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## WRD RETIREES

NEWSLETTER 131  
May 2006

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

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's springtime in Virginia and the dogwood and redbud blossoms are just gorgeous. Joyce refuses to travel anywhere at this time of year because it's so beautiful here! I'm sure fellow WRD retirees are enjoying the springtime weather in the rest of the country as well.

George Ferguson celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on April 2, 2006. George is one of the founding fathers of WRD Retirees, served 13 years as the first Newsletter Editor, and is tremendously admired by the membership. The HQ retirees helped George celebrate at our April lunch meeting. Nine of the eleven living Presidents of WRD Retirees were in the crowd of 70 members/spouses honoring George in celebration of his century. Out of town guests included Joe Cragwall, Charlottesville; Jim Blakey, CO; and Herb Freiberger, MD. A number of working folks from USGS, notably Cathy Hill, Regional Hydrologist, NR, and Blair Jones, Research program were also in attendance. Photos from the celebration appear on page 22 of the Newsletter. Congratulations, George!

There are a number of important events taking place in WRD Retirees:

**WRD Retirees Reunion:** Our 13<sup>th</sup> Reunion will be in Madison, WI, September 21-24. The Wisconsin organizing committee has worked very hard to put together an outstanding program for all of us. The Reunions are a great place to renew contact with longtime friends and colleagues. Those of you who have attended any of the reunions realize this. For those retirees who have yet to attend a Reunion, this is a great opportunity for you to experience that fact. The Reunion registration form appears on page 11 of this Newsletter. Reunion activities were described in detail in the February Edition of the Newsletter. Information also can be found at <http://wi.water.usgs.gov/reunion/index.htm>. Be an active member and attend the reunion. It will be a lot of fun!

**Blue Ribbon Panel:** The panel I mentioned in the President's message in the last Edition of the Newsletter has been formed and is addressing the question, "**Does WRD Retirees need to change in order to attract the current working force in USGS as they reach retirement?**" Hal Langford, Loren Young, Jim Blakey, Bill Boning, Tom Yorke, Russ Wagner, and I are the members. We will address this question because there have been so many significant organizational changes in the Water Resources program at USGS in the past decade. Cathy Hill, Regional Hydrologist, NR has agreed to discuss our findings and provide perspective from the current workforce. Please remember that any suggested changes we propose will be presented to the entire membership for a vote. We hope to make a preliminary report to the membership at the Madison Reunion.

**Scholarship for Hydrologic Technicians:** The elected officers of WRD Retirees have developed a proposal for WRD Retirees to sponsor a scholarship for Hydrologic Technicians. The scholarship program is described on page 13 of this Newsletter. Hydrologic Technicians enjoy a well-deserved reputation of delivering high-quality data products that meet local, state, and National needs. These folks are often referred to as the "backbone" of the water program. I'm sure each one of you can recall a Hydrologic Technician that had a tremendous positive impact on your career. I certainly can. Funding for the scholarship would come from the WRD Retiree Treasury so read the proposal and vote on whether or not you think we should proceed with plans to implement the proposed scholarship program.

I hope to see you in Madison! Come join us for a great time.

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**Jay Akers** writes, "Nothing much that is notable going on around here, but do want to thank Bill Boning for sending the history books. They brought back good memories of my days at Lees Ferry and on the Navajo Project with **Pete Stevens, Bill Hardt, John Harsbarger, Charles Repenning**, and others.

"One day on the reservation as I was driving along the base of a cliff with Pete, I was looking up trying to determine what formation formed the cliffs when the truck hit a large rock and the steering wheel spun around with my face in it. I was really banged up. When we returned to Halbrook the next day, "Rep" Repenning, who was in charge of our mapping effort, asked me what happened. I replied that Pete and I got into an argument and that he had worked me over with a stave out of our cots. Rep, after a moment of silence, says "what does Pete look like?"

**Barbara Anderson** had a stroke a little over a year ago. It mostly affected her legs and she uses a walker. She is doing much better than she was a year ago.

**Henry Anderson** says he is looking forward to the reunion in Wisconsin this year and hopes to hear more about it soon.

**Bob Beall** says, "I'm announcing the printing of a 235-page book detailing my 1941 to 1945 period of service with the U.S. Army Air Corps titled "One Soldier's Tour of Duty," is a compilation of pictures, commentary, clippings, and memorabilia that was first assembled in a notebook. In January 2001, my son, Jim Beall, offered to take the assembly and to scan, compose, and reproduce the effort in book form. Jim did the scanning and his wife Susan Becker did the compiling in page format (in Boulder, CO). I am much indebted to them for a good looking product. Twenty-five copies were run off. Half of the 4+ year period was spent with the Sixth Weather Squadron at bases in Panama as an enlisted forecaster. The squadron "enjoyed" a rather civilized war--shooting at no one and not getting shot. Although the Sixth Air Force and its support groups have been largely ignored in the epic history of WW II, it had its share of casualties in downed aircraft, tropical disease, depression, and family separation. The tour ended with the closure of the Bradley Field Weather Station at Windsor Locks, CT, and separation at Mitchell Field, NY.

**Chuck Berkstresser** reports, "**Bev** recovered from the broken bone in her foot. Then, she was diagnosed with peritoneal carcinoma after Christmas. So, I'm back to cooking, KP, grocery and pharmacy runs, etc. Otherwise, all is well. All four daughters are pitching in on weekends, coming from Arcata, Napa, and Los Angeles and are a huge help, both in the house and with boosting our spirits. And, yes, they tend to keep the spirits out of the wine cellar and into my glass (and theirs). Bev watches our daughters

and me in amazement. Her chemo is going well and she is improving. The goal is remission. I managed to get a couple of nights out for retirement events. **Ginny Wetzlaff's** was a pleasant party. She is the last (?) of the group present when I retired 3 decades ago. Also went to **Chuck Lamb's** lamb-roast, an outrageously funny affair. Although I did not actually know Chuck, he and I were in Iowa City at the same time (he was 4, I was 24). I mainly went to see other retirees who worked with him."

**Jim and Joyce Biesecker** report, "We were pleased to have **Jim and Paula Blakey** and **Herb Freiburger** as house guests recently. They were in the area to attend the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of **George Ferguson**. Unfortunately, **Pat Freiburger** had to stay at home to care for an ailing mother. We missed her a lot. **Hal and Jean Langford** joined us all one evening for dinner. We drank lots of wine and had a great time."

**Jim Bowie** reports, "Hurricane Katrina started out with evacuation to **James and Merle Hudson** in Jackson, MS. The hurricane followed leaving our safe haven without power. We further evacuated to our son's in Lafayette, LA, for a week. Upon returning home, we found how lucky we were. Fourteen trees down, none on the house or barn. All shingles on the roof of our house were gone along with some vinyl trim, two storm doors, and screen on the porch. Several other little things. There was no damage to the inside of the house. With a new roof, doors, and screens, we are back in business. We are having a wonderful experience in brotherly love or helping others watching the disaster effort of outsiders. Our barn apartment with other game area and shop has been used by disaster workers from several churches in North Mississippi for eating and sleeping. Usually there are 12-18 men, women, and young adults here for 5 or 6 nights each week. The maximum number for a night has been 31. The showering experience was finally solved last week when the church in Bay St. Louis finally got their showers working. Prior to that, we opened two of the bathrooms in the house for them. It is good to see how people are helping others after the storm. (Note—the apartment only has one small bathroom).

"Thanks to each of you for your efforts on the Newsletter."

**Dick Bloyd** thanks everyone for the effort that is put into the Newsletter.

**Alan Brown** says, "This year I purchased a sports mobile 4x4 van to continue my full-time RV lifestyle. Now my adventure horizons are nearly unlimited. I am now back in Kentucky getting acquainted with my new grandson, Caleb. I enjoy the Newsletter, but I would like to see more technicians contribute. How about submitting some of those great stories of adventurous field trips? I used to collect numerous or strange remarks from field notes, example; "too many canoes to wade," or "I can't feel my feet, I quit (the measurement)." (**Note: The above news**

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**was erroneously included in Newsletter 130 as news from Charlie Lane. The Newsletter staff sincerely apologizes for the error.)**

**Charles Bryant** reports, “**Elizabeth** and I moved from Little Rock to Maryville, TN, just south of Knoxville, in July 2005. Maryville is in the foothills of the beautiful Smoky Mountains. Our move was made partly because of health and partly (the most part) to be near our granddaughters. Elizabeth survived cancer in 2004 but has not regained her strength. I had my fifth major surgery (nissen fondoplication) in January 2003 and have not regained my stamina. Our son-in-law and daughter take care of our heavy stuff and that is a blessing. We are very involved in our granddaughter’s lives.

“I enjoyed a visit with **Joy** and **Phil Matthews** after we moved here. They are managing pretty well. Phil does have P.A.D. He is taking therapy and is making good progress. Phil was my boss for a few years in the Little Rock office.

“Thanks to all of you who produce the Newsletter. You do a great job. At my age, almost every issue brings a little sadness as we lose more and more of our age group. Still, I want to know about those who pass on. I can always reflect on the good things they did for the Survey and for their friendship. Keep up the good work.”

