Washington, D.C., but took on the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program as the State Coordinator in Brookings, South Dakota. There he worked with ranchers and farmers, restoring habitat for wildlife. He also drafted a national agreement with the National Association of Conservation Districts that enabled the FWS to use North American Wetlands Conservation Act funding for restoration projects on private lands, working through local conservation districts.

During his career, he received many awards and recognitions from many organizations. Some of the organizations include: The Wildlife Society, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, SD Wildlife Federation, Lake Christina Gun Club, and The Lake Campbell Improvement Association. Carl retired from his career in 2004. Carl received dozens of professional awards throughout his career, including the Distinguished Service Award, which is the highest honor from the Department of the Interior.

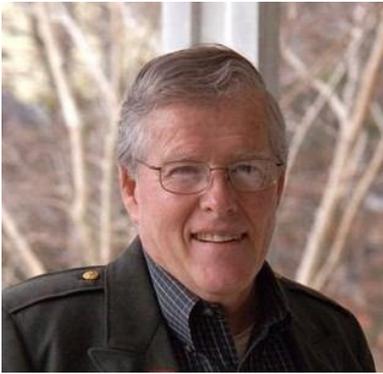
After retirement, Carl was not one to sit idle and started his retirement hobby, Madsen Gardens, near Brookings, SD. He built a greenhouse business, a tree service, a 10-acre produce garden, and wildlife plots on his property over his retirement years. Family and friends were always welcome to work in the garden where weeds were free as well as his produce. He was instrumental in developing the Brookings Farmer's Market, connecting volunteer groups to work in the garden, was generous with his produce, and donated much of his crops to Feeding Brookings.

He was proud of his Danish Heritage and shared his traditions with 4 generations in his family. He loved to cook for the holidays, taught the grandchildren and great grandchildren how to drive tractors and farm machinery, helped organize the annual Lake Campbell 4th of July Parade, created an annual Pumpkin Festival, taught his family an appreciation for hunting, fishing, bird watching, gardening, a love for serving others, and a love for nature. Carl was also a member of the FWS Retirees Association.

Carl is survived by his wife Aileen, son, Daniel Madsen, daughters, Kristine Madsen, Kathryn (Scott) Larson, grandchildren, Justin (Missy) Larson, Megan (Anthony) Larson, Jeffrey (Morgan) Madsen, Luke (Jackie) Schultz, Thomas (Kaisha) Madsen, John (Deana) Schultz, Maggie (Austin) Chase, great-grandchildren, Warren, Libby, Miranda, Jackson, Gage, Mason, Everly, Silas, Aydan, Meadow, Asher, Rowan, and Daisy; and Carl's siblings, Julie Madsen, Robert (Julie) Madsen, William (Mary) Madsen, James (Mary) Madsen, Karen (William) Madsen-Damrow. Carl was preceded in death by his parents, and siblings Walter, George, and Ellen.

Prepared by Paul Tritaik, Tom Worthington, and the Madsen Family

James J. (Jim) McKeivitt (September 8, 1939 – November 14, 2025)



Jim McKeivitt passed away on November 14th, 2025. James Jude “Jim” McKeivitt was born on September 8, 1939 in Jersey City, N.J. to James F. and Margaret Conner McKeivitt, the first of five children. Raised on the central Jersey shore, Jim attended parochial grammar schools and Red Bank Catholic High School,

graduating in 1957. While growing up, Jim spent his summer days at the beach, fishing in the surf or local rivers, or hiking and camping. He spent the winters just waiting for summer.

After high school, Jim attended Seton Hall University (one semester full time in 1958) in pursuit of a degree in veterinary medicine and Monmouth College (five semesters nights) pursuing a chemistry degree while working as a lab technician in the research labs at Colgate-Palmolive Company in Jersey City. Drafted into the U.S. Army in 1962, he served two years stateside in the 1st Armored Division during the Berlin and Cuban missile crises. After his discharge from the army in 1964, he returned to Colgate-Palmolive and attended Rutgers University at night until 1969. Then he chucked the idea of a chemistry degree, married fellow Colgate employee Lucille Lempert, and moved to Logan, Utah to pursue his lifelong passion for fish, wildlife and the great outdoors. He graduated from Utah State University magna cum laude in 1971 with a degree in Wildlife Management and Biology and immediately accepted a position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Ecological Services, as a GS-7 field biologist.

