# **USGS RETIREES**

NEWSLETTER No. 202 February 2024

An organization of retirees of the U.S. Geological Survey, whose purpose is to keep its members in touch with each other and their former agency.

# President's Message

Hello, fellow USGS Retirees. Welcome to 2024! I hope 2024 brings you health, hope, and happiness. I also hope the year brings you continued feelings of connectedness with your former USGS colleagues and friends.

That is what the Retirees' Organization is about: to help us remain connected to the USGS community and to help us retain contact with the many friends we acquired through our years of service to the USGS. Your Board of Officers has been hard at work promoting that purpose and ensuring the organization continues to stay relevant to your interests. The November newsletter introduced me as the Board's nominee for President. I worked for the USGS WRD and its successor organizations for 40 years. Most of you will know me through my time with the former Office of Surface Water. While employed with OSW, I loved engaging with hydrologists, hydrographers, and administrative professionals in the field and hearing both their insights and concerns. I sought to understand and promote their innovations and highlight their needs to USGS leadership. It was the most rewarding experience of my career.

My career was also rewarding in other ways. Throughout, I benefitted from investments made in me by the USGS, my supervisors, and colleagues, cooperating agencies, and the taxpayer. So did you. I believe it is important for us as beneficiaries of these investments to continue to serve, from our accumulated expertise where it is appropriate and needed, and with our energy where we can.

As one of the new members of the Board and as your new president, I am motivated to serve you. Please drop me a note or an email or give me a call to tell me what is crucial about the Retirees' Organization and how we might improve its service to you, the USGS, and the Nation (contact: wrdretirees2014@gmail.com).

Last year, our 50<sup>th</sup>, brought great success. We distributed 4 editions of the retirees' newsletter and a copy of the organization directory to nearly 1,200 members. We held a highly successful reunion in Tucson, attended by 65 members, and we sponsored educational scholarships, funded through your generosity, to 3 young USGS employees. For the first time we had a booth, staffed by retired hydrographers, at the recent USGS National Water Data Technical Workshop attended by 575 USGS hydrographers and hydrologists. Retiree member Brady Long gave a presentation on the USGS Retirees' Organization, including the Scholarship component, and encouraged attendees to join us.

The Board also launched a number of initiatives in 2023. Pete Anttila, President Emeritus, along with several Board and at-large members, conducted a review of recent membership trends and offered valuable recommendations for growing the organization, improving communications with USGS regions and science centers, and serving more past and present USGS employees. (The recommendations were shared in the November newsletter.) Bill Carswell, past president, renewed contacts with the leadership of the Water Mission Area and expanded outreach to the leadership of other USGS mission areas.

This year brings more opportunities. Yes, we will follow up on last year's initiatives. In addition, we will seek to support and engage our current membership, tap your expertise, energy, and interest in "earth science in the public service," reach out more effectively to seasoned USGS employees approaching retirement, and prepare to host our 2025 reunion, hopefully, near the new USGS Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility (HIF) and Hydraulic Lab in Tuscaloosa Alabama.

We could use your help in all of this and more. Reach out to us. We will put you to useful, gentle, and rewarding work. But if you do nothing else today, take a moment to pull out your WRD Retirees Directory and send a note, card, or email or phone an old USGS friend. And here is the thing: renewing and extending relationships simultaneously enriches ourselves and our friends while costing us little. Do it. It will brighten a USGS friend's day, as well as your own.

Have a great Winter and Take Care!

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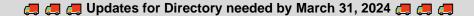
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#### **OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

#### Greetings Retirees:

I want to congratulate Robert on his election as USGS Retirees' Organization President. I have known Robert for well over 30 years and he is a superb scientist, leader, and communicator. I look forward to working with him and newly elected Regional Representatives Barb Ryan and Sandy Williamson in my new role as Past President. I have enjoyed the past two years working with a group of outstanding retirees who have volunteered to give their all in supporting our organization. I hope everyone has a safe, enjoyable 2024.

Regards, Bill



The 2024 Members' Directory will be distributed in May. Please let us know if:

- \* Your mailing address, email address, or phone number has changed in the last few years.
- \* The listing for your significant other is inaccurate.
- \* You know of the passing of any member, significant other, or non-member who was eligible to have been a member.

The directory and quarterly newsletter are distributed in print or pdf format. The newsletter is also distributed as a link. If you want a format different from what you last received, please let us know.

Send updated information and requests to <a href="wrdretirees2014@gmail.com">wrdretirees2014@gmail.com</a> or USGS Retirees, P.O. Box 280, Herndon, VA 20172.

Thank you!

# The Mighty Mississippi Through the Lens of Nutrients and Gulf Hypoxia: How Does Minnesota Fit In?



Lori Sprague USGS Water Mission Area

At the 2023 Minnesota Water Resources Conference, October 17-18, Lori Sprague talked about the current state of the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico and answered audience questions about the connection to Minnesota's nitrogen reduction plan. The hypoxia zone in the Gulf of Mexico is now roughly the size of Connecticut, creating a substantial hardship for shrimp fishermen who must detour and sail much further to find shrimp and maintain their livelihoods. Hypoxia is a naturally occurring event, on record as far back as the late 1800's, and will always be part of the aquatic ecosystem. Hypoxia occurs when large amounts of algae, fed by nutrients, natural and manmade, die, sink, decompose and suck the oxygen out of the water, making the zone challenging for aquatic life. Sprague says reducing the transport of nutrients, especially nitrogen, into the Gulf from the Mississippi River is key to shrinking the current size of the hypoxic zone.

There are multiple sources of nitrogen in the Mississippi River, from all along the basin, as far north as Minnesota. Artificial fertilizer, livestock manure, and atmospheric deposition from industrial emissions are the major contributors of manmade nutrients in the Gulf. Strategies to combat the rise in nitrogen include vegetative areas like buffers and cover crops where plants can take up the nutrients before runoff carries the nitrogen to streams and rivers. Helping farmers determine the proper amounts of fertilizer for crops as well as timing of application has also had a positive impact on lowering nutrient levels.

The USGS estimates that the nutrient loads in the Gulf are now half of what they would be without governmentally recommended changes in land and water management. "Whatever the magic combination of things that worked, we'd be much worse off than if we hadn't done those things," said Sprague.

Source: Minnegram (newsletter of the U. of Minnesota Water Resources Center). A special Minnesota Water Resources Conference Edition, November 29, 2023. The 2023 Minnesota Water Resources Conference returned to the St. Paul River Centre, October 17-18, with attendance numbers approaching pre-pandemic levels, nearing 900. Attendees had over 100 breakout presentations to choose from, as well as in-depth plenary sessions, covering the health of the Mississippi River watershed, leadership discussion of drinking water, and a fusion of engineering and art as a vision and tool for future water resource planning.

# The USA-National Phenology Network (2007-2024): Its Genesis and Achievements



Julio L. Betancourt, Scientist Emeritus, Science and Decisions Center, USGS (presented at USGS Retirees Reston Lunch, January 11, 2024)

Seasonal timing has myriad influences on plants and animals, biospheric processes, and human systems, and it is critical for formulating adaptive responses to both climate variability and change. The timing of seasonal transitions varies widely from year to year and is also changing directionally, yet the climatic drivers, patterns, and consequences of these variations are not well understood. To better understand patterns, sources, and consequences of seasonal timing, from 2005 to 2007 I helped establish the USA National Phenology Network (NPN, www.usanpn.org). Thanks to support from USGS, the National Science Foundation, the University of Arizona, and other organizations, and particularly to the hard work and innovation of its National Coordinating Office (NCO), the NPN turned out to be the most consequential initiative of my scientific career. In recognition of its achievements over the past 18 years, the American Geophysical Union awarded Theresa Crimmins and her NPN staff at the University of Arizona the 2023 Science for Society Team Award.

The NPN is a continental-scale network of standardized, routine, and sustained phenological observations for plant and animals, and the tools to analyze them at local to national scales (www.usapnpn.org). In operation since 2007, the NPN collects, organizes, and delivers research-grade phenological data, information, and forecasts to advance global change research; inform natural resource policy and management; and promote understanding of phenology by a wide range of audiences. The NPN has a long and deep record of scientific and societal impact across scales. It is dedicated to inclusion and equitability in their data, collaborations, and operation, while fully embracing the tenets of knowledge co-production, where partner needs dictate the format, frequency, and lead time of product delivery.

Citizen science is often criticized for a lack of reliability or unevenness in its observations, but the work of the NCO team to create, maintain, and communicate standardized protocols for observations, data curation, data access, and synthesis into national-scale products makes the NPN an uncommonly robust network compared to many crowd-sourced citizen-science endeavors. NPN's citizen science portal, Nature's Notebook (https://www.usanpn.org/natures\_notebook), is used routinely by tens of thousands of citizens and professionals across the United States. Observations enabled by Nature's Notebook now exceed 34 million records for >1,750 plant and animal species and is growing by >4 million records each year. The NCO team has created tools for downloading, visualizing, and synthesizing phenological data, enabling access and use by a wide breadth of users. NPN programs are described in >40 publications, and NPN data have been used in 40 Ph.D. and M.S. theses, and >175 scientific publications. NPN protocols, products and tools have been adopted by instructors at >100 higher education institutions and >100 teachers in K-12. NPN maps and results reach millions of citizens through the news media each year.

#### "END OF MY TENURE"



Don Cline, USGS Associate Director for Water Retiring on March 9, 2024

Friends and Colleagues,

After 26 years of federal civil service, plus a couple of years of post-doctoral fellowships, five years of graduate school, and 10 more years before that in a completely different career, I've decided that it's time to pursue some much-anticipated R&R. I will be retiring on March 9.

I've been most fortunate throughout my career to work with a very large cadre of some of the Nation's brightest scientists, engineers, technologists, architects, policymakers, and administrative professionals across several government and academic organizations. My career has given me the opportunity to travel far and wide, from the Arctic to South America, from Europe to Asia, and extensively throughout the United States and Canada. Along the way I've had more extraordinarily interesting experiences than I can keep track of, many of which have been "once in a lifetime" and most of which I could never have imagined when I started out on this journey. Not the least of these has been the honor and privilege of serving as a senior executive for the past 14 years, six leading the National Weather Service's Hydrology Laboratory and National Water Center, and eight leading the USGS Water Resources Mission Area. I keenly appreciate that my success has always depended very much on you, and for that I am most grateful. It will certainly be hard to leave all of this behind.

What won't be hard to leave behind is Northern Virginia's population density of 1,700 people per square mile. Not to mention the humidity...

This year my wife and I celebrate 45 years together, and we plan to commemorate the occasion by returning home to southwestern Colorado (with a population density of 10 people per square mile), where we intend to pursue a quieter life exploring and photographing some of the most spectacular landscapes of the West. The geology, hydrology, geomorphology, ecology, and human history of the area truly fascinate us, and it will be much fun to study this geography outside of the constraints of brief weekends and all-too-short vacations. Moreover, it has not escaped my attention that the region offers nearly endless world-class opportunities to humor trout with demonstrations of poor fly-casting skills. I've also long had a notion to retrace and photograph the route of Hayden's 1869 geologic survey of Colorado and New Mexico, so we'll be looking into that as well and perhaps combining a few objectives along the way.

Just a few months after I began my federal career, I witnessed firsthand a devastating snowmelt flood that at the time was the most expensive disaster in U.S. history on a per capita basis. That made a very large impression on me. Realizing the potential for better science to help mitigate such risks, that early event solidified within me a lifelong commitment to advancing and delivering water science for civil service. Many thanks to all who have contributed so much to my own success over the years and to our collective mission to advance and deliver the very best science we possibly can to all who need it.

I wish you all the very best. May your trails be happy, your light good, and your lines tight.