**Angel Class** says, “Hello!! I’m doing very well up to now. I went back to Tallahassee for one week during the week of July 5<sup>th</sup>. I had a good time visiting friends with **Ernie Alvarez**, but I had to leave a day earlier because a storm was around the area with a possible hit. I had to spend a couple of days in Orlando. The week of Labor Day, I went back to Florida—this time to Ocala with my younger son because he wanted to go to the horse farms and buy some equipment. Once again we had to move to Orlando because a storm was around the area and there was a lot of bad weather. Other than that, my wife Maria and I are behaving fine, doing a lot of babysitting with my youngest grandson (2 years). Congratulations for the job well done with the Newsletter. Happy Holidays and God bless you all.” **(NOTE: The above news was erroneously included in Newsletter 130 as news from Robert Myrick. The Newsletter staff sincerely apologizes for the error.)**

**Edith Chase** writes, “The Memorial Day weekend of 2005 will always be a memorable time for us. **Stann’s** WWII Army outfit decided to have its 2005 reunion here in Washington, DC. It was the first one they’ve held here, and it was especially because of the new WWII Memorial. In 2004, we were asked by the outfit’s coordinator to host the reunion even though we’d been able to attend only one reunion. Inasmuch as we’re the only ones living anywhere near this area, we had no back-up help. It was a very wearing year of preparation.

“The first day, we had a chartered bus with a tour guide to take us to the Capitol for a special tour by Congressional staff. Then we toured Capitol Hill, went to Lafayette Park, and visited the outside of the White House. The “outside” visit was the closest we could get because we’d just been turned down after applying months before for a group tour. From there, we went to the Ronald Reagan Building for a very late lunch in the huge food court and to see the large piece of the Berlin Wall that is on display there.

“The next day, we visited Arlington Cemetery by Metro. At the cemetery, we rode the tour mobile to see the grounds, getting off for the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns and other special areas.

“The last day we visited the WWII Memorial where the photographer we’d contracted for met us. Group photos were taken and the photographer set up a web site so that the photos could be viewed and copies ordered on line. We also toured the Dupont Circle area, where the famous Chases live (mentioned by the guide), Embassy Row, the National Cathedral, down through Georgetown, a stop to see the Korean and Vietnam Memorials, and back to the hotel for all to rest up for the banquet that evening. A few speeches were made at the banquet, and we received a standing ovation for our efforts. We said goodbye to everyone and went home to collapse and have a couple of stiff drinks.

“We received many thank you notes. As a memento of the reunion, we’d purchased Smithsonian paperweights made from the same granite that the Memorial is made of and that have a bronze plaque on top with the words, “National WWII Memorial” and medallions of the six military services. On the sides, Stann applied four bronze panels that describe his outfit’s tour of duty and the dates of the reunion. It’s a unique gift in every sense of the word and it can be passed on to future generations without fading or wearing out. Only 30 of the 200 notices we sent were able to attend (after all, the war ended 60 years ago) but with only 2 requiring wheelchairs. The package of material we gave the attendees included a WWII Memorial brochure, a full description of all the Memorial’s features and the web site where there is a Registry of those who served during the war. I’ve checked that site for the names of some of the WRD retirees who’ve written about their WWII experiences in the Newsletter and they are not in the Registry. It’s easy to put your or other’s names in the Registry, with no charge for the general description but a \$10 fee if a photo is included. Go to **www.wwiimemorial.com** and click on the WWII Registry on the left side of the site, or you can do it by mail.”

**Chuck Collier** writes, “Last October **Pat** and I really enjoyed an 8-day tour of New York City. The tour was sponsored by the Tacoma Musical Playhouse who arranged for seeing four Broadway musicals and two off-Broadway, plus tours of the city and excellent dining. We

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spent Christmas and New Year's with our daughter and her family in Cleveland. We are looking forward to the Madison Reunion."

**Loretta Conroy** thanks everyone for the great Newsletter.

**Joan Cook** sends her thanks for the work everyone does for our great Retirees' organization.

**Judy Cornwell** thanks everyone for the effort that is put into the Newsletters.

**John Cotton** writes, "The week after I retired in 1994, I went to work for the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and for some reason I am still working full-time. I was appointed to the first NH Board of Professional Geologists when licensing began in 2000 and am now Chair of the Board. There are now about 650 licensed geologists in the State, and we are one of only four States that require continuing education credits."

**Harold Eddins** says, "I can't remember to pay my dues but do remember the head-on collision with **Ken Taylor** driving a USGS vehicle. Ken was cut up pretty good and I ended up with a spinal fusion."

**Bob Babrysch** reports, "There was no flooding from the hurricane. However, I did have a hole in the roof from a tree limb. **Cecilia** retired from teaching after about 40 years. She is keeping our granddaughter who is now 13 months old. I'm somewhat busy with my vegetable garden. I gave about 2,000 pounds of tomatoes to food pantries in 2005."

**Mary Beverage** says, "**Joe** looks forward to and enjoys reading the Newsletter. However, he will enjoy it much more after March 15 when he gets a new lens in his right eye."

**David Dawdy** says, "I finally have some news to report. The Dawdys are doing well. **Doris** is finishing a book on the Klamath River. I'm a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee of the SFPUC and on a Lake Merced Task Force working to restore a local lake. But, the real news is that I have just been awarded the 2006 Ven Te Chow Award of the ASCE "For pioneering contributions to engineering hydrology and water resources engineering, particularly in the estimation of floods, hydrologic modeling and predictability, scaling of hydrologic variables, and for his continued active research, mentoring of younger members, and service to the profession." This follows receiving the 1999 Arid Zones Engineering Award of the ASCE, The Ray Linsley Award of the American Institute of Hydrology, and being elected a Fellow of the American Geophysical Union. Many will note that much of the award above is based on my work in the USGS many years ago. I thank in particular **Manuel Benson**, **Rolland Carter**,

**Walter Langbein**, and **Luna Leopold** for all the help they gave me as a junior researcher."

**Bob Faye** writes, "I have certainly enjoyed retirement. I have been consulting since 1998. Business got so brisk that I incorporated in 1993 as a subchapter S corporation. All of my years with the Survey have stood me in good stead and I seem to thrive in the consulting arena. Don't know if I ever will completely retire. "

**Bruce Foxworthy** reports, "On August 19, 2005, **Cleo** fell and broke her left hip, and much of our time since then has been devoted to her recovery and rehabilitation. Her type of surgical repair (3 titanium screws) takes about a year for complete "pain-free" recovery, so my time since then has been full of care giving, cooking, and housekeeping. I haven't been involved in so much of the latter two activities since bachelor days. Happily, Cleo is now nearing full mobility, just in time for camping season.

"On August 14, we had a wonderful reunion of most of the staff of the former Puget Sound Earth Sciences Applications Project, which was headquartered in Seattle during the late 1970's and early 1980's. The half-day reunion was hosted by **David Frank** (formerly with WRD, now with EPA) and wife (and writer) **Ann Spears** at their lovely home on Vashon Island near Seattle. It was an unforgettable afternoon of glorious sun and scenery, a feast that focused on David's grilled salmon, good drink, and fine fellowship.

"The Puget Sound ESA Project, a multidisciplinary effort, was staffed jointly by the Survey's Water Resources and Geologic Divisions. In addition to most of the former Geologic Division participants in the project, the reunion was attended by WRD participants **Gil Bortleson**, with wife, **Marlene**; **Bob Gillion**, currently at the Sacramento office, and of course, myself with Cleo. Also attending were **Austin Post**, retired from the old Tacoma Office of the Survey's glaciology program, with wife **Roberta**; and **Wendel Tangborn**, formerly of that same office. Also at the reunion was **Temma Pistrang**, widow of **Marvin Pistrang**, who was with our ESA project but may be best remembered by WRD colleagues for his work in Nevada.

"Once again, my appreciation for the great job of the officers and the Newsletter staff; it is truly the tie that binds us together."

**Robert (Bob) K. Gabrysch** has been chosen to receive a life-time-achievement award for his significant scientific contributions concerning the Gulf Coast aquifer system and land-surface subsidence in the greater Houston and Galveston area. The award will be presented by the Engineering, Science, & Technology Council of Houston (ECH) at their 2006 Annual Awards Banquet on May 18, 2006. His accomplishments during his career with the USGS and interaction with the Harris-Galveston

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Subsidence District, Fort Bend Subsidence District, and the City of Houston were instrumental in gaining knowledge of the complex relation between subsidence and groundwater withdrawal. Congratulations, Bob.

**Ray George** says, "Keep up the good work."

**Joseph Gonthier** says, "I'm still a full-time RV'er and still enjoying the life-style. I was planning to hang up my keys last year at age 75 but decided I enjoyed the travel too much to quit and my health has been too good to quit. My travels are mainly in the 9 western mountain states. Currently, I am in Tucson, AZ, where we met, enjoying the warm weather and getting ready to head north. Keep well."