He and Lucille moved to Pennsylvania, his first duty station, and it was there that children Daniel Patrick and Michael Sean were born. In 1973, the family was moved to Annapolis, Maryland where Jim and another biologist opened the first Ecological Services field station on Chesapeake Bay. After a coin flip, the other biologist got Chesapeake Bay and Jim got all the rest of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia as a field area. In 1976, Jim was made Supervisor of the Southern California Ecological Services Field Office in Laguna Niguel, at the time, the fastest rise from entry level biologist to field supervisor in the nation. Jim was in California buying a house in Mission Viejo, with Lucille still in Maryland preparing for the move, when daughter Erin Kathleen joined the family.

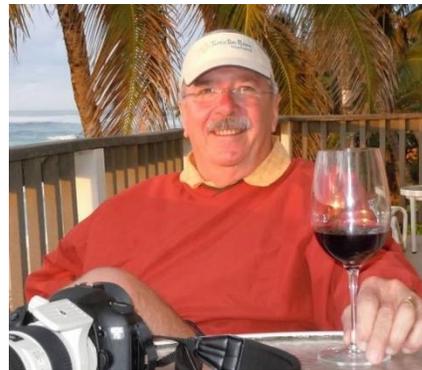
In 1978 the family moved to Auburn, CA when Jim was made Supervisor of the Sacramento Ecological Service Field Office, at the time the largest in the country and the focus of incredible fish and wildlife resource issues and of the California water wars. He served in that capacity for 12 years, resisting pressures to take a management position in Washington, D.C. and wishing to remain in the field and raise his family in rural northern

California, where he was heavily involved with Little League and Babe Ruth baseball and youth soccer. From 1992 until his retirement from the Service in 2000, Jim was the Program Manager for the Central Valley Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program, the most ambitious such restoration program ever undertaken in this country. After retirement, he continued his involvement in natural resources issues for a while working as a consultant doing field studies. He also joined the Association of Retired Fish and Wildlife Service Employees, attending reunions of fellow retirees around the country. He was elected to the Board of Directors of that group in 2011 and served until 2021.

A lifelong practicing Catholic, Jim attended Mass daily and was deeply involved in parish activities at St. Joseph and at St. Teresa of Avila Parishes in Auburn. He served on the Parish Council, was a long-time Sacristan and Eucharistic Minister, and was the Altar Server trainer and coordinator.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Lucille, his children Dan McKeivitt (Teresa), Michael McKeivitt (Amy), and Erin Satterwhite (Brad), and grandchildren Tyler Smith, Reilly McKeivitt, Ronan McKeivitt, Phoebe McKeivitt, Juniper McKeivitt, and Elliott Satterwhite. He is also survived by brothers, Robert McKeivitt (New Jersey), Richard McKeivitt (North Carolina), and sister Patricia Ann Carey (Florida). He is preceded in death by his brother Charles (Arizona).

William Frank (Bill) Shake



William Frank (Bill) Shake, 84, of Tigard, Oregon, a loving husband, father, grandfather, friend and an acclaimed spokesman for fish in the Columbia basin and throughout the Pacific Northwest, died February 10, 2026, of congestive heart failure, complicated by

dementia, at his home with his family by his side.

Bill started as something of a landlubber, in the landlocked Illinois farming town of Macomb. He was the son of Kimbrough Shake, a physics teacher at nearby Western Illinois University, and Verda Shake, a school teacher. There he explored the Mississippi River, fishing, duck hunting and perfected water skiing. Bill mowed yards, delivered newspapers, bagged groceries, worked as a counselor at a Wisconsin summer camp, and earned the coveted Eagle Scout award.

He was a 22-year alumnus of Western Illinois University, starting at their on-campus laboratory kindergarten and elementary grades, and ending with bachelor's and master's degrees in zoology in 1964 and 1967 respectively. Bill earned a second master's in public administration at American University in Washington, D.C. in 1981. While attending Western Illinois,

he met his high school sweetheart Deanna (Bower) and they later married on August 2nd, 1964.

A 38-year employee of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, and culminating in Portland, Oregon, Bill saw the agency through two of the nation's most complex environmental battles of the past half-century, forest and fisheries management. Both issues carried profound conservation, economic, and cultural implications. Bill was a respected advocate for salmon and steelhead in high-level negotiations where he counseled Cabinet secretaries and presidential appointees.