Don

#### **RETIREMENTS**



Barry Baldigo, a Research Biologist at the USGS New York Water Science Center (NYWSC) in Troy, NY, retired on December 30, 2023. Barry began his USGS career in 1990. During his tenure, he has conducted biological research across NY State, publishing many articles and reports in numerous professional journals across a wide range of topics. Together, his publications have been cited over 2,000 times. Some of his most influential research has focused on the impacts of acid rain on fish communities in streams of the Adirondacks and Catskills. His research was critical in defining brook trout toxicity thresholds for aluminum, acid neutralizing capacity, and pH. Since 2006, Barry has also served

as an Associate Editor for Transactions of the American Fisheries Society (TAFS). During that time, he has handled hundreds of manuscripts, including many authored by scientists from USGS. If you have ever received an annoying review from a TAFS editor reminding you about proper use of topic sentences – you have probably had Barry as an editor. Among Barry's notable accomplishments were serving as co-founder and co-organizer of the Adirondack Research Forum and the Catskill Environmental Research and Monitoring Symposium, regional conferences that featured presentations and discussions on ecosystem science relevant to land and water management in these two regions. Perhaps most importantly, for more than 30 years, Barry has been the quintessential friendly, welcoming face at the NYWSC and to those he has interacted with across the USGS. His encouragement and mentoring of colleagues and students over the years has brought out the best in those around him. From playfully badgering nervous undergraduate students during a poster session with questions like "what are the management implications of your work" to fostering collaborations among researchers from countless organizations and backgrounds, Barry has been a leader of the aquatic biological research community and a strong positive presence at the USGS. His expertise, collegiality, and productive good spirit will be missed, and we wish him a long and happy retirement.

-- Rob Breault, Director, NYWSC



Amy Cornwell, Financial Specialist, retired on December 30, 2023, after 42 years of service with the USGS! Amy began working for the USGS Water Resources Division, Reston, VA, in 1981 under a student appointment. Later in her career, she joined the Office of Fiscal Services which later merged under the USGS Headquarters' Office of Accounting and Financial Management (OAFM). Throughout most of Amy's career, she provided fiscal support to the Science Support offices, and more recently, she served as one of OAFM's lead Financial Specialists. On January 3, 2024, some of Amy's friends and colleagues joined with her to celebrate as she begins a new chapter in her life.

-- Joanne L. Wyka, OAFM



**Steve Cox**, a Hydrologist with the Washington Water Science Center (WA WSC), retired on January 1, 2024. Please join me in congratulating Steve for over 42 years of service to the USGS. Steve began his career with the USGS in a hurry, shortly after the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980 as a contract employee and later a Hydrologic Technician collecting discharge and sediment samples to help monitor, understand, and anticipate where the massive and ongoing sediment mobilization events following the eruption might move and end up. For that work, Steve has stories of being dropped off by helicopter on the roof of our old building, the 26-story Wells Fargo Plaza, only to find someone had locked the roof door from the inside and the

helicopter had departed. The first of Steve's many publications was a study in Whatcom County, western Washington, where he contributed to 'the' definitive study of the hydrogeology and nitrate contamination within the Sumas-Abbottsford aguifer system. A location and topic that would see continued land use challenges and one that Steve would return to later in his career with a novel, multilevel nutrients in GW sampling design and study. The findings from these studies are still taken into consideration when evaluating management options today. At the Upper Columbia River site, a location and pollution investigation that Steve came to be regarded as the foremost expert. Steve created and led numerous studies, including a novel boat-based porewater-sampling device for thalweg sediments, utilizing nearly continuous radon measurements to decipher discharge driven gaining and losing diel variations in porewater metals flux, and using SEM microscopy to identify slag and unequivocally demonstrate the unappreciated 'flaking and weathering' that mining slag material underwent once released into the Columbia River. Steve's investigations of the distribution of trace elements in Lake Roosevelt sediments, the release of trace elements from sediment and slag particles to pore water, and the dynamics of river pore water interactions all were critical to our collective understanding of contaminants and toxicity within the Upper Columbia Site. These results are relied heavily upon by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior to this day to understand and protect public interests. To his credit, Steve will continue to volunteer his time to the USGS and the public in the review and guidance of workplans for the Upper Columbia River site. Steve's innovations in instrumentation, including the pore-water sampler, combinations of piezometers and manometers to measure GW/SW exchange, and field-based dissolved hydrogen measurements to identify redox processes in groundwater, has helped to establish the respect of his colleagues within the USGS and the hydrogeologic community. Steve's retirement is well deserved, but we are fortunate to be able to continue to access his expertise as he will remain in volunteer status. His email will remain active. -- Patrick Moran, WAWSC, and USGS Retirees Washington Affiliate Liaison



Mary Giorgino, Associate Director of Investigations, South Atlantic Water Science Center (SAWSC), retired on December 30, 2023, from the USGS after 31 years of service. She will be missed by all here at SAWSC! Mary got her first microscope at age 9 by selling seeds door-to-door and quickly became enthralled with things that live in a drop of water. She received a B.S. degree in Environmental Biology from Tusculum College in 1982, while working summers as a research technician at the University of Tennessee Department of Food Technology and Science. It was here that she honed her laboratory and test-kitchen skills, which she insists are closely related. After a summer research internship at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Mary headed

north to the University of Notre Dame, where she earned a M.S. degree in Biology in 1985. The job market for aquatic-macrophyte/sediment-chemistry scientists was challenging (who knew?), so Mary took a job with the North Carolina Division of Environmental Management. During her seven years with state government, she developed a statewide lake assessment program and led a variety of waterquality studies in estuaries, lakes, and streams. Mary joined the USGS in December 1992 as a hydrologist in the North Carolina District, to assist with studies of the Catawba River chain of lakes. After informing everyone that she "would only be here 3 years," she ended up spending her entire USGS career in the Raleigh office, leading numerous projects and the Albemarle-Pamlico NAWQA unit, and weathering sequestration, furloughs, and the merger of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia into the SAWSC. In 2003, Mary became a Water-Quality Specialist—the best job in the world. Ten years later, she "didn't dodge in time" and became a supervisor (other duties as assigned), but it all worked out in the end. The Monitoring and Environmental Assessment Team members made supervising easy. For the last 5 years, Mary has served as the Associate Director of Hydrologic Investigations for SAWSC. She is very grateful for the many amazing USGS scientists and supervisors who mentored and inspired her along the way. It has been an honor and joy to work with all of you. After retirement, Mary will rejoin SAWSC part-time, but she is looking forward to more gardening, foraging, cooking, and entering competitions in the North Carolina State Fair. There are lots of remaining National Parks to visit. We do not have the details, but Mary's family refers to her vacation itineraries as "death marches." -- Vic Engel, Director, SAWSC

Bill Hazell retired as the Asheville, North Carolina Field Office Chief effective December 29, 2023. Prior to joining the USGS, he worked for 10 years as a welder including 7 years at the Shearon-Harris Nuclear Power Plant near Apex, NC. He returned to school and started working for the USGS as a student in 1988 in Raleigh, NC. Upon receiving his AAS in Civil Engineering Technology, he started working full-time in Charlotte, NC. During his time in Charlotte, Bill was Project Chief for FEMA Flood Studies and the Charlotte/Mecklenburg Raingage Network and also developed the flood early-warning system. He mentored and trained many new employees and continued to build a strong technical reputation. In 2006 he had the opportunity to move to Asheville, NC and take on "The Best Job in the USGS" as the Asheville Field Office Chief. During his 35+ year career with the USGS, Bill has always respected and learned from those that came before him. He has taken every opportunity to pass this pride and knowledge along to his peers. Bill has trained many new Technicians through one-on-one training and discussions. He has also formally mentored many new Technicians and Supervisors; taught regional and national classes, reaching over 250 students; participated in numerous technical reviews; chaired the Scientific and Technical Employee Development committee (STED); and helped develop new online training modules and intensive in-person training curriculum. Bill has always been an advocate for USGS Technicians. He often says, "There is no problem that two Technicians can't figure out." He has chaired several important Data Committees including the Committee for Hydrologic Instrumentation and Data, Eastern Region (CHIDER) and Hydrologic Data Advisory Committee (HDAC). He was an important advocate for the Data Workshops and was a forceful proponent for the field perspective during the development of the new technical reviews when serving on the Technical Review Advisory Committee (TRAC). Bill also participated in the committee that developed new Position Descriptions for GS-09, 10, and 11 Hydrologic Technicians. Most importantly, Bill has used his position as a leader, mentor, and technical expert to set a good example. He has changed the expectations of a Hydrologic Technician through his daily accomplishments and years of outstanding work and mentoring. Bill has been planning this exit since January and he has complete confidence in the people that have stepped up to replace him in his many roles. He remains emphatic in his belief that there is a strong place for USGS Technicians and a positive future for the USGS. He likes to tell people that he didn't even know this type of work existed while in school but after 35 years, he can't imagine having done anything else. Through droughts, floods, and anything in between, Bill has always stressed the need to collect data of the highest quality and demonstrated this through his actions. We will miss this outstanding leader of SAWSC and the USGS! -- Vic Engel, Director, SAWSC



Paul Heisig, a groundwater hydrologist at the USGS New York Water Science Center (NYWSC) in Troy, NY, retired on December 30, 2023. Paul authored or coauthored numerous reports and data releases over nearly 40 years of service with USGS focusing largely on understanding groundwater resources at a wide range of scales – from small state parks, to towns, counties, and regional areas across New York. Paul's ability to synthesize disparate data sets into conceptual models of the subsurface were highly valued by state and local cooperators and colleagues in the NYWSC and beyond. Paul's personal interest in art carried over to the production of beautiful maps and cross-sections in his reports and a devotion to generating

unconventional graphics that converted dense amounts of data into easy understood information. We hope to temper the loss of Paul's depth of knowledge, mentoring skills, scientific rigor, and good humor with his transition to Volunteer Emeritus Scientist status.

*More from Paul:* After completing an undergraduate degree in Geology at SUNY Geneseo in 1983, I obtained a Master's degree in Geology at Ohio State University in 1985. I was uncertain of what direction I wanted to go in geology because I found it all so interesting, but I wanted something more applied. I had the good fortune to take two groundwater classes: a groundwater hydrology class from Jay Lehr, the enthusiastic, flamboyant Director of the National Groundwater Association, who showed me the breath and real-world application of hydrogeology, and a groundwater field methods class with Al Razem, a groundwater hydrologist at the Columbus, OH, USGS office, who eventually connected me to the Long Island, NY, USGS office. Back home on Long Island in the Fall of 1985, I was hired by

Bruno Nemickas the Assistant Office Chief of the Syosset USGS office. It was an exciting time, with many new hires, but great senior expertise at the office. I started working with Keith Prince tracking a tertiary treated wastewater plume in Nassau County and had early groundwater hydrology training classes with O. Lehn Franke and Herb Buxton. After 4 years on Long Island, I was able to transfer 'upstate' to the Albany office. My work since then has centered on conceptualization of glacial and bedrock hydrogeologic systems using hydrologic, geochemical, and geophysical tools, natural occurrence of methane in groundwater in south-central NY, use of stream baseflow chemistry as a surrogate for groundwater quality in small watersheds, and aquifer mapping. I've had the good fortune to learn from and work with two top-notch hydrologists. Allan Randall and John Williams for many years, as well as other NY colleagues, Rich Reynolds, Bill Kappel, Todd Miller, and Dick Yager. I am also indebted to Alton Anderson for his good humor, 'can do' attitude, and extensive borehole geophysical work and field work over the years, but especially in Rockland County, NY-I owe him a Star Award. I also extend thanks to all management, Specialist, administrative, laboratory, and publications personnel in the NYWSC and beyond that have supported and made my work possible over these many years. It has been a gratifying career - to learn what 'lies beneath' in many areas of eastern NY that I wondered about as a child from the back seat of my parent's car; communicating science with State, County, and local agencies and officials, and, humorously, being hugged by a consultant at a conference when he realized I was the author of a report that he found useful. I will continue as a Volunteer Emeritus Scientist this year until my final two reports are published. After that, I hope to have more time with family (especially my 3 grandchildren!), get back to oil painting and genealogy, travel with my wife Dawn, work on house projects, science outreach, and stay curious about geology. -- Rob Breault, Director, NYWSC