**Al Harr** reports, "My bride, **Evelyn**, of 63 years died the morning of December 30, 2005. She had been struggling with colon cancer for 5 years. She was under Hospice Care at the time. My vocabulary is not adequate to describe the compassion and dedication the Hospice Staff has for their patients. Thank God she gave me two fine children to help me in my time of sorrow. A word to all retirees—your wife is the most precious gift you will ever have.

"I'm looking forward to the Reunion in September. I hope that many of you duffers and pros join me for the golf outing on one of the finest 27-hole courses in the Madison area."

**Mark Have** appreciates the work that everyone does in producing such a fine Newsletter.

**Maxine Heath** says, "I'm sorry to report that **Dick** is not able to make decisions or to write at this time. He is in a rehabilitation facility recovering from two very bad falls recently. The outcome is undetermined at this time but hopefully he will be home in the very near future."

**Hugh Hudson** writes, "The following is a note from W.R. (Wally) Hansen, Geologic Division, retired, to GD's retiree's newsletter that I think is appropriate for publication, verbatim, in our newsletter. Wally's compliments to GD's newsletter are applicable to our newsletter.

"I also want to recommend to WRD retirees a book by Wally titled "Greenland's Icy Fury" that is no longer in print but obtainable from better libraries or via [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com). It is a humorous, well written account of his experiences as a member of an Army weather reconnaissance team stationed on Greenland during WWII. Wally waves the glaciology, hydrology, meteorology, geology, and ethnology of Greenland into a very interesting and informative description of living and working under the most dangerous weather conditions on the planet. Wally was an enlisted man but his book deserves a 4-star rank.

"The following is Wally's note to the GD retirees' newsletter.

"Dear Newsletter:

My sincere thanks for our good work in putting out the NEWSLETTER. Let it be said that the NEWSLETTER is the one great instrument that keeps us all together as one great family. Based, however, on my rash contention that we retirees tend to take things too seriously, I dare you to print the following bit of claptrap, courtesy W.R. Hansen:

### ODE TO A STEGOSAUR

Pity the plight of the shy stegosaur  
Whose mortal remains are scattered afar  
Tho' he dined rather well upon  
Succulent grasses  
He croaked when he choked eating  
Blackstrap molasses



Thanks again for your indulgence—Wally Hansen"

**Craig Hutchinson** was presented with the 2006 Outstanding Alumni Award by the University of South Florida Geology Alumni Society on February 11. The ceremony consisted of a banquet attended by about 150 alumni and friends and a good roasting of Craig by his niece Tammy McBride, a former USGS intern, and now hydrologist with the Southwest Florida Water Management District. Professor Daniel Spangler got out his 1970 grade book and compared Craig's grades with Assistant State Geologist, Tom Scott, the first award recipient in 2002. The ceremony is a major fundraiser for the Skip Davis Foundation, which provides scholarships for geology majors at USF. Craig is also a member of the Tampa Horseshoe Club. He averages 25% ringers and invites all retirees to "come out and pitch."

**Don Kelly** says, "Keep up the good work. I enjoy the newsletter and hope to someday join you all at a luncheon. Unfortunately, I often have a conflict with the WRD luncheon schedule because Mondays and Tuesdays are sacred granddaughter days. Also be assured that all those years spent trying to make a hydrologist out of me were not entirely wasted. I just turned in a story on Berkeley Springs, in which the chemistry and flow of the springs play a prominent role."

**Vance Kennedy** writes, "I recently had a back operation that is quite new and may benefit others. Some older people have deposits around the spinal cord that result in significant pain in the lower back and legs. It is a condition called "spinal stenosis." The normal operation can last up

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to 3 hours and can occasionally result in paralysis from the waist down. The odds in that major operation are commonly stated as 90-95 percent positive. I have stalled on getting the operation for several years by getting multiple epidural injections.

"Recently, a friend told me about a new operation, just approved by the FDA last November, which is much less invasive and hazardous. It has a reported success rate of 90 percent or more. It is referred as the "NeXt Stop" in an article by Sam Whiting in the San Francisco Chronicle of February 26, 2006. The operation was developed by Dr. James Zucherman, Medical Director of the Spine Center at St. Mary's in San Francisco. A titanium device is implanted to enlarge the spinal canal.

"I was operated on March 14<sup>th</sup> by a well-known local spinal surgeon after he observed the operation once by Dr. Zucherman in San Francisco. It was the first such operation in Modesto and by my doctor. It is now 2 weeks after the operation and I appear to be "cured" of that problem. We'll see. The half-hour operation was done under local anesthesia with my being aware at all times, but under a sedative. Driving was forbidden for 2 weeks after the operation and square dancing for 8 weeks.

"My other activities involve planning a 2,000 SF fruit market for my corner where more than 20,000 cars a day stop. The road is scheduled to be a 4-lane, then a 6-lane, highway in a few years. I have 22 varieties of citrus trees on my small farm and plan a "niche" market for such fruit. I lease a couple acres for strawberries and have some apricot, cherry, nectarine, and peach trees of various varieties. It's great for someone who grew up where fruit trees froze every spring.

"There are significant local problems with developments covering prime farmland and affecting local water supplies. I have been involved in supporting local activists and politicians concerned with these problems, sometimes with success, sometimes not. I had a hand in getting a cooperative USGS groundwater study going, which has recently been expanded with additional support.

"I live alone with a son and family in the immediate vicinity, two daughters in the Bay area and a daughter in Portland, Oregon. My severe diabetes of almost 50 years causes some problems but so far not impossible to deal with. It doesn't hurt that my physician is a good friend that I can call day or night, seven days a week. It's an interesting life for a guy almost 83 years old."

**Patricia Kingrey** reports, "The year of 2005 was great. In July, my daughter, Sandra, and I went on a tour of the Hawaiian Islands for 12 days and it was a dream come true. We flew from island to island. Our tour started at Kona on the Big Island. We visited Punalu'u black sand beach. It also included a trip to Kahua Ranch, a working

cowboy ranch, plus a BBQ that evening. The Volcano Lava Fields were most interesting and while there we got to talk through a Lava Tube. Before leaving Kona, we visited Kona Coffee Living History Farm. On Kauai, we stayed at the Princeville Resort which was a luxury. Our stay there was highlighted by a helicopter tour of the island. On Maui, we took in all the sights of the island, including lunch at "Bubba Gump's" Restaurant located in Lahaina. We also went to a Luau which was fantastic. We drove up Mount Haleakala which is 9800 feet. It was very cool on top of the mountain. We left Maui and flew to Oahu. We stayed at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel which is located on Waikiki Beach. It is famous for its color of pink. Everything about it was pink. While there we went for a sail on the MaiTai Catamaran. We sailed out by Diamond Head. There were many sights to see but the most impressive was the Pearl Harbor Memorial. We also had a private showing of the Bishop Museum. In August, I went on a "Mystery Trip" with a group of seniors and ended up in Delaware at a dinner theatre and saw "Bye, Bye Birdie." From there, we went to Lancaster, PA, and saw the play "Ruth." In September, I went to Arvada, CO, and stayed with my grandson for 3 weeks while his parents were touring Italy. During the month of October, Sandra and I went to Georgia and spent time visiting relatives in and around Atlanta. It was great to see family that we hadn't seen for 4 years or more. In December, Sandra and I flew to Arvada and had Christmas with Brenda, my other daughter and family. All in all it was a wonderful year. I am looking forward to 2006 and see what it has in store for me.

"To all WRD retirees, I wish you a very Happy New Year."

**William Lichtler** reports, "**Jean** and I have been busy the past few years thanks, in part, to Mother Nature. She was generous enough to send us five hurricanes in 2004. Three visited us in Orlando and two visited us in our place near Boone, NC. Charlie piled trees all over our yard and street but only knocked out the electricity for 9 days. When Francis and Jeanne came along there were few trees left to knock down. However, Francis then paid us a visit in Boone and softened the ground so when Ivan came behind her, he knocked trees down all over the area, including a 70-foot tree completely across our house and another 70-footer between our well and our transformer, barely missing both. We have been busy cutting up lots of firewood for our magnificent fireplace in Boone. Insurance covered almost all the damage. As usual, we plan to visit our children and friends in Connecticut, New York, Virginia, Maine, Kentucky, and Florida this summer and do a little consulting on the side. All are well and Jean is pleased with her new knee. I have lunch with **Joel Kimrey** and **Harry Rodis** every once in a while. We were happy to get together with **Alan** and **Jean Brown** when they visited Orlando at Christmas. We really enjoy the Newsletter. Best regards to all our friends."

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**Jerry and Muffy Lindholm** report, "We enjoyed the Christmas and New Year's holidays in Minneapolis with our son and daughter and their families. It was good to experience a Minnesota winter again even though global warming seems very much a reality.

"I recently was asked to present a program on "Minerals and Rocks" to grandson Carl's fourth grade class in Boise. Some of the samples shown were collected and last looked at in the 1950's. Since then, they have been moved to Texas, Oklahoma, back to Minnesota, and finally to Idaho. Needless to say, some identification must now be considered tentative. The students enjoyed handling the many samples as I did during preparation. I was even asked for a repeat presentation to the sixth grade class. "Rocks are wonderful!"