Hired in a temporary position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Indiana, his subsequent agency promotion took him to Lansing, Michigan's Area Office, where Bill and Deanna had their two daughters, Shantel Renee, and Jennifer Michelle.

Moving to Minneapolis, then Washington, D.C., he split his time between Capitol Hill and the Oval Office, working on President Jimmy Carter's 100-million-acre expansion of public lands in Alaska, the largest in the country's conservation history. While living in Virginia without opportunities for fishing and hunting, he perfected his skills in tennis and coached both daughters' softball teams.

Bill arrived in Portland in 1982, with responsibilities for endangered species and Federal Aid programs to state fish and game departments in the agency's six-state Pacific Region. By 1987, his duties focused exclusively on fisheries, including Puget Sound, and the Columbia, Sacramento, and Klamath river basins. "And I had become a crazy salmon and steelhead fisherman," he said in a 2008 oral history. A massive agency reorganization in 1998 gave him responsibility for all agency functions throughout the Columbia River basin — an area the size of France. Bill was widely respected for his collaborative working relationships with the tribes, state, federal, international, and private partners. He received the Department of the Interior's Meritorious Service Award in 1999.

After his retirement in 2004, Bill served as a science and policy advisor to the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association. He also spent time as a board member with Oregon Wildlife Foundation and Friends of Doernbecher Children's Hospital. He and Deanna co-chaired the Northwest Wine Showcase for "The Heart of Doernbecher" annual gala for many years. As a member of Sophie's Chapter, he helped raise funds for Oregon Health and Science University's Grant Program.

For 30+ years, Bill shared his annual salmon and halibut fishing trips to Sitka, Alaska, starting with 4 people and later filling out the lodge with 30+ fishermen with a waiting list. He was happy that he shared the experience with both his grandsons on each of their 16th birthdays. Joining friends boating on the Columbia, Willamette, the Washington and Oregon coast, saltwater salmon fishing, razor clamming and crabbing were favorites to enjoy the bounties of the Northwest. Foraging for wild mushrooms was another bonus for being a "foodie". Bill and Deanna explored

many wine regions across Oregon, Washington, and California, enjoying many wine club activities that provided great wine and meeting wonderful people. Traveling for work and in retirement brought about many adventures; the Northshore of Oahu in Hawaii and Italy being favorite destinations.

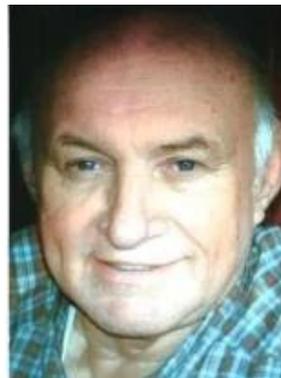
Bill was a huge people person. He loved people and people loved him. When he laughed, which was often, it was contagious. He always smiled, even when there was no one to smile at. He always wanted to know about you and your life. He had the gift of listening rather than talking. Bill loved life and life loved Bill.

In addition to his wife Deanna, Bill is survived by two daughters, Shantel Shake and Jennifer Dardenne, and son-in-law David Dardenne, all of Sherwood, Oregon; two grandsons, Jacob Ames of California and Hayden Ames of Arizona; one cousin, Susan Shake of Delaware; and sister-in-law Debra Hazlett and husband Roger, of Missouri. They are "parents by affirmation" to Jennifer Saliba, husband Greg, and three grandchildren, Sophia, Marcus, and Bennett, all of Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Bill was one of the good ones and he will be missed by so many. In honor of Bill, donations can be made to the Oregon Wildlife Foundation or Sophie's Chapter Grant Program at the Doernbecher Foundation.

Prepared by David Klinger and Deanna Shake, with contributions from Cindy Barry

Rollin P. Siegfried (October 8, 1942 - March 20, 2023)



Rollin Siegfried, age 80, of Eagle River, WI passed away peacefully on Monday, March 20, 2023 at Seasons of Life Hospice in Woodruff, WI. Rollin Paul Siegfried was born on October 8, 1942 to Paul and Evelyn (West) Siegfried in Watertown, SD. Rollin grew up on his family farm at Goodwin, SD where he found enjoyment even at an early age of hunting ducks, geese and pheasants in the grain and corn fields on the

farm. It was a natural that he would seek a career in wildlife and conservation. He was the last senior to graduate from Goodwin High School in 1960 and went on to graduate from South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD with a degree in Wildlife Conservation. During that time, he had summer jobs for two years in Alaska working on red salmon research.