Greg Lawrence, Research Physical Scientist with the New York Water Science Center (NYWSC) in Troy, NY, retired on December 15, 2023, and is now transitioning into a role as an Emeritus Scientist. Greg began his USGS career in 1990 after completing a Ph.D. at Syracuse University and a post-doctoral research assignment at the University of Maine. Greg's central research focus is the effects of acid rain on forested ecosystems. The unique and enduring contribution of Greg's research has been recognizing and focusing on the central role of soils in governing ecosystem acidification, and he has pursued this interest through integrative studies of surface water

chemistry and impacts on the health of trees and aquatic biota. The interrelationships of the biogeochemical cycles of calcium, aluminum, carbon, and nitrogen have been at the heart of this work. In recent years, Greg has focused on the study of ecosystem recovery as acid rain has diminished, and again his emphasis has been on the central role of soils in governing the response. His recent research has also highlighted the growing role of climate change and he has advanced understanding of carbon cycling processes in forest soils. During his career, Greg published extensively in high impact environmental science journals, given many invited presentations at international conferences, advised and mentored graduate students, and collaborated with a wide range of colleagues both inside and outside of the USGS. He has numerous accomplishments that include a Department of the Interior Superior Service Award in 2003, service as Associate Editor of the Journal of Environmental Quality during 2004-09, and as a long-time Science Advisor to the New York State Energy Research and Development authority. In 2007, Greg was a co-founder of the Northeastern Soils Monitoring Cooperative, a collaborative group that has made major contributions to scientific understanding of temporal changes in soil chemistry and resulting effects on forested ecosystems. The geographical scope of Greg's research has been at scales as broad as North America and Europe, but with focus especially on the Adirondack Mountains as well as the Catskill Mountains, New England, Canada, and Russia. Among his colleagues in the Watersheds Research Section at the USGS in Troy, Greg is valued for his leadership, good humor, and his dedication to field work. Throughout his career, Greg has collected soil and water samples, and made vegetation measurements in remote and rugged terrain; work that he continued right up to his retirement date. We honor Greg's amazing career, wish him well in retirement, and expect to see his continued research contributions as an Emeritus Scientist.



Denis R. LeBlanc, Research Hydrologist (and now Scientist Emeritus), New England Water Science Center, has retired from the USGS after 48 years of dedicated public service and significant contributions to the field of groundwater hydrology. Denis began his career in 1975 in the Boston office of the USGS Water Resources Division. His initial assignment was to participate on a field and modeling study of the groundwater resources of Cape Cod. In 1977, the State of Massachusetts asked the USGS to study the impact on groundwater quality of 45 years of land disposal of sewage at the Otis Air Force Base sewage treatment facility on western Cape Cod. The project was one of several begun across the United States in the late

1970s in response to growing public and governmental concern about contamination of the Nation's water resources. Over the next five years, Denis led a project to map the three-dimensional structure of the plume and evaluate processes affecting plume transport in the aquifer. Research on the sewage plume expanded in 1983 when the site was selected by the USGS Toxics Hydrology Program for interdisciplinary research on contaminant hydrology. Under Denis's leadership, research at the site by a large team of USGS and affiliated governmental and non-governmental scientists has continued for more than four decades. Current research focuses on a wide range of topics, including the fate and transport of PFAS in groundwater and surface; ecosystem effects of contaminant exposure; and determination of the role of groundwater/lake interactions on plume paths. Denis's career has been marked by sustained collaborative relationships and long-term friendships developed with the many environmental and water-resource stakeholders and citizens of the Cape. He is an engaging communicator and trusted scientist who is frequently asked to speak at public meetings and participate in science advisory groups. In 1993, statements that he made during a public meeting on groundwater contamination and remediation at the Base were quoted as part of a Special Edition of National Geographic on North America's Fresh Water. Perhaps most significantly, he has inspired and championed the careers of dozens of students, interns, and early-career scientists, many of whom have gone on to make contributions of their own to the hydrologic and environmental sciences. Denis has received several awards and significant recognition for his scientific contributions, including Department of Interior Meritorious Service (1995) and Distinguished Service (2016) Awards. In 2013, he was elected a Fellow of the Geological Society of America and in 2020 received the USGS Eugene M. Shoemaker Lifetime Achievement Award for science communication. The Shoemaker Award is given "to honor a scientist who creates excitement and enthusiasm for science among non-scientists." Everyone who knows Denis will agree that there are few people who demonstrate more enthusiasm and excitement about USGS science than does Denis—among both scientists and non-scientists alike. On behalf of your friends and colleagues at the USGS, thank you Denis for your many contributions to the USGS through your long and remarkable career.

-- Paul Barlow, Chief of the Hydrologic Interpretive Branch, New England WSC



Kathy Lee, a Deputy Program Coordinator for the Toxic Substances Hydrology Program, Environmental Health (EH) Program, retired at the end of July 2023. Her work with NAWQA as an ecologist, author of the GeoHealth Newsletter, archivist for the programs bibliography, mentor and resource will make a lasting impression in the EH community. Kathy Lee's last position with the USGS was as one of the Deputy Program Coordinators for the EH Program. If asked what she did, she could probably list a multitude of jobs and roles she filled during this time, ranging from outreach, author, website producer, program manager, mentor and moderator. However, this was just a portion of her time with the USGS, as a dedicated civil servant for almost 30 years, Kathy was also a valuable part of the USGS in MN and KS. She led groundbreaking research with the Upper Mississippi NAWQA (effects of

agriculture, urban and forested land use on nutrient enrichment, fish populations, and aquatic habitat). In addition to NAWQA, she also performed the first statewide surveys of endocrine disruptors in fish and water within MN. Kathy is passionate about the Great Lakes and their tributaries, both personally

and with her research. Her research within the Great Lakes ranged from contaminants of emerging concern, estrogenic effects, neuroactive pharmaceuticals, and later developed into a nationwide effort on informing the public of research throughout the USGS EMA/EH Program. Once working for the Toxic Substances Hydrology Program, she tirelessly promoted the science within the program through science features, GeoHealth Newsletters, and story maps. These efforts highlighted the research of more than 200 scientists throughout the program. Kathy took her job seriously and spent her career fostering the next generation of scientists and managers within both the water-resources and environmental health communities. More importantly, these technicians/scientists/ and students consider her a lifelong friend, confidant and resource. Her honesty, candid personality – mixed with a heap of joie de vivre - makes her an easy person to work with. Those that she mentored will continue to make an impact in their field of science. You can see her featured in the USGS circular on Women in Science. She can juggle a handful of priority tasks and stop to listen to problems in another section to give suggestions. Sometimes though, it's the simple things that make a difference, being that person that folks know will almost freeze to death just to sleep outside to witness a clear sky and a million stars. Just knowing that the support is there, even if not needed immediately. During difficult times when the future of the mission and science supported by the EH program were uncertain, Kathy lead by example and continued her management responsibilities without hesitation while consistently sending positive messages about EH to the work force that continue to resonate and inspire today. Former supervisors have mentioned what a pleasure it was to mentor and work with Kathy, and they wished everyone was as insightful. As it is, everyone would be lucky to have a colleague and direct report like her. We all want to thank you Kathy for your dedicated career and contributions to the USGS scientific community. I feel comfortable to say we will all miss working with you, but this is not goodbye.

# -- Environmental Health Program



Greg Mendez, Hydrologist, California Water Science Center (CAWSC), retired on December 30, 2023, from the USGS after more than 32 years of dedicated public service and contributions to the field of hydrology. Greg received his B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from New Mexico State University in 1989. He started his USGS career in May 1991 as a Hydrologic Technician collecting surface-water and water-quality samples in Albuquerque, NM. These first two years of technician experience served as the foundation to his long career as an expert in many aspects of field-data collection and analysis. These skills were an asset to the CAWSC Bakersfield Field Office in California where he served as a hydrologist for several years. In 1995, Greg brought his broad base of experience and

dedication to the CAWSC San Diego Projects Office as a hydrologist. During his long career, Greg has had opportunities to implement innovative sampling techniques for gathering essential surface-water, groundwater, stormwater, and snowmelt samples, and contribute to multiple hydrologic studies. His field work has taken him to many remote places including the Sierra National Forest, reachable only by helicopter, the Rio Grande River where he dodged large chunks of ice, and the Mojave Desert where summer temperatures exceeded 115 degrees Fahrenheit. Many interpretive USGS publications and reports include his name and his contributions to them were essential to their completion. Greg was well known as the go to guy for collecting reliable groundwater-quality samples. As testament to his devotion and skilled application and documentation of field techniques, Greg was recently part of the CAWSC Groundwater Specialist Team to help teach and audit colleagues and younger hydrologists and hydrologic technicians. On behalf of Greg's friends and colleagues at the USGS, I would like to thank Greg for his many years of devoted public service to the USGS throughout his long career. I (and especially Claudia) am ever hopeful that he will be able to enjoy watching his beloved Miami Dolphins have a memorable play off season! Best wishes in your retirement, Greg!

-- Anke Mueller-Solger, Director, CAWSC



Jennifer Morace, Supervisory Hydrologist at Oregon Water Science Center (ORWSC) retired on November 30, 2023. Her stellar career is summarized by her ORWSC colleagues below: The USGS and ORWSC owes a great deal to the loyalty and dedication of employees like Jennifer, and we commend Jennifer for her exceptional contributions to USGS science. Jennifer joined the USGS in 1991. Over her 30-year career, Jennifer's research has focused on contaminants of emerging and legacy concern in the Columbia River Basin. Jennifer's work and leadership on the Columbia River Contaminants and Habitats project, the Columbia River Effluent and Stormwater Inputs study, the Contaminants and Pacific Lamprey project, and many others have

led to multiple publications that are highly cited and that improved understanding for scientists, decision makers, and the public. Jennifer also served as a scientist and leader for the National Water Quality Assessment program for over 20 years and contributed to or led numerous publications with high value to the nation. In addition to serving as an excellent scientist, Jennifer served as the first USGS Peer Support Worker in our Center, providing resources and support to her fellow USGS scientists as they navigated challenging issues. As a capstone to Jennifer's career, Jennifer also served as the Ecology Team Supervisor, leading a team of 6 scientists with a diverse study portfolio and a wealth of supportive knowledge to encourage them in their endeavors. Her drive to develop her employees earned Jennifer the first ever ORWSC Annual Mentoring Award. The mentoring award will be presented to an excellent in-center mentor as a tradition that will continue at our annual reports celebrations in the years to come. In her 30 years with USGS, Jennifer also invested in building invaluable connections outside our agency. Jennifer has mentored students at Portland State University and served as a guest lecturer for many years at Portland Community College. For decades, Jennifer closely collaborated with NOAA Fisheries, US EPA, the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership, Columbia Riverkeeper, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and many others through the Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group. These collaborations culminated in establishment of the Columbia River Basin Restoration Funding Assistance Program in 2016, which is investing millions of dollars for research and monitoring in the Columbia River Basin. In recognition of Jennifer's efforts, Jennifer was the recipient of the River Hero Award in 2015 for demonstrating a high level of commitment and hard work to reduce toxics in the Columbia River Basin. Jennifer's friends and colleagues join me in congratulating Jennifer on her many years of devoted public service and on her distinguished retirement. We will miss her kindness, happy demeanor, and determination to make positive change in the office. -- Joanne Thamke, Director, ORWSC