**Mary Lowry** writes, "My son, Jim, is here and I will be moving to Denver with him in the spring. After all these years, his wife decided she wanted a divorce, so he and I bought a nice home out there and live together for whatever time I have left. However, I'm doing fine, so that may be a while. I am getting a defibulator in March because I was fainting occasionally in the bathroom very unexpectedly. I go everywhere and still drive. I don't stay put as some old folks do."

**Sharon Mathey** reports, "I've sold my house and moved to Leisure World of Virginia. I have a wonderful view of the Potomac River from my sunroom. It's nice not to have house maintenance bills, but instead have a condo fee. Lots of activities and not enough time for everything. Volunteering at the hospital is still a big part of my life. In May, I'm going to Australia to visit my daughter for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time. It's a long trip, but worth it."

**Richard McCullough** writes, "My how time flies. It seems like only yesterday when I retired from the USGS. Actually, it was December 1988. I've been busy with volunteer work, repairing bikes for children and adults thru RSVP, and repairing books at the local library.

"Last year, my wife celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. We went to Hawaii for a cruise of the islands, but I got sick with my headaches so I didn't enjoy the trip. I spent too much time in bed. This year we have reservations to take a River Cruise of the Rhine, Main, Danube, and the Mosel Rivers in Europe. Hope to keep healthy for the trip."

**Marshall Moss** has just been through two surgeries a week apart, the first being prostate surgery and the second brain surgery for removal of a non-malignant tumor on his pituitary. He is now out of the ICU and home but not ready to take phone calls. Those who were close to Marshall might want to send him a get-well card.

**Nancy Ordazzo** reports, "Needless to say, we are getting tired of the wet weather. The baseball season has started

and it's not much fun sitting in the rain. We still have season tickets to the Oakland A's. I think this will be our last year. It's time to support our local team—the Sacramento River Cats.

"We were kept busy in 2005. **Jack** and I celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in July and enjoyed having our scattered family together. In September, we were all together again in Richmond, VA, to attend our granddaughter's wedding. We have a few trips planned for this year. So, we keep busy."

**Dick Paulson** reports, "After 31 years in Reston, the last 27 of which in the same home, **Marion** and I left Reston and moved to St. Michaels, MD, with intermediate stops of Thanksgiving week in Duck, NC, and 6 weeks in a furnished apartment in Falls Church, VA. Both of us are struggling with leaving Reston and highly enjoyable careers—Marion as a Montessori pre-school teacher and I as a water-resources consultant—but other private-agenda activities are beckoning us to a more relaxed lifestyle on the Eastern Shore of Chesapeake Bay. Continuing a focus on Asia since the severe floods in the Mekong River Basin in 2000, my consulting required me to travel three times in 2005 to the Mekong River Commission countries of Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand. I also ventured as far as Katamandu, Nepal and Lhasa, Tibet on two of the trips. This was somewhat reduced from traveling 4 or 5 times per year during the preceding several years. On a much-reduced basis and through a consulting contract with the National Weather Service, I'll continue to support Asia Flood Network (AFN), a U.S. Agency for International Development program to transfer Survey and NWS technologies to Asia. I liaise a lot with **Verne Schneider**, Jim Verdin at the EROS Data Center, and numerous NWS staff in supporting AFN. Traveling to Asia has been a kick; I've made numerous good friends, been to Angkor Wat, Luang Prabang, Hanoi, and other fascinating venues, enjoyed wonderful cuisines, and (I hope) made at least a small contribution to mitigating Asian flood-related problems. Even though I have visited rural villages in some of these countries, I've been very fortunate to have avoided pesky little flare-ups of SAARS and Avian Flu during these travels, though bad food on a United Airlines trans-Pacific flight gave me my worst health moments in many years. Marion and I look forward to settling in our new home in St. Michaels, seeing more of the family and friends, and traveling on holiday to a few of the places I've been to in Asia."

**Bud Peirce** says, "I wish I could report, as other WRD retirees do, that I have taken ocean cruises, visited exotic foreign lands, or other exciting adventures, but "tam not so. Those days are long gone. Now, halfway through my 95<sup>th</sup> year, my biggest news item, if anyone is interested, is that I am still alive. As a retiree in 1968, I now seldom recognize a familiar name in the "News of Retirees" section of your excellent publication. It seems that, to paraphrase a

## NEWS OF RETIREES

famous General of the Army, "old stream-gagers never die, they just drift away."

"Three years ago, my daughter and her husband, both retired and moved to Panama City, and now live only ten minutes away. Thanks to their loving efforts to provide a life-support system, I am still able to live in my own home. They do my housekeeping, laundry, grocery shopping, feed the six feral cats that live in my backyard, and see that the prescriptions are refilled for the nine medicines I take every day. A few more medications and I think I can stop eating regular food and subsist on pills alone.

"Six months ago, on my 94<sup>th</sup> birthday, I failed the exam to renew my driver's license because of poor vision and had to trade in the faithful old (1984) Buick on a walker. Let me tell you, the loss of one's personal means of transportation these days entails a major change in one's life-style. As some wag remarked, "growing old is not for sissies." He had it right.

"I recall that when on my high-school track team, I could run 440 yards in 56 seconds. Now, if I could push the walker that far, it would take me 22 minutes. Do the math, and you will find that my present warp 9 speed in one foot per second. Recently, I read that a mature cockroach in good condition and fleeing a spray gun could top out at five feet per second. What a humiliating come-down to be so far outclassed by a mere bug—and a rather unsavory bug at that!

"Lately, it seems that Florida is becoming the preferred target for devastating hurricanes. Fortunately, Panama City has escaped the full fury of the many hurricanes striking the states this year. A tornado associated with hurricane Dennis did cause serious damage to a small area of town and Ivan caused some beach erosion besides bringing down my radio antenna, putting my ham radio station off the air for about 2 weeks. But, our good luck will not last forever. A few years ago, a friend of mine retired and moved to Utah. At the time, I thought that anyone who voluntarily moved from Florida to Utah must surely be mentally deranged. Now, I am not so sure."

**Georgina M. de Pineiro** says, "I really enjoy receiving news about retirees. This year my husband and I celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on a cruise in the Caribbean. Time really flies when you are having fun! A big "hello" to all those that might remember me. I met many extraordinary people in my 29 years with the WRD and I miss them all."

**Beverly Pittarelli** thanks all the hard working officers and staff for their efforts.

**Doug Posson** reports that he and **Linda** are spending about 3 months in France, currently down where the Pyrenees drop into the Mediterranean. Picasso country!

**John Ritter** writes, "I'm still keeping busy. Lately I edited poetry that a local poet is preparing for publication. Last year a piece I wrote about my father's death was published in a book of memoirs. **Judy** and I travel to Gainesville, FL, as often as we can to see daughter Allison and family. My other daughter, Amy, is an engineer with Waterborne in Leesburg, VA. I've been a member of Clifton Park's Environmental Conservation commission for 9 years and am still active with the local library, which is building a new library three times the size of the old one. My best to all. See you in Madison."

**Fred Ruggles** says, "All is well in the Land of Canaan. I am still able to take care of the household chores, as well as being a member of the Inland Wetland and Conservation Commission; Hoosatonnia River Commission, and active in my church. Travel has taken me to Florida, Virginia, and Maryland. I am looking forward to an active spring."

**Carroll Saboe** reports, "**Betty** and I are fine now having just recovered from the flu bug. I am in the process of screening slides and pictures from the 50's to the 80's and am about ready to record them on DVD's so, should be ready to pass out copies soon to my children and family. It has been a worthwhile experience. Our daughter Sue lives in Indianapolis and son, John is in San Diego. Betty and I plan to go to the WRD Retirees Reunion in Madison this year."

**Stan Sauer** says, "**Virginia** and I are both doing well and are looking forward to enjoying good health in 2006. We enjoyed a recent visit from **Larry** and **Rita Martens**. They were in Texas for the promotion ceremonies for their son, Ted, at Fort Hood and spent several days with us. It was great to catch up on news and talk about the "good old days."

**Bill Schneider** reports, "I'm still "perking along" and arguing with my urologist who keeps pushing these \$5-plus-pills that "may-or-may-not work" in six months-or-so. Fell from a ladder last October, breaking the humerus in my right arm and tearing the rotator cuff. Right now I'm finishing up some phys-ed and will have to decide on surgery or live with limited use of the arm. It's not much of a handicap, though - I can do just about everything with it except raise my hand much above the top of my head. I'm still living independently in my own home with a small wood-working shop in the garage just about a mile from my daughter's place, get to go camping occasionally on weekends with her and some of her friends, and also spend some time at a hot springs resort spa out in the desert. I still enjoy the Newsletter, although I must admit there are darned few names in it now that I recognize."

**Elizabeth Smith** writes, "I really enjoy the WRD Retirees Newsletter. There are a few names I remember as being co-workers of my late husband, **Earl**. Just checking the

## NEWS OF RETIREES

newsletter staff, I'm sure that **Loren Young** had an occasional supper with us. Earl was working in the early 50's for U.S. BR Yak Inca Project and Loren was with the USGS.