After graduation, Rollin worked for the State of Wisconsin as a Game Warden. Rollin started his U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service career at Squaw Creek NWR in Missouri and then Tamarac NWR in Minnesota, both as Assistant Refuge Manager. Rollin then took charge of the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District, overseeing wetlands in five counties in northwestern Minnesota. Rollin then went to Pierre, South Dakota to serve as Realty Officer in charge of land acquisition in Nebraska, Kansas,

and South Dakota. Rollin then moved to Fergus Falls Wetland Management District to serve as Wetland Manager before becoming Complex Manager. Rollin's last assignment was as Special Assistant to the Regional Director for Ecosystems before retirement.

During his career, Rollin served in the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard. He retired from the U.S. Air Force Happy Hooligans 119th Wing ANG after 28 years as a Senior Master Sergeant in the Environmental Section of the Engineering Group. Rollin continued that love by building a cabin near the lakes north of Goodwin, SD that became a retreat when he wanted to get away and continued his love of the rural life! He was called away a number of times to the Missouri River in South Dakota and Alaska with his friends and son where he enjoyed fishing most recently later in life.

The hobby that called for equally as much love and attention was snowmobiling at his retirement home in Eagle River, Wisconsin, the snowmobile capital of the world! Rollin was married to Bonnie Jean Bandow Feb 1, 1964 in Goodwin, SD and to that union two children were born: Jennifer Christine and Adam Paul. He later married Karen Elg January 5, 1991 in Fergus Falls, MN. Rollin's two children graduated from Fergus Falls, MN High School and it is in Fergus Falls where his beloved daughter, Jennifer died in 2020 and is buried. Rollin was an active member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. In addition to being awarded a 50-year member of the Masons and active in his community having memberships in the Headwaters Corvette Club, Antique Vintage Snowmobile Association, and Antique Power Association.

He is survived by his son, Adam (Bridgette), son-in-law Chuck Keller, Grandchildren: Jacob, Tanner, Riley, Connor, Aidan, Reagan; sister, Lavonne (Virgil) Anderson, brother, Keith Siegfried (Janice Nordseth) and numerous nieces and nephews and his special friend, Karen Maahs. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Jennifer Christine, one sister, Arlene Propst; sister-in-law Cheri Siegfried, one brother, Daryl and his parents; Evelyn (West) and Paul Siegfried.

Prepared by Paul Tritaik and the Siegfried Family with contributions from Dorothe Norton

Bonnie Woodall Strawser (June 8, 1950 – January 10, 2026)



Bonnie Gail Woodall Strawser, age 75, of Manteo, NC, joined Jesus in eternal glory on Saturday, January 10, 2026. Bonnie was born on June 8, 1950 in Rocky Mount, North Carolina to Mary and Basil Woodall. Bonnie graduated from Dinwiddie County High School in 1968. Bonnie was only the second woman — after her mother — in her family to graduate from high school and the first ever to earn a college degree.

She graduated from Radford University in 1972 with a B.S. in Mathematics.

Bonnie earned her living as a math teacher in Petersburg, Virginia, while also running a nature study day camp during the summer. She applied for a position at Pocahontas State Park in Virginia and was hired as a gate attendant. The problem was there were only uniforms for men. It was the late 1960's, and Bonnie opted to dress as Pocahontas and, as such, hosted state park activities. When the state park's naturalist left, Bonnie stepped into that position and ran the nature center. She spent the next few years teaching and visiting national parks. During the school year, she taught biology and math at the Navaho Indian Reservation in Tuba City, Arizona. She then attended North Carolina State University and graduated in 1978 earning a master's degree in Environmental Education and Forestry.

Through a chance meeting with a refuge employee, Bonnie discovered national wildlife refuges and knew she'd found her home. In 1978, she was hired as Outdoor Recreation Planner for Iroquois NWR near Buffalo, New York. By the end of 1979, she had all the cold she could take. So, on January 1, 1980, she moved to the Outer Banks of North Carolina to become the Outdoor Recreation Planner for Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. Bonnie established a college internship program in 1980, which helped keep down costs of maintaining the refuge while offering new workers in the field experiences to last a lifetime. She added Workamping to the volunteer program at Pea Island in 1999, which gave retired people the opportunity to volunteer on the refuge in exchange for lodging. Bonnie also launched a highly successful volunteer groups, as well as the award-winning Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, the friend's group for Pea Island and Alligator River NWRs.