Scott Prinos, Hydrogeology and Groundwater Modeling Section Chief for the Caribbean-Florida Water Science Center (CFWSC), is retiring after 32 years and 7 months of dedicated service to the USGS and advancing the frontiers of water-resources science. I have personally had the honor and pleasure of working with Scott for almost half of his career, and am grateful for all I have learned from him. Now, a little about his career... After working on his Master's Degree in Geology at Northern Illinois University, he joined the USGS Illinois, Dekalb Sub-District Office, as a Hydrologic Technician, collecting a variety of hydrologic data, and contributing to hydrogeologic evaluations of EPA Super Fund sites. Tiring of freezing every winter in the rivers and brownfields of IL, Scott jumped at an opportunity to

move to the sub-tropics to become Groundwater Data Collection Program Coordinator in the Miami Sub-District office. For 9 of his 12 years in the Data Unit, he also cut his teeth as a supervisory hydrologist. In this position, he was responsible for evaluating the groundwater monitoring network, and implementing changes to improve the value of the data being collected for water-resources managers to make informed decisions, leading the project "Design of a Real-Time Groundwater Level Monitoring Network and Portrayal of Hydrologic Data in Southern Florida." This was a precursor to, and inspiration for, the USGS Groundwater Watch webpage. With his interest in and ability to apply a variety of types of data in innovative ways to better define groundwater problems, Scott transferred to the Hydrologic Investigations unit and worked on: geospatial salinity network evaluations; mapping the inland extent of saltwater intrusion in the shallow aquifer system; temporal statistical analyses of potentiometric

surfaces; collection, analysis, and publication of geophysical surveys; improving the design of monitoring well designs to optimize the geophysical and geochemical information; and hydrostratigraphic analyses. Three particularly valuable and enduring contributions he has made include (1) a method to track saltwater intrusion uses time-series of electromagnetic induction log (TSEMIL) data sets to identify changes in bulk resistivity through time; (2) the development of a prototype website to include various types of groundwater and surface-water data and graphical analyses, which has evolved into Water Level and Salinity Analysis Mapper; and (3) seminal reports on the origins and changes in saltwater intrusion in the coastal aguifer, and designing groundwater salinity monitoring networks to provide actionable data to water-resource managers. Since 2020, Scott has also served as the Hydrogeology and Groundwater Modeling Section Chief for the CFWSC. Scott's legacy extends beyond his scientific works, as he has mentored many early-career scientists, unselfishly sharing his knowledge, time, and authorship to inspire a new crop of potential USGS superstars, giving them tools for success. He enthusiastically organized a major outreach engagement every year - improving our presentation materials while sharing his knowledge with thousands of Broward County residents. With his strong sense of community, he organized photo contests to populate the Davie office walls with staff contributions, almost single handedly getting them on the walls; and he built the mini museum in our entryway, contributing largely from his own collections. And we will surely miss his organization of after-hours bird watching and axe/knife/other-object-throwing activities (though not at the same time!), and the special deal he had w/ Santa to stock the hot chocolate bar. After retiring, Scott will take some time to recover from his career, then will dive enthusiastically into nature photography, perfecting his knife-throwing skills, and traveling the -- Dorothy F. Sifuentes, Ph.D., Director, CFWSC world! Best wishes in your retirement, Scott!



Christina (Chris) Stamos-Pfeiffer, Supervisory Hydrologist, California Water Science Center (CAWSC), retired on December 30, 2023, from the USGS after more than 36 years of dedicated public service and significant contributions to the field of groundwater hydrology. Chris completed her bachelor's degree in geology from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1984. After graduating, she supported petroleum geologists at Standard Oil of Ohio and British Petroleum in San Francisco. While a graduate student at San Diego State University, she worked as a micropaleontologist and did consulting work for her professors. Chris started her USGS career as a GS-4 student Hydrologic Technician for the San Diego Projects Office in 1987. After

completing her master's degree in geology with an emphasis in groundwater hydrology in 1989, she commenced her decades-long career as a hydrologist for the USGS. During her USGS tenure, Chris' studies and field work in California coastal and desert alluvial basins have entailed designing and installing multiple well monitoring wells, interpreting water-level and water-guality data, investigating complex regional hydrogeologic systems, quantifying groundwater budgets, and simulating groundwater flow. As a Supervisory Hydrologist for the CAWSC Groundwater Availability and Use Assessments Program, Chris' primary duties include developing cooperative studies and reviewing technically complex interpretive reports. She also mentored many scientists on innovative techniques to investigate and determine sources, age, and chemical character of groundwater. Chris was a member of the CAWSC groundwater-specialist team and has collaborated with hydrologists from USGS Water Mission Area across the nation. Chris's career has been marked by sustained collaborative relationships and long-term friendships developed with stakeholders and cooperators in the southwestern Mojave Desert. She is passionate about USGS data and a trusted scientist who is frequently asked for input on CAWSC projects, particularly those in the Mojave Desert. On behalf of Chris' friends and colleagues at the USGS, I would like to thank Chris for her many years of devoted public service to the USGS throughout her long career. I'd also like to thank her for being willing to return to the USGS/CAWSC on a part-time NDAA appointment to help with various projects and mentor scientists in the CAWSC San Diego office between spending time with her family and traveling to exotic places. Best wishes in your retirement, Chris! --Anke Mueller-Solger, Director, CAWSC



**Doug Walters,** Raleigh Field Office (RFO) Chief, retired on December 29, 2023. His leadership of the RFO over the last 25 years of a 35-year career is apparent in the consistently outstanding accomplishments of this tight-knit unit. Read on about Doug's remarkable career, including the backstory of this OFR cover photo (left). Doug received an AA degree in Liberal Arts from Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge, IA, in 1982 and a BS degree in Geology from the University of Iowa in Iowa City, IA, in 1985 (the good football years!). After graduating college, Doug moved to Tallassee, FL, where he met his wife Jaime, a student at FSU. After three years of working as a manager in a home improvement store, Doug felt it was time to get a real job and use his college degree. He opened the phone book to the blue pages (government listings for those too young to know) and there it was... the United States

Geological Survey in Miami, FL. Doug went in for an interview and was hired on the spot by Aaron Higer "aka: Father of the Everglades," and there his USGS career began in the Miami Sub-District Office in 1988 as a Hydrologic Technician in the Data Section. Doug was there for the transition of strip chart and paper punch tape recorders (ADRs) to data collection platforms (DCPs). Doug also was one of the pioneers into the world of acoustic technology, installing many of the first acoustic systems in the alligator infested South Florida canals. He designed a transducer mount which could be serviced above water level and his design was published in the HIF WRD Bulletin. He was converted to Hydrologist in 1991. In the days following Hurricane Andrew, Doug and his crew marked and surveyed the highest high-water marks on the 2nd floor parking deck of the Burger King Corporation and at the Deering Estate at 16.5 feet. In 1994, it was time for a geographical change, to head north and get away from hurricanes and monotonous weather. Doug, Jaime, and his two young boys, Tristan and Braden (3rd son, Austin was born in NC) packed up and left South Florida when Doug requested a transfer to the Raleigh, NC office. Doug began his NC stint in the Investigation Section. His most memorable time in data-collection efforts was working with Jerad Bales on the Roanoke River Floodplain study. Doug published several reports. One of those being Estimated Water Use, by County, in NC, 1995. Doug's two older sons were featured on the cover of this report, a USGS first! In 1998, Doug was selected as the RFO Chief. Doug says he was finally back home, in data, where he belonged! Doug has served as the RFO Chief for the last 25 years. During his tenure he has fostered many professional relationships with Federal, State, and Local partners and has overseen million-plus dollar streamgaging program. Doug has always been an advocate and voice for the hydrologic technicians, mentoring and fostering individual careers. Doug has participated in many national surface water discipline reviews, and he was a member of the National USGS team for Continuous Records Processing (CRP) Implementation, laying the foundation for what is now CRP policy. He participated in and/or led numerous coastal and inland high-water campaigns responding to hurricanes, Nor'easters, and big rain events. Doug oversaw the establishment and installation of 175 permanent storm sensor deployment locations and ten rapid deployment gage locations along the NC coastline in association with the SWATH effort following Hurricane Sandy. Congratulations Doug! -- Vic Engel, Director, SAWSC

**Doug Walters writes:** It's hard to believe 35 years have gone by so quickly! What I will miss most is the day-to-day interaction with my field office team. My team is my success, I could not have accomplished everything I have without them! The workings of a USGS Field Office are difficult to describe to someone who has not experienced it. The activity in the field office is in constant flux and ever changing, and this is what has kept me engaged all these years! Not many can say they loved their job, I did! It will be nice to sit back and just listen to the sound of rain on the roof for a change without making plans for needed discharge measurements in my mind! In retirement, I plan to spend more time with my wife, my 3 boys and their growing families, do a little traveling, a little yardwork, and spend many hours in the wood shop! Thanks for the memories to all who I have the pleasure to cross paths with throughout the years. It's been a fun and memorable ride!



**David Yancy**, IT Specialist, CAWSC, retired on December 28, 2023, after 40 years of dedicated service to the USGS. As one of the longest serving CAWSC employees, David Yancey has had an impactful career with the center, the Water Mission Area (WMA), and the USGS. David started his career as a Hydrologic Technician at the former CAWSC Santa Barbara Field Office in 1984. David's experience with the BASIC programming language, which he learned in college and from a hobby in which he dabbled with a Commodore 64 home computer, helped him improve the software used by all CAWSC Field Offices to compute surface-water records. In 1987, this led to an IT position in the CAWSC headquarters in Sacramento where he has

worked ever since. Most of David's career was in programming with various languages and supporting software across several platforms (Prime, Unix, Solaris, and Linux). One of David's biggest accomplishments is being one of two original developers for the USGS WaterAlert service, starting around 2008. David was responsible for developing its public interface, while the other developer, David Boldt, created its back-end software. When David Boldt moved to the Bureau, David Yancey took over managing the back-end software, until it was modernized and replaced in 2022. David also developed the support software for AutoFF, another application used by all Water Science Centers. Recently, David has been involved with automating data transfers to cloud resources including PRISM and SNOTEL projects to create models ready to run with the current data through automation. David has also developed a standard webcam setup for gages in the field for the center. David's outstanding quality of work has earned him the respect of his colleagues and reflects on his dedication to the goals of the CAWSC, WMA, and USGS. David will be missed, and his knowledge is irreplaceable. On behalf of David's friends and colleagues at the USGS, I would like to thank David for his many years of devoted public service to the USGS throughout his long career and wish him happy travels in his well--- Anke Mueller-Solger, Director, CAWSC deserved retirement! Congratulations, David!

#### **NEWS OF RETIREES**

Pete Anttila ('02) writes: It has been 2 years since I submitted an article for "News of Retirees." I have a lot to report. In August 2022, my sister in North Carolina had a severe stroke that left her with permanent brain damage with a complete loss of memory and inability to communicate effectively. Thankfully, she had a will and a Durable Power of Attorney (POA) designating me as executor and POA, respectively. Getting access and to manage her finances sometimes had been difficult and time consuming. Fortunately, she had purchased a long-term health insurance policy that provided a maximum of \$300 a day for her 24/7 care at Twin Lakes Retirement Community in Burlington, NC. On October 31, 2023, she passed away resulting in numerous and sometimes lengthy tasks in settling her estate. Since November of 2019, I have continued to serve as the Conservator for a former neighbor and dear friend who has Alzheimer's. Unfortunately, her condition continues to deteriorate. She is receiving memory care at a very nice senior living facility, 10 miles from my residence.