"Cheryl, my widowed daughter, now shares my home and teaches in the local school district. During Christmastime we attended a performance of the Nutcracker at the newly renovated Opera House in Boston which really put me in the Christmas spirit. Cheryl and I continue our water exercise. I went x-country skiing on a trail on Nature Conservatory land in Durham, NH, with my friend, Beverly. It was not as easy as I anticipated. The falling down is OK—it's the getting up.

"I celebrated my 85<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 9<sup>th</sup>. My cousin, Barbara, and I rented a pavilion in a very nice city park so there was space for everyone to stretch. Food consisted of picnic fare and pretty cakes. All the children and grandchildren and six great grandchildren attended.

"Cheryl and my granddaughter Nina and I took a round about way to Idaho Falls, Lake Chalan, Applets and Cotlets factory outlet, Coulee Dam, Spokane, a day in Colfax for a family gathering, Lake Cour D'Alene, Lolo Pass and other parts of the Lewis and Clark Trail. We also visited Glacier National Park. The weather and scenery were beautiful. We eventually made our way back to Haverhill, MA."

**Joseph Upson** says, "It's always interesting to read the Newsletter, and I check over what some of the people are doing, but it's getting harder and harder to find anyone whose name I recognize, let alone anyone I really knew. **Bobbie** and I don't travel any more, except within the State of New Hampshire, and that mainly to doctors' and dentists' appointments. Until recently, we have been doing some regular exercise three times a week at a local "Wellness Center," but that has been interrupted by a hernia operation for me, from which I am about recovered, and a knee problem. We hope to get back to it soon.

"I had a very nice telephone call from **Bob Schneider**, and it's good to know that he is doing well. I also talked with **Wolfgang Swarzenski**. He and **Regula** are doing pretty well, living in an apartment in San Francisco near their physician daughter.

"My son, Walter, and wife live in Yardley, PA, an 8-hour drive if you abide pretty much by the speed limits. Our daughter and her husband live in Casper, WY, so we don't see them often, but they do manage to come "out East" once or twice a year. The Manchester, NH, airport, about 85 miles from where we live, is a good place to fly into.

"Normally, we keep fairly busy. We are active in the Church we belong to and as many of you know, the day-to-day business of living seems to take up more and more time.

"Best regards to everyone and I look forward to the next Newsletter."

**Steve Van Denburgh** says he belongs to many (too many) organizations, but WRD is a near-the-top favorite.

**Frank Welder** reports, "At the Grand Junction Geological Society joint meeting with the Mesa State Geology Club, Wednesday, March 22, 2006, I spoke on the "Study of the Delta in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana Before and After Katrina."

"As a graduate student at Louisiana State University in the early 1950's, I was a member of a small research group funded by the Office of Naval Research to study navigability and traffic ability of the Louisiana Coast. My area of study was essentially Plaquemines Parish from New Orleans to about 100 miles downriver to the Gulf. This was the subject of my PhD degree.

"In late January of 2006, I returned to my old study area at the invitation of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to observe the effects of subsidence, salt water intrusion and Hurricane Katrina."

**Frank Wells** writes, "All is well here in Liberty Hill. **Cindy** and I enjoy life in the country and being amateur farmers. We are active in our seniors group, AKA, "Over the Hill Gang" and are still doing meals on wheels in the Liberty Hill area. "

**Roger Wolff** says he is still doing Christmas trees but more and more of it with hired help. At "choose and cut" time, **Bill Mann** is the Chief Salesman!"

**Tom Yorke** reports, "**Steve Blanchard** made a presentation describing the current SW program and the Water Resources budget to about 30 retirees at the February luncheon meeting. At the March meeting **Donna Myers**, NAWQA Chief, described the recently published analysis of about 32,000 pesticide determinations. That analysis has been well received by scientists and other agencies. It shows that the decision to ban chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides, such as DDT, has been effective in that analysis of bed material and aquatic organisms show a dramatic decline in DDT residue over the past decades. At the April, meeting 70 members/spouses celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of **George Ferguson**. Additionally Dave Powers, GD, gave a wonderful presentation describing the effects of the meteor that hit the south end of the DE-MD-VA peninsula 37 million years ago. At the May meeting, **Norm Hutchinson**, who is currently working for the Department of Public Works in Purcellville, VA, gave an outstanding presentation describing the functioning of a public water utility in a small town."

## 2006 WRD Retirees Reunion

Planning continues for the WRD Retirees Reunion, September 21-24, 2006, at the downtown Madison Concourse Hotel. Rooms are still available at a discounted rate for the Reunion. Discounted rooms for early registrants are no longer available; however, there are still some post-Reunion rooms. The planning committee suggests that those people planning on coming to Madison in September make their hotel reservations soon so as to ensure a room at the Concourse. Reservations can be made by calling the Concourse Hotel toll free at 1-800-356-8293 or at 608-257-6000. Room rates are \$109 for single or double rooms. Mention that you will be attending the "WRD Retirees Reunion" to get this special rate. The hotel has a website at [www.concoursehotel.com](http://www.concoursehotel.com) with more information.

The Planning Committee would like to clarify a few items. Parking will be included with your room rate without additional charge. The Friday buffet will be a noontime soup and salad affair, following the business meeting. There are no formal plans for Friday night. A list of nearby restaurants will be included in your registration packets. Make sure you indicate a second choice of field trips. Any shuffling will be based on dates of registration. We would like to call attention to our web site at <http://wi.water.usgs.gov/reunion/index.htm>. Considerable information regarding the Reunion, Madison, and the Concourse Hotel will be found there, including an up-to-date list of Reunion attendees. Lastly, if you are interested or willing to help out at the Reunion, we are looking for a few good volunteers. Just express your willingness on the back of the registration form, or send us a note.

### Optional Reunion Tour - Leopold Shack and Farm

Admired by an ever-growing number of readers and imitated by hundreds of writers, ***A Sand County Almanac***, written by Aldo Leopold, serves as one of the cornerstones for modern conservation science, policy, and ethics. Edited by Aldo's son, Luna (former Chief Hydrologist of the Water Resources Division), and published in 1949 – one year after Aldo's death – it has become a classic in the field equaled in its lasting stature only by Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. Through science, history, humor, and prose, Aldo Leopold utilizes *A Sand County Almanac* and its call for a Land Ethic to communicate the true connection between people and the natural world. The Shack, a re-built chicken coop along the Wisconsin River where the Leopold family stayed during weekend retreats, is the 'birthplace' of the essays in *A Sand County Almanac*. As the primary advocate and interpreter of the Leopold legacy, the Aldo Leopold Foundation manages the original Leopold farm and now-famous Shack (see [www.aldoleopold.org](http://www.aldoleopold.org)).

A number of attendees at the Madison Reunion are planning an early arrival on Wednesday, September 20, to allow more time for visiting with fellow attendees. An optional tour is being set up for Thursday morning to visit the Leopold Shack and Farm near Baraboo, WI. The tour will last about 2 hours and includes the history and philosophy of Aldo Leopold, a visit to the Shack, and a walk through restored prairie and woods. The Foundation recommends a contribution of \$15/person for non-members and offers a membership special that includes the tour, membership, and a copy of the new photo-illustrated *A Sand County Almanac* for \$35.

Participants will leave the Concourse Hotel at 9:00 AM for a 1-hour drive to Baraboo, enjoy a 2-hour tour, and return to Madison in early afternoon. The Shack and surrounding land are undeveloped; there is no drinking water, no bathroom facility, no telephone, and parking is very limited. Transportation will be by car pool and each car can decide on an enroute rest stop and/or lunch stop on the return to Madison. Each group of 20 will have a tour guide and a maximum of two groups will be accommodated. To provide the Foundation with a head count, please **reserve your place with notification to Bill Emmett ([w.emmett@att.net](mailto:w.emmett@att.net) or 303-795-7510) by mid-August**. Participants may pay individually on the day of the tour.

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**2006 WRD RETIREES REUNION, MADISON, WISCONSIN**  
**SEPTEMBER 21-24, 2006**

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAILADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION FEE**

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$30.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$40.00 per person after Aug. 15, 2006; refunds available prior to this date)

**THURSDAY, SEP 21 BRAT FEST, MEET & GREET**, (Brat and/or Chicken, Vegetables, Chips, Cookie, Beer, Milk, or Soft Drink)

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$16.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**FRIDAY, SEP 22 SOUP AND SALAD BUFFET** (choice of two soups, pasta salad, bread sticks, salad bar, dessert bar)

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$16.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**GOLF**

Number planning to play Friday afternoon \_\_\_\_\_

**SATURDAY NIGHT GALA BANQUET, SEP 23** (Entrees include salad, Vegetables, Dessert, rolls w/Butter, Coffee/Tea)

**PRIME BEEF** served with garlic-mashed potatoes

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$41.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**WISCONSIN WALLEYE** served with wild rice

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$35.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**VEGETARIAN ENTRÉE** (chef's choice)

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$35.00 per person  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOUR SELECTIONS:** Selections will be honored to the extent possible. Pay for first choice but indicate a second choice.