Bonnie was also instrumental in the design and opening of the Coastal North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Gateway Visitor Center on Roanoke Island and served as the Visitor Services Manager. And she was there at the beginning of the annual Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival in 1997. In 2009, Bonnie began serving as the Public Information Officer for the Southern Area Red Incident Management Team and enjoyed doing that work for 16 years, even after retirement in 2020. For the past 2 years she was the president of the refuge non-profit support group, Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society. Bonnie was also a member of the FWS Retirees Association.

Bonnie put in 42 years of work with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. She was a friend to wildlife and wildlands and to thousands of visitors, co-workers, friends and family. She was a bold and adventurous woman of faith whose life was marked by courage, conviction, and a love of God and people. She was a lifelong learner, an infamous networker, and a woman of her word. If Bonnie couldn't solve the problem, no one could. Service oriented and always seeking the next challenge, Bonnie cultured a huge network of professional and community friends. She especially loved her fire family, Fish and Wildlife Service family, and her Source Church family, among countless others. Bonnie was inspirational to those she loved, befriended, and

mentored. One way to best describe Bonnie, is she was a trailblazer who set a very high bar.

The greatest honor was the privilege of calling Bonnie “Mom.” Jenna Erpelding (Bryon, Kory, and Mya), Amy Lane Outlaw (Ken and Laney), Erika Burkhart (Heath, Waylon, Heidi, Jolene, Lincoln, and Gus), and Kanan Strawser have that privilege. Bonnie was predeceased by her daughter, Anna-Marie Strawser; parents, Mary and Basil Woodall; and siblings, Gwen Lane and Sonny Alston.

Prepared by Paul Tritaik, Muriel Smith (FWS News, Spring 2003), Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, and the Strawser Family

Patricia L. Thompson December 3, 1950 – January 24, 2026)



Patricia L. Thompson, affectionately known as Patti or Pat, was born on December 31, 1950, and passed away peacefully on January 24, 2026. Patti fought courageously with a long battle of Dementia with Lewy Bodies. Despite the challenges this illness presented, she faced each day with resilience, grace, and determination. Her ability to maintain warmth, humor, and kindness throughout her journey

stands as a testament to her remarkable character. She will be deeply missed and forever remembered by all who were fortunate to know her.

Patti’s life was marked by a deep sense of purpose and a steadfast commitment to serving others. Raised with strong values, she began her distinguished federal career in 1971. She began her career on April 12, 1971 with the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, which later became the Service. Over the last 11 years as the Human Resources Officer for the Division of Human Resources for Regions 1 and 8, Pat has provided extraordinary policy support, strategic thinking, innovation, and exemplary leadership in supporting nearly 25 percent of the entire employee population of the Service. As the manager of the largest regional Human Resources staff in the Service, she led by example to further the mission of the Service. She provided significant support in the establishment of Region 8, a new region for the Service. She also provided outstanding service in successfully managing one of the first pilot HSPD-12 Credentialing Centers in Portland, Oregon for the Department of the Interior, which has the highest compliance rate in the Service. Pat oversaw the development of planning, training and staff deployment to carry out Phase I requirements for Electronic Official Personnel Folders (eOPF) implementation of over 2,200 hard copy Official Personnel Folders.

Upon the departure of the longtime Assistant Regional Director (ARD) for Budget and Administration, Pat stepped in as the

acting ARD. Her broad knowledge of the Budget and Administration programs, wealth of experience, and unflappable demeanor made her the perfect choice for the role. She performed as expected with the utmost professionalism, integrity, and sense of mission. As a result of her leadership, the administrative support network for Region 1 and 8 continued functioning without any operational disruption. For her unrivalled dedication over four decades, Pat was granted the highest honor of the Department of the Interior, the Distinguished Service Award.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Patti embraced life with warmth and grace. She delighted in finding treasures at Goodwill, blending practicality with her unique sense of style. She had a playful tradition of leaving the tags on her finds, proudly showing family and friends the bargains she’d scored, as if to celebrate her knack for smart and resourceful shopping. This lighthearted gesture became part of her charm, reflecting both her frugality and her sense of humor.