In January of last year, I visited family in Northern California to celebrate 4 generations of January birthdays in the family. The day before the celebration, which was my birthday and my daughter-in-law's, I had a bad fall fracturing my right hip. The next day I received a birthday present of a new hip from an orthopedic surgeon. We did have a small celebration of the 4 birthdays a week later. My scheduled 2-week stay at my stepson's house was extended to 4 weeks, when I felt able to take a flight back home to Tennessee. My travel plans this year include another family visit to California in the Spring. Last March I attended, with the help of a cane, the Retiree's reunion in Tucson. Although attendance was the lowest in years, the reunion was a great success, providing attendees a lot of enjoyment, information, and wonderful weather. Currently, I am walking without a cane and no noticeable limp. Happily, a PET scan and subsequent endoscopy taken last Spring showed no signs of cancer. It has been almost 5 years since my last chemotherapy and radiation treatment for esophageal cancer. I will have another PET scan this Spring.

Beginning in January 2022, as your latest past president, I have attended the monthly Retiree's Officers "Zoom" meetings. The December 8, 2023, meeting was my last. I believe the inclusion of the latest past president provides additional contributions and continuity to the agenda of these meetings. Also, it has been my pleasure to serve on the Retiree's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. I believe that committee, under the exceptional leadership of Herb Freiberger, successfully promoted the uniqueness of our organization and the contributions made along with many highlights over 50 continuous years, as well as, a plan to sustain the future our Retirees' organization. We all can take pride in being members of our unique Federal retirees' organization. Lastly, I urge all members to send "News of Retirees" articles to our great Newsletter. I, like most of us, like to read and keep current on the latest happenings of fellow members.

Bill Bauersfeld ('03) writes: I look forward to receiving the newsletter each quarter and appreciate all the hard work that goes into putting it together. It's hard to believe I've been retired almost 21 years. When Jill and I retired in early 2003, we decided to escape the crowded areas of PA and moved to the Poconos in NE PA. We had hoped it would be our "forever home" but it was not to be. In July, we moved to south-central PA to be near our daughter Amy, Son-In-Law Matt, and grandson Andrew. We are now living in the beautiful and historic township of Annville. It's been quite an adjustment moving from the woods to a much busier area. I had my application submitted to the local volunteer fire department before we even moved. I'm entering my 50th year as a volunteer firefighter and can't imagine not being active. Jill has joined the bell choir at our church (which is just across the street from our house), we go to the gym at least 3 days a week, and recently joined the Palmyra Sportsmen's Association. Our health remains pretty good and we're keeping busy. I have joined a golf league but the weather hasn't been very conducive to playing golf. Looking forward to spring!

*Mark Hamill's spouse writes ('14):* As the former NWISWeb Chief, Mark has enjoyed nine years of retirement and definitely recommends it. Mark had a brain tumor removed in November 2022, a glioblastoma. He's happy to report though that he's doing remarkably well. Radiation, surgery and chemotherapy removed the tumor and so far have kept a new tumor from forming. Mark counts his blessings and good fortune and feels virtually normal. We are enjoying an active retirement and the cancer did not slow him much in 2023. We took an Alaska cruise in May and a European River Cruise in October. We've enjoyed other exotic vacations since retirement, most notably a trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos. He's done some computer consulting for clients but is doing less of it due to the tumor. Mark and Terri are still living in Northampton, MA, home of Smith College.

Gerhard Kuhn ('07) writes: During the summer of 2020, my wife, Karen, and I decided to leave the ever-increasing congestion of the Denver area and move to western Colorado. We wanted to be closer to two of our grandchildren who live in Carbondale; the move was encouraged by our son and his wife! We ended up purchasing a great new home--With single-floor living, great views of the Grand Hogback, and inspiring sunrises and sunsets--In New Castle (10 mi west of Glenwood Springs). We love the guiet lifestyle here and the close proximity to mountains, mesas, and ample recreation opportunities. We are just 35 min away from the grandkids (and their parents), compared to the 3-4 hour grueling, mountainous, sometimes treacherous, drive on I-70 from Littleton. The New Castle--Carbondale family times we have shared during the past 2 1/2 years are ten-fold the times during the previous 10 years! About a year prior to our move, I took up a new hobby--Birding! I've always loved observing birds, but, it was just on a casual basis. I became an e-Bird member with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and began submitting on-line birding reports since March 2019. This has been a rewarding hobby--Birding can be done anywhere, just about any time, with anyone (fun times shared with Karen), gets one outside, and more in tune with our natural world; plus, it does not require a big financial commitment. Cornell has created amazing tools (all free) for birding, including species identification by description, photos, and sound. The Cornell web pages keep track of all observations submitted, the when, where, and more. Great hobby--Any other birders out there? My best regards to former Colleagues in the Colorado Water Science Center and elsewhere. Thanks especially to all the volunteers who keep this outstanding retirees' organization going!

Frank T. Manheim ('02) writes: I am still an (ancient) professor at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government. When I retired from USGS in 2002, I committed myself to finding an institution where I could track the origin of the conflict between environmentalists and industry - that affected the last 20 years of my work in USGS's marine science program. I think I found it, and gave a retirees' talk on it about 10 years ago. In my research I came across important relationships that are not described in ordinary academic publications - partly because they are politically sensitive or not in accordance with prevailing expert opinion. Especially in the social sciences, it is difficult to publish in flagship journals because they accept only 5-10 percent of manuscripts and have very formal requirements. In fact, it's a major problem. In my opinion, the field of political science has gotten semi-isolated from the society they study. You rarely see any contributions from political scientists in the papers because though they are very smart, they mainly communicate with peers. So, with exceptions I mostly publish in the social science research network. Three years ago, I started submitting op-eds to political magazines. Feel free to contact me if you'd like to see some juicy titles in my list. Regards to all colleagues.

**Barney Popkin ('72) writes:** Thanks much. I'm now over eighty years old. I left the Survey WRD/ Texas District in the early 70's for graduate school. I'm sure many of those I knew at the Survey are now gone -- DC editor Edith Chase, geologist Peter Stevens, geologist Bob Anderson, Texas district chief Twig Twitchell, Texas district groundwater chief Al Winslow, Austin geologist Earnie Baker, Houston geologist John Wesselman, Houston subdistrict chief Bob Smith, Wichita Falls subdistrict chief Jack Jones, Austin chemist Herb Mendieta, Austin chemist Don Lefeste, Houston geologist Bill

Sandeen, Austin technician Buster Follet, Austin geologist Ed Leggett, Houston technician Gene McCadoo, Houston engineer Bob Gabrysch, Texas district surface water chief Stan Saurer, Houston assistant subdistrict chief Emil Kaminski, Louisiana geologist A.N. Turcan, and DC geologist Mike Diggkes.

Ah, Stan Sauer trained me as a streamgager in 1965. I was assigned to him for my initial hydrology orientation. The Survey assigned me to analyze several years of Brazos River reservoir data. Not knowing better, I disappeared for weeks in the UTexas library to study everything I could on lakes and reservoirs. When I appeared in the Survey's Austin office weeks later, Stan's secretary exploded. But Stan was unfazed. Stan was wonderful, patient, wise, thoughtful. He loved fried chicken. One day we went out together with another trainee. The guy looked over the bridge railing down at the ladder to the gage house, and quit on the spot.

Edith Chase was a wonderful editor. I met her and her sister years later at a Superfund Conference in California. I didn't know Edith was deaf. I wrote a small epic poem for my first USGS report on Brazos River reservoir stratification. Edith sent me a note at the time from DC, "Young man, the Survey does not publish poetry!"

John Wesselman was a groundwater mentor to me in Houston. We rebuilt surplus post office carts together, camped together, and installed shallow water jet wells together in the Willis Sand near San Houston State Park. We used equipment from Sears. It was always a treat for me and my young bride to visit John and his breed. John introduced me to Turcan of Louisiana who taught us how identify fresh groundwater from oil-field downhole resistivity logs. That led me to discovered an unknown artesian freshwater aquifer. When I first met John, he was having hemorrhoid surgery in Galveston. But I didn't know where. My sweet bride and I drove to Galveston from Houston in our used VW beetle. We heard an ambulance siren. We followed it to John's hospital. Where we met the ever-pregnant and generous Pauline. Ahaha! -- Do the best with what you have!

Pat Tucci ('02) writes: "Signing off" It's been a privilege to serve as the Western Region Director for the Retirees organization over the past several years. The executive committee is a hard-working (and fun) group, and until I was part of it, had no idea how much work was involved. It takes some effort to keep the group viable, to organize the reunions, award the scholarships, and much more, and they do a great job. I'll continue to serve as the Arizona State representative. I hope to see you at upcoming reunions, and in the meantime, I'll keep playing music and travelling.

Denny Wentz ('12) writes: I should provide a brief update of what we've been up to, as I don't believe I have done that since I retired in 2012. I left the USGS somewhat unexpectedly (after a bout with prostate cancer), so, consequently, I hadn't given the "afterlife" any thought. It took a few years for me to accept my situation, but it has definitely gotten easier over time as I have focused more and more on my photography. (Check out @d\_macdogall if you're an IG fan—I don't post a lot.) I've also been known to do a little fly fishing. Over the years, Betty, Rachael (our daughter), and I (and our dogs, Clancy and Fergus) have taken annual, or more frequent, trips from Portland to Crested Butte, Colorado, to visit my daughter Tracy and her husband. Those trips were usually through southern Utah and are what ultimately convinced me that I wanted to return to Colorado. I had worked for the Colorado District during the 70s with folks like George Leavesley, Bob Williams, Jack Weeks, Barb Ryan, John Klein, and many, many others, and Colorado always seemed more like home than anywhere I've lived. We've been here in Fort Collins for a little over 2 months now and are close to settled. We chose Fort Collins because it's more like the Denver I remember from the 70s...fewer people, less traffic, closer to the Poudre, an environmental ethic, and great music. All the best...Denny

#### **MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS**

# New Mexico Water Science Center Retirees Meeting December 8, 2023

The NMWSC retiree meeting on December 8th was great! Nathan Myers gave us an update on what's happening in the office. The main points are that many employees are still working from home after covid, the office has open vacancies, and there are now 4 field offices. These field offices are in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Roswell, and Taos. Dave Wilkins was unable to attend, but asked that I announce that his wife LaNell passed away November 7 in Brunswick, GA. She suffered with dementia for some time. Pat Borland and Ralph Clement were neighbors in Santa Fe many years ago and had a great time reminiscing. – Steve Richey, USGS Retirees NM State Representative



Pictured standing L to R: Steve Richey, Steve Lewandowski, Nathan Myers, and Pat Borland. Seated are Ralph Clement and Elsie Sanchez. Also attending (not pictured) are my wife Katherine Mondragon and Ralph's son Bill.

#### Retirees attend MD-DE-DC Water Science Center 2023 Christmas Lunch



Attendees are L to R: Ed Doheny, Jon Dillow, Herb Freiberger, Bob Shedlock, Gary Fisher, and Dan Phelan

#### North Carolina Retirees Fall Luncheon

### November 14, 2023

The North Carolina Retirees Fall Luncheon was held on November 14th at City BBQ on Lake Boone Trail in Raleigh, NC, with 15 people in attendance. The group enjoyed lunch and fellowship and welcomed soon-to-be-retired member Doug Walters, Raleigh Field Office Chief. In addition to Doug's planned retirement in December, he will also be joined this year by Bill Hazell, Asheville Field Office Chief, and Mary Giorgino, Associate Director for Hydrologic Studies South Atlantic Water Science Center.