**WISCONSIN RIVER TOUR** (Includes transportation, entrance fees, and casino lunch)

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$45.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT TOUR** (Includes transportation, entrance fees, and box lunch)

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$41.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**HOUSE ON THE ROCK TOUR** (includes transportation and entrance fees, lunch on your own)

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$49.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**MADISON AREA TOUR** (Includes transportation, entrance fees, and tour guide)

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$18.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED** (Registration, Brat Fest, Lunch, Dinner, and Tour)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form, with your check payable to "2006 RETIREES REUNION" to:

**USGS RETIREES**  
**8505 RESEARCH WAY**  
**MIDDLETON, WI 53562**

**FOR QUESTIONS CONTACT:** Dale Cotter at [dgcott@att.net](mailto:dgcott@att.net), phone 608-848-2946; Marv Sherrill at [sherrill@chorus.net](mailto:sherrill@chorus.net); or Warren Gebert at [wagebert@usgs.gov](mailto:wagebert@usgs.gov).

**REMINDERS:** All meals and events include gratuities. Reserve hotel rooms early at the Concourse Hotel in Madison, telephone 1-800-356-8293 or 608-257-6000. Mention "WRD RETIREES REUNION" or "WRD 0921" when reserving.

**Proposal for WRD Retirees to Sponsor a Scholarship for Hydrologic Technicians**  
**By Jim Biesecker, President**

Hydrologic Technicians enjoy a well-deserved reputation of delivering high-quality data products that meet local, state, and National needs. Praise for these employees comes from groups both internal and external to the USGS. These folks are often referred to as the "backbone" of the water program. I'm sure each one of you can recall a Hydrologic Technician that had a tremendous positive impact on your career. I most certainly can.

Several institutions currently offer university level training specific for Hydrologic Technicians: GateWay Community College in Phoenix, AZ; Vermilion Community College in Ely, MN; Spokane Community College, in Spokane, WA; and Western Dakota Technical Institute in Rapid City, SD, are schools that USGS has experience with. They each offer a two-year program that leads to an Associate Degree as a Hydrologic Technician.

After discussion among the elected officers of WRD Retirees, we are proposing that WRD Retirees establish a scholarship for a second-year student who has demonstrated the ability to earn good grades, is a good citizen, has interest in USGS employment, and preferably has successfully completed one summer of work with USGS and is being recommended by their supervisor to continue with USGS upon successful completion of their degree. The amount of the scholarship would be \$1,500. Funds for the scholarship would come from the WRD Retirees treasury. We will work with the above listed institutions to provide us with a list of candidates. WRD Retirees will convene a group to make the final selection. The USGS Human Resources Offices work very closely with each of the schools listed above and has expressed a willingness to assist WRD Retirees in any way with our scholarship winner selection process.

Please complete the ballot below regarding the proposed scholarship:

\*\*\*\*\*

WRD Retirees should establish the Hydrologic Technician Scholarship \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

The annual level of funding should be \$1,500 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
(If you vote no, list the funding level you propose. \$\_\_\_\_\_)

I support increasing the annual dues to \$8 to fund this program \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
(This would be an increase of only \$2 above the current \$6 dues.)

Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the above three questions regarding the proposed WRD Retiree Scholarship for Hydrologic Technicians and send your completed ballot to the Secretary, WRD Retirees, P.O. Box 280, Herndon, VA 20172-0280, by June 16, 2006. Thank you!

We will announce the results of the scholarship vote in the August 2006 Edition of the WRD Retirees Newsletter. Also, please complete the "News of Retirees" blank on the back of this page.

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**NEWS OF RETIREES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER**

Please use the space below to let us know what's happening in your life. Your friends and colleagues in WRD Retirees would like to hear about what you have been doing! Thanks.

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# MEMORIAL

## Luna B. Leopold

### 1915 – 2006

Luna Leopold, Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, and former Chief Hydrologist of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), died of congestive heart failure at his home in Berkeley on February 23, 2006. He was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on October 8, 1915. He was the son of Aldo Leopold, a leading figure in American conservation, whose essays in his posthumous *A Sand County Almanac* were edited by Luna and are classic in the conservation literature. His mother was Estella Bergere, a member of the Luna family, original Spanish settlers of New Mexico and who gave Luna his great love of the American Southwest. Luna received his BS in Civil Engineering from the University of Wisconsin, Madison (1936), his MS in Physics-Meteorology from the University of California, Los Angeles (1944), and his PhD in Geology from Harvard University (1950).



Luna's first professional work was during 1936-1940 with the Soil Conservation Service in Albuquerque conducting pioneering studies on analyses of precipitation and water-runoff data. During 1940-1946, he served with the U.S. Army Weather Service, Army Air Force, rising from Private to Captain. During his military service, he helped develop new techniques of predicting probable weather patterns, the basis of present-day probability forecasting in weather prediction. He was Chief Meteorologist for the Pineapple Research Institute, Hawaii, during 1946-1949. It was during this time that his research in cloud physics led to the fact that above-freezing clouds could be seeded to cause precipitation, an application that has been widely copied. During 1950-1973, he worked with the USGS as Hydraulic Engineer (1950-1956), Chief Hydrologist (1957-1966), and Senior Research Hydrologist (1966-1973). His next positions were Professor (1972-1986) and Professor Emeritus (1987-2006) at the University of California. After retirement from the USGS in 1973, Leopold maintained part-time and volunteer status with the USGS; among other activities, he co-authored two USGS Professional Papers at ages 82 and 89.

Leopold was widely recognized as one of the Nation's most distinguished earth scientists and his accomplishments are recognized throughout the world. During his leadership as Chief Hydrologist of the USGS, he transformed the Water Resources Division from a data-collecting agency to the Nation's premier water research and information agency. Leopold initiated major changes in organizational structure, operating policies, and recruitment practices leading to interdisciplinary approaches to scientific problems. Indeed, many past and present employees of the Water Resources Division (now Water Resources Discipline) chose the USGS for employment because of the forward-looking visions expressed by Leopold.

In a 1984 tribute, former USGS Director, Thomas B. Nolan, said, "Luna Leopold went far beyond providing the right attitude in scientific leadership. He is widely acclaimed for his personal contributions to scientific study related to the environment. Research such as his studies on South Florida's Jetport or the Trans-Alaska Pipeline established precedents and set the guidelines for today's (Environmental Impact Statements)."

Leopold wrote six books and authored some 200 technical papers. His contributions to science are evidenced by his many awards and honors. In addition to six honorary doctoral degrees, Luna's awards include the U.S. Department of Interior Distinguished Service Medal (1958), Rockefeller Public Service Award (1972), Warren Prize from the National Academy of Science (1973), Horton Medal of the American Geophysical Union (1992), Penrose Medal of the Geological Society of America (1994), Ian Campbell Medal of the American Geological Institute (2000), and was posthumously awarded the prestigious Benjamin Franklin Medal for Earth and Environmental Science in April 2006. In awarding the 1991 National Medal of Science to Leopold, former President George H.W. Bush said, "Your rare blending of visionary fundamental research with practical reality to meet the Nation's water needs has been a powerful force in bringing constructive attention to the serious problems of water management and the conservation of our environment."

Leopold had a special fondness for Wyoming and built a cabin overlooking Fremont Lake and a home on the New Fork River, both near Pinedale. He was an outdoorsman and enjoyed his hobbies of hiking, horseback riding, camping, and cooking in a Dutch oven. It was near here that Luna conducted much of his research, mentored his colleagues, and guided numerous students under his supervision.

Luna was preceded in death by his wife of 30 years, Barbara Beck Nelson Leopold who died in 2004. He is survived by his first wife, Carolyn Leopold Michaels; three siblings, A. Carl Leopold, Nina Leopold Bradley, and Estella B. Leopold; four children: son, Bruce Leopold; daughter, Madelyn Leopold; stepson, T. Leverett Nelson; stepdaughter, Carolyn T. Nelson; and two grandchildren. His brother, A. Starker Leopold, died in 1983.

Memorials may be sent to the Luna B. Leopold Geomorphology Fund, University of Wisconsin Foundation, P.O. Box 8860, Madison, WI 53708-9960, or to the Aldo Leopold Foundation ([www.aldoleopold.org](http://www.aldoleopold.org)).

By Bill Emmett

# MEMORIAL

## James F. Wilson, Jr.

### 1933 – 2006

James F. "Jim" Wilson, Jr. lost a 4-year battle with Multiple Myeloma on February 5, 2006, at his home in Cheyenne, WY. His final days were spent with his family by his side. During those last days, he and the family received numerous phone calls and e-mails from former co-workers, which they all greatly appreciated, especially Jim.