Known for her kindness and generosity, she always saw the best in those around her. Patti cherished her family above all, offering unwavering encouragement to her son, Nick, and finding immense joy in being a grandmother to Andrew. As a loving sister and aunt, Patricia shared her warmth and wisdom with her family, nurturing close bonds and creating lasting memories. She was also a true friend to many, offering kindness, encouragement, and a listening ear, enriching the lives of those around her through her generous spirit and heartfelt companionship. Her love of simple pleasures—a well-poured pint, laughter with friends, and time spent with loved ones—reflected her appreciation for life’s everyday moments.

Patricia L. Thompson will be remembered for her professional excellence, integrity, and sense of mission. More importantly, she will be cherished for her devotion to her family and friends, her generous nature, and her ability to inspire others. Her legacy lives on in the hearts of Nick, Andrew, and countless family, friends, and colleagues of whose lives were enriched by her presence.

Information provided by Pat Thompson’s family

Richard Toltzmann (April 20, 1935 – May 27, 2023)

On May 27, 2023 Richard Toltzmann, beloved husband, father and friend passed away at the age of 88. Richard was born in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, on April 20, 1935. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a B.S. in Biology, which is reflected in his love for the outdoors. Richard met his wife Joan in high school and they were married later in 1955. He was also in the Navy for a tour on the Great Lakes. Richard was then employed by the Federal Government in the Department of the Interior. They raised their two children, David and Mark, in all their various homes on wildlife refuges in the U.S. Richard and his wife lived in Green Valley for more than 20 years. One of his major accomplishments in Green Valley was the formation of the Green Valley Hunting and Fishing Club, of which he was

president for several years. He was an avid fisherman, hunter and hiker.

Lynn Harrison Wellman (March 13, 1954 – February 19, 2026)



Lynn Harrison Wellman, 71, passed away on February 19, 2026, in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Born on March 13, 1954, in New Orleans, Louisiana, and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, Lynn lived a life dedicated to public service, the environment, and the pursuit of knowledge.

Lynn's academic journey began at the University of the South (Sewanee) in Tennessee, where he laid the foundation for his lifelong commitment to learning. He furthered his education with graduate studies at Western Kentucky University and Louisiana State University. His passion for science and knowledge was constant throughout his career and personal endeavors.

A devoted public servant, Lynn worked to protect the environment and natural resources for the State of Louisiana, at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Lynn was a toxicologist and botanist working on environmental pollution and contaminants his whole career. He started his career working for the State of Louisiana on water quality/pollution control. His federal service started in 1991 at the EPA in Atlanta where he worked on RCRA/superfund clean ups for the South East. He moved to New Mexico and the FWS in 2002 to work in contaminants on water quality issues - spent a lot of time managing CAFOs and working with tribal partners. One of the highlights of his career was being part of the Deepwater Horizon response. He went down to the Gulf multiple times to assist in the clean up

His contributions to these organizations reflected his deep commitment to environmental stewardship and public welfare. Beyond his government service, Lynn shared his knowledge as an educator at Clayton State College in Georgia and helped others navigate financial complexities through his work at H&R Block. He was a Boy Scout, member of the Chi Psi fraternity and recognized as a Kentucky Colonel by the state's Governor.

Known for his sharp wit, intellect and great sense of humor, Lynn brought joy and enrichment to those around him. His love of learning and dedication to science were hallmarks of his character, inspiring those who had the privilege of knowing him.

Lynn loved his family dearly and is survived by his sons Jacob (36) and Eric (29), who carry forward his intellectual curiosity and love of the outdoors as well as his siblings Robert, David and Patricia. He also leaves behind his loyal canine companion Watson (15), who was a cherished part of his life.

May Lynn's memory bring comfort to all who knew him and serve as a reminder of a life well-lived in service to others.
Information provided by Lynn's family.

A note from Deborah Holle about our obituaries

Recently I found out one of my friends passed away. I wanted to send an obituary to Helen Clough the editor of our Newsletter. However, the obituary on line was so short and mentioned nothing about her career with the FWS. This won't be a perfect fix, but if you know of some who passed away that worked for the Service, please let Helen know. If possible, try to call some other of her co-workers so we can include something about her career, duty stations, jobs, etc. We will try to include more personal information with the obituary. This won't be a perfect solution so if you have any suggestions. please let Helen know

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