Front Row (L to R): Jeanne Robbins, Callie Oblinger, Doug Harned, Jerry Ryan, Tim Spruill, Myra Daniel (Charles' Wife). Back Row (L to R): Bernice Allen, Doug Walters, Jerad Bales, Gloria Moore, Nelson William, Gary Garrett, Charles Daniel

#### **MEMORIALS**



Gary Cottrell, 67, passed away on October 16, 2023, after a 3-year long battle with metastatic melanoma. Gary was born on August 5, 1956, to Beryl and James Cottrell in Boulder, CO, and was the eldest of three children. He graduated from Lyons High School. In September of 1975, Gary joined the armed services, serving in the Air Force and Air National Guard. In June 1975, he met his wife, Debbie, and after a two-year engagement they were married in 1977. Shortly after his honorable discharge from the Air Force and Air National Guard, Gary earned his Bachelor of Chemistry at the University of Northern Colorado. He then started with the USGS National Water Quality Laboratory and went on to earn his MBA from CU Denver while working at the lab. He worked with the USGS for 36 years, starting as an Analytical Chemist and working his way to Acting Strategic Science Laboratory Branch (SLSB) Chief and Acting Quality Systems Branch (QSB) Chief at the Lakewood, CO,

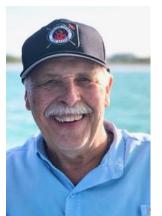
Laboratory Analytical Services Division lab, before retiring in August of 2020. He was diagnosed in December 2020 and given only a year or two to live but fought bravely for 3 years. He passed painlessly in his own home, in the arms of his loving wife of 46 years, with his son and daughter, and his best friend since 3rd grade by his side. He travelled the country to visit water science centers and labs and made friends everywhere he went due to his very personable, honest, and generous nature. In his free time, he coached Longmont YMCA football, played softball, ran marathons for charity and travelled the world with his family. He was an avid sports fan of his alma maters and was never a fairweather fan of the Broncos and Rockies. He treated everyone as the individual they are and made every conversation feel personal, becoming the de facto "office therapist." Gary is survived by his wife, Debbie, his son and daughter, and a younger brother. He is preceded in death by his younger sister who also passed from cancer in 2015. The family would like to shout the praises of Gary's best friend, Rick, who has been a great comfort and who has done anything and everything during Gary's illness.

His daughter Janette writes: "In my time at the USGS, I have had many people seek me out to tell me how my dad positively impacted their careers and their lives, for which I am grateful, and I know that he will be greatly missed. When he was diagnosed, he said, 'I've raised a wonderful family, travelled the world, and had a job I loved.' Many of you probably know him for his sense of humor and even to the end, that sense of humor kept making nurses and doctors laugh."



**T. Ray Cummings, 94,** passed away on September 5, 2023. He was born in Corsicana, TX, on February 28,1930, to Edna Nadine (Key) and Kirby Raymond Cummings. Ray attended Navarro Junior College and graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in chemistry. He served for two years in the military at Ft. Lee. After his service he joined the USGS as a hydrologist. His work took him to OH, WY, OK, SC, and finally Michigan where he was District Chief. After his retirement, Ray traveled the world extensively. His stated mission was to avoid Europe until he was too old to go anywhere interesting. His favorite places were Iran, Chile and China. When not traveling, he could be found on a golf course. He was

predeceased by his parents, his sister, his son, his granddaughter, and his grandson. He is survived by his daughter, 2 grandsons, 1 great granddaughter, and his daughter-in-law.



Kenneth (Ken) Ernest Frasl, 67, passed away, surrounded by his girls, on May 30, 2023, in Olympia, WA. Ken was born in Richland, WA, on June 22, 1955, to Kenneth and Ethel (Palmer) Frasl and has one younger brother, Paul. Ken's parents both served in the U.S. Army, which took them to Chicago, Hawaii, and Italy before eventually settling in Tillicum, WA, where he grew up and made several lifelong friends. Ken met Terry Kahler in April 1982 and they were married on May 7, 1988, in Puyallup, WA. Ken and Terry lived in Parkland, WA, until their two daughters Katy and Shelby were born, after which they moved to their forever home in Maytown, WA, in 1994. Family was the most important thing in life for Ken. While he would frequently tell people that he was outnumbered, his girls (his wife and his daughters) were his entire world and they did most things together. Although Ken never had the son that he hoped for, he was thrilled to get a son-in-law, when Shelby met and married

her husband James in 2015. Ken's career with the USGS, Washington Water Science Center, began in 1991 as a Hydrology Student Trainee, while earning his Associates Degree in Applied Science, specializing in Water Technology, from Green River Community College. Over the next several years, he honed his skills as an exemplary streamgager. His leadership skills and ability to train junior technicians, resulted in his being appointed section lead in 2007, acting Field Office Chief in 2008, and then Field Office Chief in 2010, where he led a 14-member team of technicians to install, operate, and maintain a network of 150-plus streamgages throughout Western Washington, until retiring in March 2019. Ken began volunteering in 1996 as a firefighter/EMT with Littlerock Fire Rescue, which later became West Thurston Regional Fire Authority. He quickly discovered this was his true calling and dedicated most of his free time to this passion. This became quite a family affair with Terry and the girls following closely behind him in all he did with the fire service. He rose through the ranks and became Deputy Chief for the department and served in that role until his passing. While volunteering over the years he was honored to receive dozens of awards including WA State Firefighter of the Year (2003), Geico National Public Service Award in Washington DC (2004), WA State Officer of the Year (2014), as well as many department accolades. He also spent over 20 years instructing new fire recruits at the Thurston County Fire Recruit Academy where he was able to pass on his wealth of knowledge to the next generation. He was always searching for new members to recruit and his fire brothers and sisters became a second family to him and the girls. Ken was a lifelong learner, who always strived to gain new knowledge. He was a perfectionist, who put his whole heart into everything he did. He was a natural leader and had a passion for teaching others all that he had learned. In his younger days Ken enjoyed riding dirt bikes in poker runs, shooting black powder rifles, and taking trips on the Harley he and Terry shared. He always enjoyed outdoor adventures, fishing, camping, traveling, cheering on Seattle sports teams, riding his tractor around their beautiful property and relaxing with family and friends. He and Terry frequently visited Maui and were working on seeing all of the National Parks in their retirement. He had a love for classic rock music and old war movies. Ken had a way of making everyone feel special, he was loved by anyone that met him and had one of those contagious spirits that words cannot describe.



Holly Grason, 73 (wife of USGS Retiree, Dave Grason) passed away on December 18, 2023. Born in Mahopac, NY, on December 3, 1950, to Jack Allen and Cynthia Walworth, Holly grew up in Mahopac with her parents and sister. She earned an undergraduate degree in history from Wells College in 1972. After a year in New York City, she began a course of study at the University of Connecticut. While living in Hartford, she met and married David Grason of Fullerton, PA, in 1974. Holly graduated in 1976 with a MA in child development and family studies. Holly was a tireless advocate for mothers and children, an accomplished public health professional, and a valued mentor, innovator, and colleague. Among many notable appointments, she served at the Maryland Department of Health, the Association of Maternal &

Child Health Programs (AMCHP), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She was the Director of the Johns Hopkins University Women's and Children's Health Policy Center (WCHPC)

from 1993 to 2005. From 2000 to 2018, she was Associate Professor of Public Health at JHU Bloomberg School of Public Health. Holly was recognized with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau Director's award in 2006 and Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017. Holly enjoyed spoiling her children, granddaughters, and dog, Tilly. She knitted thoughtful gifts for friends and family, particularly babies. She continued her value of service into retirement, volunteering at Ryan's House for Youth, the Island County Community Health Advisory Board, and Master Gardeners. Holly is survived by her husband David, her two sons, her daughter, and her two granddaughters. Holly was laid to rest in a private ceremony for immediate family.



**Richard Stephen Hammerschlag, 82,** of Highland, MD, passed away on December 28, 2023. He is survived by his beloved wife, Freddi (nee Shurr); his loving son, cherished grandchildren, and dear brother. He was predeceased by parents Sally and David Hammerschlag. Dick was a biologist with the USGS, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, from 1995-2007, but for the majority of his professional career, he served as Chief, Center for Urban Ecology for the National Park Service (NPS). Dick received his B.A. in Botany at Colgate University in 1963 and his M.S. in Plant Pathology at the University of Maryland in 1966. From 1966 to 1968, after being drafted, he became a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant in the Army at Ft. Detrick, MD, where he was involved with rice disease studies. Following this tour of duty in the Army, Dick returned to the University of Maryland where he received a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology in 1972. This was followed by a Post Doctoral appointment at the USDA, where he conducted herbicide mode of action studies. Following retirement, Dick collaborated on

several wetlands projects while remaining on board at Patuxent as an Emeritus scientist, serving as a volunteer at the National Arboretum and elsewhere, redesigning sections of the several acre eclectic home garden, traveling both in the United States and abroad with his also retired wife, Freddi (married 57 years), and of course spending prime time with his wife, son, Dan, daughter-in-law, and grandkids.

**Matt Perry writes:** Dick was well-known to many employees over several decades for his friendly personality and his indefatigable work ethic.

**Sam Driege writes:** As Matt mentions, Dick was one of our colleagues who transitioned from the National Park Service from the Center for Urban Ecology in the 90s during the Clinton Administration. I never worked directly with Dick, but had many hallway chats with him over the years and smile when I think of his kindness and thoughtfulness.

**Brian Underwood writes:** I' sorry to hear of the passing of Dick. He and I shared many common research interests. He always made it a point to catch up with me when I was on campus or attending one of our Science Meetings. He was a good ecologist and field biologist who never passed an opportunity to learn something new. He will be greatly missed.



Vance C. Kennedy, Ph.D., 100, passed away in his sleep on August 17, 2023, three months after his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in Modesto, CA. Vance was born May 18, 1923, in Big Run, PA, the second of four children to William and Verona Kennedy. Vance grew up in East Butler, PA, and served in World War II as an electronics technician's mate. In 1948, he married his beloved wife, Helen, with whom he had four children. With his love of education and science, Vance worked toward and received college degrees, including a BS in Chemical Engineering, an MS in Geophysics and Geochemistry, and a PhD in Geology. Vance was proud of his main career working as a research hydrologist, studying water for the USGS.

Working around the country, but mainly in Denver, CO, and then in Menlo Park, CA. Vance was a leading expert on Acid Rain and isotope research. Vance was awarded the Department of the Interior's Meritorious Service Award in 1982 for his contributions to science, and in 1994, he received the Department's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award. Two work-related trips that he especially enjoyed included a raft trip down the Grand Canyon, and a visit to China to consult on stream chemistry. During his time at the USGS, he authored 47 scientific papers on subjects ranging from sediment-carrying capacity of floods to acid rain to using isotopes to track water's age and movement.

After retirement in 1984, Vance created a second career owning and working on a Fruit and Christmas tree farm he developed in Modesto, CA. Throughout retirement, Vance involved himself in several issues, including farmland preservation, water rights and availability, erosion prevention, and climate change. He was the founder of California's Farmland Trust, which established the Dr. Vance Kennedy Award. After fracturing his hip from a fall from a tractor at age 94, Vance moved to assisted living at Dale Commons, where he kept up his activism through letter writing. Vance is survived by three of his four children, his sister, six grand-children, and two great-children, whom Vance had the joy of meeting. He was predeceased by his wife, Helen, and daughter Mary, both lost to cancer. In accordance with Vance's wishes, there will be no memorial service. Interment will be private. The family of Vance Kennedy would like to express their warmest thanks for the love, support and prayers received from friends and family during this time. We would also like to express our gratitude for the great care and support given to Vance by the members of the Dale Commons Community and Global Hospice.