Jim was born May 25, 1933, in Detroit, MI. He attended Detroit Redford High School, where he was on the Student Council, played Varsity Football, and was Senior Class President. After graduating, he enrolled at Michigan College of Mining and Technology in Houghton, MI. In college, he was active in ROTC and was Cadet Colonel (Corps Commander) his senior year. He graduated with a B.S. in Geological Engineering in 1955. He then served two years of active duty in the U.S. Army. The Army years took him to Fort Belvoir, VA, Fort Knox, KY, and Hanau, Germany.

After Jim's military service he began his long and distinguished career with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). His first assignment was as a Hydraulic Engineer, Nevada Subdistrict, Utah District, Surface Water Branch in Carson City, NV. He transferred in 1960 to the Plans and Operations Section, Surface Water Branch, Washington, D.C. Jim began his career interest in dye tracing in 1963, when he began working for the Hydrologic Studies Section, Surface Water Branch in Arlington, VA. During this period (1966), he also completed his Master of Engineering Administration (MEA) from George Washington University. From 1966-1967, he worked in the Office of Remote Sensing which involved initial work on EROS (later, Landsat) Satellite.

Jim transferred to Cheyenne, WY, in 1967 as Chief, Hydraulics Section, and from 1968-1970 as Chief of the Hydrologic Studies Section. From 1970-1988, Jim served as Assistant District Chief during which time he was Acting District Chief for a combined total of 2 years during the change of 4 District Chiefs. Jim retired in 1994 with 38 years of Federal Service.

Jim was nationally recognized as an expert in the use of fluorescent dyes in time-of-travel and dispersion studies in streams and rivers. He developed field, laboratory, analytical, and reporting techniques for this type of study. Jim personally conducted time-of-travel studies on major river systems, including the Potomac, Great Miami, Mississippi, Missouri, and Wind/Bighorn. He also conducted the emergency dye measurement of the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans following the devastation of Hurricane Betsy in 1965. In addition, he developed a portable dye-dilution method of obtaining discharge for use where it was impractical to use standard stream gauging methods. He has authored or co-authored over 25 publications related to his work in the use of fluorescent dyes in hydrologic investigations, including Techniques of Water Resources Investigations (TWRI) manuals. Jim had an international reputation as an expert in Time-of-Travel Methods and was invited to lecture on the application of dye tracing at the Fourth General Assembly of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics in Berne, Switzerland.

Jim made many more contributions to the study of hydrology and hydraulics during his career with the USGS. He was involved with Geographic Information System (GIS) Coordination with interagency cooperation with the Forest Service and Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. Jim also led the effort to eliminate the huge backlog of unfunded reports, due to the rapid decline in program and staff at the end of the energy boom in the late 1970's. In 10 years, the overdue reports were reduced from 35 to 1!

Jim's retirement was really not much of a change in his work routine. He continued as a Volunteer for Science, Wyoming District until a few weeks before his death. He had volunteered 10,000 hours of service at that time.

As a volunteer for Science, Jim continued to review manuscripts, reorganized the District Library, and created an Online Bibliography for all reports relating to Wyoming hydrology. Many of the District Chiefs Jim worked for considered him the "Corporate Memory" for the District. This knowledge was relayed to numerous employees over the years. In 1985, Jim received the U.S. Department of the Interior Superior Service Award and in 1990 he received the Meritorious Service Award.

Jim and wife Judy were very active in the Boy Scouts (Jim was an Eagle Scout) and the Presbyterian Church. In recent years, Jim was active with his grandson's Bantam Ice Hockey team and served as statistician for the team both at home and away games in the Rocky Mountain area.

Jim is survived by his wife of 47 years, Judy; a son, John Wilson of New York City; and daughter, Susan Hesson and husband Dan of Cheyenne; a brother, John Wilson and wife, Barbara of Des Moines, IA; one grandson, one granddaughter, and one great-granddaughter of Cheyenne.

By Joel Schuetz



## **DIVISION NEWS**

Note to WRD Retirees: Recent retirees automatically become members of WRD Retirees. If you know any of these folks who recently joined our ranks, reach out and welcome them aboard. Please invite them to your Local Meetings!

### **Recent Retirements**

#### **Northeastern Region**

**Deborah S. Snavelly Lumia**, Hydrologist, 50 Bayberry Drive, Ballston Spa, New York 12020, 02/03/06  
**Bronius Nemickas**, Supervisory Hydrologist, 12 Pennington Drive, Huntington, New York 11743, 02/03/06  
**Gilberto Pena-Cruz**, Hydrologic Technician, 50 Somerville Street, Brentwood, New York 11717, 02/03/06  
**Albert T. Rutledge**, Hydrologist, 11052 Thrush Ridge Road, Reston, VA 20191, 01/31/06  
**Anthony G. Spinello**, Hydrologist, 42 Maple Drive, Great Neck, New York 11021, 02/03/06

#### **Southeastern Region**

**Beth Marie Wrege**, Hydrologist, 5421 Cornwallis Road, Garner, North Carolina 27529, 02/18/06

#### **Central Region**

**Wallace G. Degiacomo**, Chemist, 2909 S. Monaco Parkway, Denver, Colorado, 01/31/06  
**Ione A. Duray**, Budget Technician, 2501 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58201, 01/31/06  
**Lawanna M. Kiser**, Hydrologic Technician, 5314 Pacific Road, San Angelo, Texas 76903, 04/03/06  
**Thomas J. Leman**, Hydrologist, 1400 W. Poison Spider Road, Casper, Wyoming 82604, 03/03/06

#### **Western Region**

**William L. Boults**, Hydrologic Technician, 601 Chablis Court, Ukiah, California 95482, 01/31/06  
**Charles E. Lamb**, Hydrologic Technician, 6061 15th Avenue, Sacramento, California 95820, 03/31/06  
**N. Kenneth Nellson**, Hydrologic Technician, 9843 N. Majestic Vista Lane, Tucson, Arizona 85743, 02/28/06  
**Pamela I. O'Daniel**, Admin Operations Assistant, 4016 Cheyenne Street, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001, 02/18/06  
**Cynthia J. Smith**, Hydrologic Technician, 1939 Spanish Valley Drive, Moab, Utah 84532, 04/01/06  
**Paul F. Woods**, Hydrologist, 5051 West Bainbridge Court, Boise, Idaho 84532, 04/01/06

#### **Headquarters**

**Kenneth J. Lanfear**, Supervisory Hydrologist, 1648 Wainwright Drive, Reston, Virginia 22090, 03/31/06

## DIVISION NEWS

### “WHAT'S NEW IN RESEARCH”

#### **Matt Larsen, WRD Chief Scientist for Hydrology, kicks off a new series for the Newsletter**

This is the first in what will hopefully be regular short summaries of current WRD research; however, I would first like to introduce myself. I earned a BS in Geology in 1976 from Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio and began my U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) career 1977 with the Branch of Pacific and Arctic Marine Geology, Geologic Division, Menlo Park, California. I was a physical science technician and participated in a study of natural hazards to petroleum development in the Northern Bering Sea, Alaska. I worked for the San Francisco Department of Public Health from 1981 until 1987 when I was hired by Allen Zack, then District Chief of the USGS Water Resources Division in Puerto Rico. I served as project chief on a study of landslide hazards in eastern Puerto Rico. I became the Luquillo, Puerto Rico, Water, Energy, and Biogeochemical Budgets (WEBB) project chief in 1990 and in 1993 was selected by the USGS Graduate Training Program to attend graduate school. I earned a PhD in Geography at the University of Colorado in Boulder in 1997 and continued my WEBB project responsibilities until 2000 when I became the USGS Caribbean District Chief, managing USGS water resources programs in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In 2003, I transferred to a USGS headquarters staff position in the Office of the Chief Scientist for Hydrology where I provided support to the Chief Scientist, Mary Jo Baedecker, and the Associate Director for Water, Bob Hirsch. In 2005, I was named as Chief Scientist for Hydrology. (More information about the NRP is on line at <http://water.usgs.gov/nrp/>)

Here are two recent WRD research highlights:

#### **Amargosa Desert: Studies of Nitrogen and Carbon**

Deserts have long been thought to be nutrient poor, but most traditional studies of nitrogen cycling in terrestrial ecosystems have examined the biologically active soil zone, which is considered to extend to about one meter below the surface. A 2003 report by USGS and other scientists on the Amargosa and other deserts noted that substantial quantities of nitrogen as nitrate have accumulated below the soil zone over thousands of years, and that arid regions in the southwestern United States contain a large reservoir of bioavailable nitrogen that had been previously overlooked. As a result of this discovery, it is believed that the earth's global reservoir of soil nitrate is up to 16% greater than previously estimated. This work was led by the newest NRP hire, Dr. Michelle Walvoord, who won the GSA Outstanding Woman in Science award in 2005. (More information about this work is on line, at <http://water.usgs.gov/nrp/highlights/amargosa.html>)

#### **Water Quality Study in the Boulder Creek Watershed, Colorado Compares Past, Present and Future Water Quality**

If recent news about what chemical compounds have been found in streams and lakes today prompts thoughts that water quality was better way back when, think again. A newly released study by the USGS, prepared in cooperation with the City of Boulder, Colorado, provides an overview of water quality in the Boulder Creek Watershed today and how it has changed over 160 years. Gold mining records, typhoid cases, and historical accounts, such as a 1905 newspaper article claiming that drinking Boulder Creek water “gave the sensation of swallowing rope,” were used to determine water quality in the Boulder Creek Watershed since 1859. The report addresses the impacts of land use change, water diversions, urban runoff, and wastewater effluent on water quality throughout the watershed. *State of the Watershed: Water Quality of Boulder Creek, Colorado*, by Sheila Murphy, 2006, USGS Circular 1284, is available online at <http://pubs.water.usgs.gov/circ1284/>. Also, see [http://water.usgs.gov/nrp/highlights/boulder\\_creek.html](http://water.usgs.gov/nrp/highlights/boulder_creek.html).