Jim Bennett writes: I met Vance Kennedy during the Winter of 1966 or 67 on a trip to the Rio Grande near Bernardo, NM, where one of our objectives was to evaluate the Helley-Smith bedload sampler in flow over the 0.24 mm bed material at the site. His interest at the time was transport of heavy minerals and I recall he had brought some tracers. I lost track of him until December 1989 and subsequently when located in Menlo Park, my family would visit Vance at his farm in Modesto, CA. The adventure always included finding just the right Christmas tree, walking through the fruit areas, and picking mandarin oranges and grapefruit. It was surprising to our son to find that fruit grew on trees and not just appeared in the market. Vance was a warm and caring person, and a fearsome steward for all things related to the health of the earth. We will miss his annual Christmas letters which covered many of the projects close to his heart.



Michael McDonald, 82, died peacefully at his home in Kensington, MD, on October 24, 2023, after a long fight with Alzheimer's disease. Michael, groundwater hydrologist and founding president of McDonald Morrissey Associates, Inc., is survived by his beloved wife of 56 years, Constance O'Donnell McDonald; his son and two daughters and their families; as well as five nephews and seven nieces, and many friends and colleagues. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Michael graduated from Midwood High School in Brooklyn, where he was on the Math Team. He received a N.Y. State Regents Scholarship and used it to attend Fordham University, from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics. He received a scholarship from the University of Notre Dame, from which he graduated with a M.S. degree in Mathematics. Following his studies at Notre Dame, he worked in Towson, MD, for the USGS until he was inducted into the U.S.

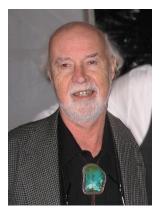
Navy. Upon successful completion of Officer's Candidate School in Pensacola, FL, he attended additional training programs in air intelligence. He was then stationed NAS Jacksonville until he had fulfilled his commitment to the Navy in 1970. After leaving the Navy, Michael obtained his M.S. degree in Computer Science at Rutgers University before returning to the USGS. He realized that he liked the mission as well as the work of the USGS and from that time on, groundwater became his focus and his intellectual passion. His education in Mathematics and Computer Science allowed him to bring the best of both fields to the projects he conducted at the USGS. Throughout a long career with the USGS, Michael made several important contributions to understanding groundwater resources. The 1970s and 80s were a time of growing awareness of the grave threats to groundwater posed by overuse and contamination. Computer modelling was emerging as a critical tool for addressing these problems but could be laborious to use. In 1984, Michael and his colleague and friend Arlen Harbaugh introduced a "modular" groundwater computer model they called MODFLOW that greatly streamlined the process. By the 1990s, MODFLOW was in wide use and had become a globally accepted standard for resolving questions in water regulation, legal proceedings, and scientific studies. Succeeding versions of MODFLOW underpin much of the model development at the USGS and elsewhere to this day. In 1990, Michael left the USGS and co-founded the groundwater consulting firm of McDonald Morrissey Associates, Inc., with offices in Reston, VA, and Hopkinton, NH. Michael retired from the firm in 2013. Michael traveled extensively for work and leisure - he saw the Southern Cross over Sydney Harbor and he traveled over land from Moscow to the Arctic Circle. He read voraciously, especially books about U.S. and European history, and could quote 18th century English poetry with ease. He rode his bicycle across Iowa in the Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) three times with his closest friends. He was a member of a long-standing poker group until Alzheimer's disease made it impossible to continue playing. Michael was the first to laugh and find humor in the mundane. He was always calculating, encouraging his bored children to estimate the number of bricks in a building, or to calculate the value of the cubed root of 4 with no paper or pencil. He taught his grandchildren about topographical maps, the density of rocks, and imparted in them an interest in the wonders of the world around them. He loved long walks on the beach on Cape Cod, where he also looked forward to beautiful sunsets and ice cream on the back deck. Michael's was a life well lived. He worked hard but took time to enjoy life. He loved good food, fine wine, old scotch and, most importantly, spending time with his wife, children, and grandchildren.



Karin Schellenberg, 77, passed away on September 12, 2023, from a heart attack. Karin was born to Marta and Fritz Langner near the city of Breslau in Eastern Germany, now part of Poland. Her mother and 9-year-old sister (Marianne) traveled westward with other family members as refugees, facing many hardships along the way. They finally settled in rural western Germany. Karin's father did not return from the war and was listed as missing in action. Marianne sacrificed much for Karin and the bond between the sisters was deep and lasting. When Karin grew-up she found employment as a paralegal in Karlsruhe, a city she spoke fondly of her whole life and hoped to return someday. In 1968, Karin married a German citizen (Ulrich Schellenberg) who was a soldier in the U.S. Army and stationed at various posts. Their son Frank was born in Hamburg, where Karin had moved to be closer to her family. In

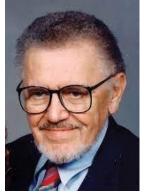
1970, shortly after Ulrich returned from combat service in Vietnam, Ulrich was tragically killed in an auto accident. Left with an infant son to raise, Karin decided to make a fresh start. She and Frank moved to the United States in the early 1970's and initially planned to stay with friends in California. When she stopped in Colorado, she joked that she was tired of traveling such a long distance and although she had intended to return to Germany, she and Frank made a life in Colorado. She worked initially at sales and interior design jobs, then found employment at the USGS with a short stint with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Karin eventually worked as an administrative assistant at the National Water Quality Laboratory (NWQL) processing personnel actions and payroll documents. In 1984, she and Mike Schroeder found each other at the NWQL, starting a relationship as Lebensgefaehrten (Life Partners) that lasted nearly 40 years. She retired in 2018 from the NWQL after more than 30 years of Federal service. Karin faced many challengers later in life – in December of 2001 she experienced the worst day of her life when her son Frank unexpectedly died at home. In 2002, she was treated for breast cancer and in later years Parkinsonism. Her heart issues began in 1999, with three open-heart surgeries (the last in 2013); a pacemaker in 2016 and numerous stents over the years. Karin loved walking, working in her vegetable garden, tending to the many varieties of flowers she planted. She loved fashion and was a shopaholic, who could wear out her friends and family accompanying her on her shopping expeditions. Karin was famous for her hair styling and colors covering a spectrum from red to purple over the years. She faced many difficulties with amazing courage and resilience; she is remembered for her kindness and love for animals; and unfaltering friendships. She is survived by her life partner Mike, her sister and brother-in-law, her niece, and cousins in Germany.

*Merilee Bennett writes:* Upon meeting Karin, my husband Jim wanted to know what color Karin's hair was – I replied, 'Karin's color' and that's what it became from that time on. Regarding shopping with Karin, I found that the adage 'shop til you drop' was a huge understatement because I normally would find a place to sit after 4 to 5 hours and wait for her to come back and get me. Karin was someone who embraced the people around her, and whether at work or in her personal life it was reciprocated by those who knew her.



Robert "Bob" Schoen, 92, passed away on August 27, 2023. Bob was born in Manhattan, NY, to parents William and Agnes Schoen. A Veteran of the U.S. Army, Bob loved reading, sailing, gardening, and bicycling. Bob was preceded in death by his parents and his older sister Helen. He is survived by his wife Jean; four children; seven grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. Bob joined the NY National Guard at age 16, where he trained as a medic and received "Expert" for his shooting marksmanship. He discovered his passion for geology as an undergraduate at City College. Bob continued his Masters of geologic studies at the University of Wyoming where he met his future wife of 66 years, Jean Rogers, in a geology class. Drafted into the U.S. Army at the end of the Korean War, Bob spent two years in Japan surveying on Okinawa. Upon his return, the two were married and moved to Moab, UT, where Bob did research in the nation's uranium mines. Using the GI Bill, Bob obtained his PhD

in geology from Harvard University. Upon graduation, Bob worked for the USGS as a geologist in the Water Resources Division in Menlo Park, CA, and in Reston, VA. He continued his career with the USGS until his retirement in 1989. At a worldwide geological symposium held in Prague, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Bob was one of a few speakers that were able to present their paper before Soviet tanks rolled into town. It took several days to get the Americans and other foreigners bussed safely out of the country. For Bob and his wife, it was a surreal experience to walk the streets with the Soviet soldiers' loaded guns always pointed at them. Bob loved the natural world and imparted that enjoyment to his four children, with numerous camping trips within the western half of America visiting national and state parks, along with any area that heralded fascinating geology to share his love of rocks and science. His grandchildren and great grandchildren loved to ask him if they had found gold in a glittery rock. Bob enjoyed classical music and attending operas. He wrote technical papers, nonfiction and fiction; dabbled in drawing; acted in Community Theater; loved photography and developed his own pictures; taught community college courses in geology; volunteered as PTA president for his children's elementary school; and loved to sing in his rich baritone. Bob and Jean retired to Middleton, WI, where they traveled frequently researching their family genealogies. They also participated in many USGS Retirees' reunions, sometimes acting as host and hostess. In 2017, they moved to Vermont to be near two of their children. Continually learning and adapting, at age 91 Bob began the daily routine of peritoneal dialysis. The mechanics fascinated him, always the scientist, and he took great pride in his mastery of the self-care regimen. He is one of the oldest patients to have attempted this, and he was successful for more than a year. Per Bob's final wishes, his ashes will be interred in the Viroqua Cemetery, Viroqua, WI, under a "nice piece of gneiss."



Henry Trapp Jr. of Solebury Township, Pa., passed away April 9, 2019, at Neshaminy Manor long-term care facility, Warrington, PA. Born in Lakewood, OH, he was the beloved son of Eva Wiener Trapp and Henry Trapp Sr., and brother of Barbara Trapp Walker, who preceded him in death. Henry's parents sold a cow to add funds to his summer earnings and scholarship at Wooster College, OH. World War II interrupted his education there, but a shoulder injury after a year, three months and 14 days in the Navy (as he would recount on request) earned him an honorable discharge, and he was able to graduate at Wooster with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry. With a Masters in Geology from Washington University in St. Louis, he began his career as oil scout for the State of Missouri and continued as geologist for the Atlantic Refining Company (later ARCO) in Wyoming and Montana, where he enjoyed elk, deer

and duck hunting in his spare time and sometimes hunted mice in a trailer he called home while "sitting on an oil well" in the middle of nowhere. He met Erika during rehearsals for Kurt Weill's "Down in the Valley," staged by the Billings, Montana Symphony. They married a year later and Henry accepted a permanent position as a hydrologist with the USGS a year after that. The USGS later transferred Henry and family to Grand Forks and Bismarck, N.D.; Tallahassee, Fla., and finally Trenton, N.J. They set up house near New Hope. Henry's last project for the USGS was a Regional Aquifer System Analysis of the Northern Atlantic Coastal Plain in parts of NC, VA, MD, DE, NJ, and NY. In retirement, Henry

studied science, religion, the arts and memoir writing at Delaware Valley University. He wrote a detailed story of his life, including his ancestors, his immigrant parents' beginnings in the United States and his growing-up years in the Cleveland, OH, area. He studied microfilms at the Doylestown Public Library and the Latter-Day Saints Library in Salt Lake City and sent copies of his memoir to extended family, who responded with additions. Henry was a volunteer helping seniors with income tax preparation and briefly served on a groundwater committee in Solebury. He was a member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists and the Geological Society of America and contributed to many civic causes. He was the loving and supportive husband of Erika Lydia Koerber Trapp, proud father of his daughter and son, and a delighted grandfather to his granddaughter.

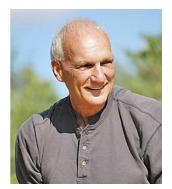


**Yvonne von Steen, 90,** of Parkville, MD, passed away on August 6, 2023. She was a native of Beatrice, NE, south of both Lincoln and Omaha. She worked with the Water Resources Division of the USGS from 1980-1995 when she retired as the Administrative Officer of the Maryland-Delaware-DC District in Towson, MD. She also worked for the National Park Service before coming to the USGS. She is survived by her son, James, of Greensboro, NC.



LaNell Hadley Wilkins (wife of USGS retiree Dave Wilkins) passed to the next phase of her life on November 7, 2023, in Brunswick, GA. She was near family and made the transition peacefully after suffering from the effects of Alzheimer's dementia for the last year. She is survived by her husband of 56 years David (Dave) Wilkins, her mother, her daughter and son, and 5 grandchildren. LaNell was born July 15, 1946, the daughter of a potash miner and a traditional mother. She was raised with Christian values by a protective Irishman father and a mother who accepted her role in the family willingly and completely. She had a tomboy upbringing learning to spit and play marbles correctly from her older brother. She was known for her kindness and acceptance of all. During high school, she had no plans for going to college, but a counselor saw her potential and encouraged her to

attend. LaNell earned a degree in Home Economics Education, the first of her family to graduate from college. At New Mexico State University, one morning, Dave was looking for a half-way decent looking girl to go sailing with and they met in the cafeteria. She stood him up that morning after noticing he was wearing beaded moccasins. Later, she accepted a date with him to get a root beer. They were married May 26, 1967, in Las Cruces, NM. When the children no longer needed a full-time mother, LaNell went back to school at the University of New Mexico. She earned a Master's degree in reading and became certified to teach K through 12th grade. She accepted a position at a high-risk middle school teaching reading and continued that until the funding was cut. She continued teaching 5th grade at that school because she was needed and because she loved to see the progress her students made with her dedicated and no-nonsense approach to teaching. Once again, she became a much sought after teacher. During the years in Albuquerque, LaNell was active in her church, and with her daughter in 4-H. and with various quilting groups in the area. In the last days of LaNell's illness, she was moved to a very nice hospice facility where she was taken care of well. After 3 nights she passed with her family near including a sister, a brother, and a niece. What a blessing peace is.



Don Williams, 80, of South Fayette, died peacefully on December 19, 2023. He was the beloved husband of Bonnie Sneddon, who preceded him in death on July 7, 2013. Don was born on November 6, 1943, and grew up in Peters Township, PA. He graduated from Peters Township High School (62) and Penn State University (65) with a B.S. in Agricultural Science and Industry. Don honorably served his country in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War from 1966-1970. He then had a 35-year career as a hydrologist with the USGS. He had an incredible heart for helping and humbly serving others, whether as a deacon to the congregation of Providence Presbyterian Church, a neighbor to friends on Boxwood and Pinewood Drive, or as an AAA employee (post-retirement!) to people stranded roadside. He was known in

the community for his delicious homegrown tomatoes, which he took great pride in and would hand deliver to neighbors and others at church. A friend recently commented that Don "was one of the kindest and most caring men I ever met," a sentiment shared by all who knew him. He was a man of few words, but the love and mercy he showed toward others in his actions reflected the personal relationship he had with Jesus Christ. He is survived by his son and two daughters and their families, including his grandchildren. He is also survived by his dear twin sister, and a joyful uncle to nieces and nephews; and a cherished foster father to precious children and special friend to others.

Curtis Schreffer writes: Don was my first supervisor at the USGS. He was one of the nicest and kindest people I have ever known. A quick story, this would've been the late 80's, I was early 20's Don would've been mid 40's. We were in the field in Indiana County. We went to supper at a steakhouse, I got a steak and Don said he was on a diet and was just going to get the salad bar. Well, after 3 trips to the salad bar and 4,000 calories later I say to Don, 'you know you probably ate 2 steaks worth of calories at that salad bar' and he says, 'yeah but I can tell me wife, I only ate salad...' He will be missed, my condolences to the family.

**Kent Crawford writes:** Don was a dedicated professional while working for the USGS. He was always willing to take on any assignment and accomplish it well. But mostly, I remember him as a kind, likable individual who was a pleasure to be around and a credit to our organization.

**Jeff Stoner writes:** A fortunate part of my career and life was crossing paths with Don and his family in Pittsburgh, PA. Professionally, I worked with Don on a comprehensive and rewarding study of the effects of coal mining in Greene County, PA, where I experienced one of the kindest and organized water-quality scientists in the USGS. He and his wife welcomed my western midwest family (with our first child born three weeks after arriving to this duty station)! We shall not forget how he and Bonnie received us into their home through their family events. I will miss that Penn Stater.



Richard Page Wilson, 85, passed away on October 14, 2023. Born in Bath County, Hot Springs, VA, in 1938 to parents J. Edward Wilson and Gladys Page Wilson (Garth). The family of four moved to Royal Orchard, close to Waynesboro, then on to a cattle farm with a thousand cattle and a thousand acres. After attending Drewry Mason High School in Ridgeway, VA, Richard studied at Davidson College, Wake Forest College, Virginia Polytechnic Institute (member of the Rifle and Pistol Club), and Radford College. In 1962, he joined the Army and spent time at FT Monmouth, NJ, and the U.S. Army Air Defense School at Fort Bliss, TX, where he excelled in basic Electronics, early computer electronics, and as part of the Fort Bliss Pistol Team, for the Post Marksmanship Unit (where he garnered several awards). When asked why he chose to be stationed in the west he stated, "(While enlisted,) I had a choice to

go back to Europe or all the way to El Paso, TX, I wanted to get as far away from the humid south as I could, and they both seemed just as far! As I got off the train, duffle bag in hand, and felt the clear, dry heat of the desert I thought I'd died and gone to heaven!" In 1965, he left the service just before the Vietnam War became a part of the American lexicon. While stationed at Fort Bliss, he met his bride, Carlota Luevano. Richard loved to sing and when the local college (UTEP) held auditions for the chorus of the opera Aida, he leaped at the chance to participate. On one fated evening during dress rehearsal, while moving set pieces onto the stage, he asked a young, very attractive woman, in harem pants

(Carlota) to hold his sandwich. She did, and absentmindedly left with her friends and the sandwich. The next evening, feeling a little guilty and wanting to shock this "gringo," she made him a beef tong sandwich. For him it was love at first bite, she having unknowingly made him his favorite! With warm thoughts of home and Mom's cooking floating around his mouth, he asked her out for coffee. They were married in August of 1965. In January of 1968, he graduated from Texas Western College (The University of Texas at El Paso) with a Bachelor of Science in the Sciences and continued his education with classes in Civil Engineering at New Mexico State University while the newlyweds lived in Mesilla, NM. In 1969, he began his career with the USGS, Water Resources Division, in Denver, CO, and in 1970, he transferred to Flagstaff, AZ, where he spent two years working primarily on the Navajo Indian Reservation to site, design, and log about 30 wells for the Emergency Drought Relief Program. In 1972, he transferred to Tucson, AZ, where he worked on the Flood Hydrology of Arizona Program, and Flood Studies for the Flood Insurance Administration, in what he called "...the bowels of the City of Tucson..." and later for the Ak Chin Tribe, to provide data for well field design in the Vekol Valley. In 1980, Richard headed far, far north to work on river surveys immediately after Mt. Saint Helen's massive eruption, then to the Grand Canyon mapping the bed of the Colorado River with augmented side-scan sonar (providing the first set of river bottom maps), and then later to Saipan to determine where to get fresh ground-water. During his 31 years with the WRD, he developed an overall knowledge of the geology and hydrology of Arizona, authored or co-authored about 16 publications, and drilled more than 100 test wells. After "retirement" he turned his attention to writing steamy novellas, dragged into volunteering far too often for his daughter's various theatrical adventures, starting a water resource company, 'Western Gunn Hydrology,' with his longtime friend Mike Carpenter. Richard is survived by his wife, two children, their partners, his adopted daughter, his grandchildren, brother and his wife and their families. He loved broadly, was a dedicated water scientist and geologist, a total space cadet, terribly disorganized, and knew just a little bit about anything and everything you could think of to ask him (absolutely anything!). He loved the southwest as if he'd been born under a mesquite- from the banks of its rivers, the depts of its canyons, high mesas, mountains reaching to snow peaks, and striped and painted deserts. We will miss his warm hugs, incredible knowledge, stories that went too long, his laugh, and the way he spray painted his beard bright green, for so many years, on Saint Patrick's Day. Goodbye Papa Wilson.

*Mike Carpenter writes:* My friend and colleague Richard Wilson had been fighting melanoma with courage and his usual great spirits for several years. I had visited him the day before he passed. He, David Graham, and I had been having lunch Fridays for years, sometimes joined by Rob Carruth, Stan Leake, and once by John Hoffman when he was in Tucson.

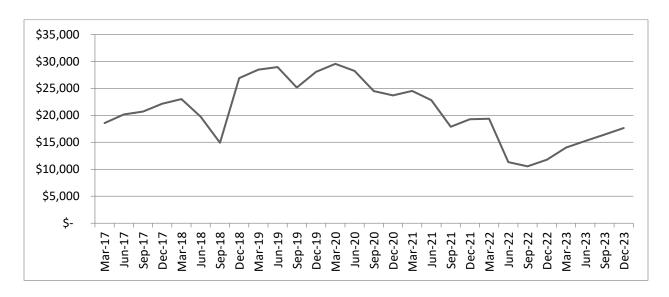
*Mark Anderson writes:* I'm sorry to hear about Richard's passing. He was a kind and thoughtful person.

# TREASURER'S REPORT, FOURTH QUARTER 2023

Treasurer Cathy Hill reports the organization had \$17,640 at the end of the fourth quarter, 2023.

Special thanks for contributions above dues to Don Goolsby, Rick Grover, Tom Herrett, Bob Hirsch, Rick Iwatsubo, Kathy Long, Doug Posson, Jeff Stoner, Denny Wentz, and Chet Zenone. Many thanks for your generosity.

### **USGS RETIREES BUDGET 2017 - 2023**



## **RETIREES EXPENSES 2021 - 2023**

Expenses	2021	2022	2023
Qrtly Newsletter	2,371	2,589	2,187
Directory	1,000	1,074	1,068
PO Box	150	216	216
State Corp Comm. Renewal	25	25	25
Scholarships	7,403	9,689	3,700
Annual Adobe license	155	156	100
Postage/Supplies	150	150	0
Bounced check	0	22	0
Water Bottles50th	0	500	0
Total Expenses	11,254	14,421	7,296

#### DIRECTORY

#### **New Members**

Al Campodonico ('19) – Cypress, TX Janet Hren ('06) – Reston, VA Barbara L. Kemp ('15) (William R.) – Arvada, CO Kathy E. Lee ('23) (Eric Wakeman) – Cohasset, MN David (Dave) Lockner ('24) (Robin) – Palo Alto, CA Jana Sue Stewart ('23) (Jeff Prey) – Madison, WI

### **New Affiliate Liaisons**

D. Matthew Ely, Affiliate Liaison for Colorado – Lakewood, CO Brian P. Kelly, Affiliate Liaison for Kansas – Shawnee, KS Nathan C. Myers (2018/retired annuitant) Liaison, New Mexico – Tijeras, NM

#### **Updates**

Bauersfeld, William R. "Bill" ('03) (Jill) – new mailing address
Ingebritsen, Steven E. "Steve" ('20) (Barbara Gaal) – corrected email address
Kume, Jack ('96) (Dianna) – new email address
Morris III, Fred ('06) – new mailing address
Peters, Jim ('04) (Barbara) – new mailing address
Schneider, Verne R. ('20) (Donna) – new email address
Schroeder, Michael ('08) – new email address
Stewart, Susan (S) – new contact information
Torres, Arturo ('12) – new mailing address
Tucci, Patrick "Pat" ('07) (Zelda Bailey) – new email address
Wentz, Dennis "Denny" ('12) (Barbara Brickson) – new mailing address