## IN MEMORIAM

**W. Harry Doyle**, age 63, died April 20, 2006 at his home. He obtained a Masters Degree from Louisiana State University. He began his career with the Water Resources Division in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1965. He was instrumental in the development of the Central Laboratory Data Management system and was with the Laboratory from its start up in Salt Lake City, Utah, through the move to Denver, Colorado. He then worked at the Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility in Mississippi. He retired in 1997 as Memphis Subdistrict Chief after a 33-year career. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Dorothy; two daughters, Kimberly Bell and Angel Jones; two granddaughters, Morgan and Madison Jones; a brother, Jerry Wayne; and his mother, Era Doyle. Harry and Dorothy spent the last two years enjoying traveling the USA in their motor home. Memorial contributions may be made to St Jude's Children's Hospital, telephone 901-578-2070. Please indicate in memory of W. Harry Doyle. Cards and letters may be sent to Dorothy in care of their daughter, Kimberly Bell, 6740 Player Drive, Olive Branch, MS 38654.

**Wallace N. Jibson**, age 90, passed away on January 18, 2006 in Logan, Utah. He was born July 15, 1915 in Grantsville, Utah. Wally moved with his family to Declo, Idaho, when he was four years old. Growing up in the depression years with hard work and little money, Wally enrolled at Utah State University. He had many interruptions while in school. Wally served in WW II as a Navy Photo Intelligence Officer. While attached to a Naval Air Reconnaissance Squadron in Guadalcanal, Wally volunteered in response to an Army request to serve in the 14<sup>th</sup> Army Corps on Bougainville Island. He was assigned to the G-2 (intelligence) staff of the commanding general, where he served for 3 months. During these lapses in his school effort, Wally had courted a former Declo neighbor, Minnie (Mickey) Preston. Their marriage on July 8, 1939 was an interruption he never regretted. After the war, they returned to Logan, where he graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering in 1946. Wally entered on duty with the Surface Water Branch at Logan, Utah, on September 23, 1946, on a reinstatement from prior service with the Agriculture Department, following his discharge from the U.S. Naval Reserve. His entire career was spent in Logan, Utah. He retired December 28, 1979 and served on a temporary appointment until September 1980. He worked as an engineer and hydrologist with the USGS. He also served under a cooperative program with the Tri-State Bear River Compact Commission in drafting and administration of the interstate river compact. He was appointed by President Gerald Ford as Federal Representative to serve as Chairman of the Commission, serving for seven years. He then was appointed as the first Engineer-manager of the Commission and served until his retirement in 1989. Other activities included Utah Society of Professional Engineers, Governor's Bear River Task Force, Cache County Water Advisory Board, and River Heights Lion's Club. He is survived by his loving wife of 66 years; his children, Cathy (Scott) Wilcock, Ron (Janet) Jibson; eight grandchildren; and two great grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother, Cal Jibson.

**Robert A. Krieger** of Doraville, Georgia, passed away on March 15, 2006, after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease. He was 87. Bob was predeceased by his beloved wife of 55 years, Ruth Keller Krieger. He is survived by six children, Kathy Krieger (Dan Kendrick), Mary Strauch (Austin), Jan Leonard (Steve), Jeanne Kraus (Rob), Joanie Bishop (Don) and Tom Krieger (Lori), twenty-four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. Bob was born June 12, 1918, and grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota. He has degrees in Chemistry and Soil Sciences from St. Thomas College and earned a PhD from the University of Minnesota in Hydrology. He retired from the USGS after 30 years of service. Bob was widely known for his spectacular yard and gardening abilities. He belonged to the Men's Club at Holy Cross Catholic Church and was a key player in landscaping the grounds. He also volunteered in helping Latino immigrants. In addition to gardening, Bob was an avid reader (particularly westerns), a bird watcher in later years, and loved to show "company" around Atlanta. He also was a big fan of the Atlanta Braves. Bob's greatest joy was his family. As an only child, he was thrilled to marry into the larger Keller family from Nebraska and then to have six children of his own. Bob had a great sense of humor and was a dedicated husband, father, and grandfather. He will be greatly missed by his family. A Funeral Mass was held at Holy Cross Catholic Church with Rev. Msgr. Paul Fogarty as Celebrant. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to: The Alzheimer's Assn, (800) 272-3900 or Crossroads Hospice of Atlanta 770-270-9598.

**Leslie W. Lenfest**, age 91, a year-long resident of Annapolis, Maryland, and formerly of Bel Air, Maryland, died of complications from pneumonia on April 12, 2006, at Ginger Cove Health Center in Annapolis after a 4-month illness. Born January 25, 1915, in Union, Maine, and the son of the late John and Lottie Lenfest, Les graduated from Northeastern University with a BS in Civil Engineering in 1937. He began his career with the U.S. Geological Survey in 1939 in Hartford, Connecticut. He received the Department of the Interior Superior Service Award in 1962. In May of 1966, while serving as Assistant District Engineer at College Park, Maryland, he left the USGS and transferred to ESSA, Weather Bureau, Office of Hydrology. He also served in the Navy during World War II. He retired from Federal service in 1973 and then worked as an engineer for the State of Maine's Environmental Protection Agency for two years. His interests included tennis, bridge, music, and playing the French horn in

## IN MEMORIAM

community bands. Surviving are his wife of 59 years, Virginia Grant Lenfest; three sons, Leslie W. Lenfest, Jr. and Paul G. Lenfest, both of Smithfield, Maine, and Charles E. Lenfest of Severna Park, Maryland; two daughters, Susan L. Sawyer of Bel Air, Maryland, and Trish Lehman of Arnold, Maryland. Les had six grandchildren, one of which predeceased him, and one great-grandchild. Funeral services and interment will take place at a later date in Camden, Maine.

**H. B. "Herb" Mendieta**, age 86, of Austin, Texas, died April 10, 2006. He was a veteran of World War II having served in the 90th Ordinance Battalion, Medical Detachment. He attended Texas A&M and the University of Texas and held a BS degree in Chemistry. He began his career with the Water Resources Division in Austin in 1951. He retired in 1984, in Austin, where he spent his 34-year career. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Marjorie; a son, Hector Edward; a daughter, Bernadine Eaton; 3 granddaughters; a great grandson; 2 brothers; and a sister. Memorial contributions may be made to: Austin Public Library Building Fund, Attention Sammie Santos, P.O. Box 2287, Austin, Texas 78768-2287. Please indicate in memory of Herb Mendieta, 904 Berkeley Avenue, Austin, TX 78745.

**Robert M. "Bob" Myrick**, age 76, died on February 28, 2006, in Las Vegas, Nevada, from respiratory problems and kidney failure. Born on March 25, 1929, in Gregory, South Dakota, Bob graduated in mining engineering from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in 1951. His first job was with Anaconda Mining during 1951 to 1952, and he was in the U.S. Army during 1952 to 1954. He next worked on the family farm in South Dakota until 1957 when he joined the U.S. Geological Survey in Columbus, Ohio. In 1958, he transferred to Washington, D.C. where he served as Research Assistant to the Chief Hydraulic Engineer, Luna Leopold. In 1961, he transferred to the Arizona District Office in Tucson where he worked with Dick Culler and other project staff on several studies on the hydrology of semi-arid lands. In the early 1970s, on detail from the Arizona District, he was project engineer to build the bedload trap on the East Fork River in Wyoming, and in 1979, transferred to the National Research Program bedload-transport project of Bill Emmett in Lakewood, Colorado, where he retired in 1985. Bob was always enthusiastic with his work and was appreciated by his coworkers and friends. His wife Stella, whom he married on June 26, 1980, survives him.

**Francis B. Sessums**, passed away on March 18, 2006, in Salem, Oregon. He was born May 23, 1917, in Pioneer, Louisiana. A dedicated husband, father, and friend, Francis will be remembered for his zeal for life and labor and for his scholarly mind. He received a BS in Chemistry from Louisiana Tech and later received a BS in Civil Engineering from Louisiana State University. In 1939, Francis accepted a position with the Geological Survey as a Junior Hydraulic Engineer in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He served as Assistant and Associate Engineer in Louisiana and South Dakota before transferring to Bismarck, North Dakota, as Assistant District Engineer in 1947. In 1953 until 1955, he served first as Assistant District Engineer and then as District Engineer for the Southwest District of the Louisiana State Department of Public Works. In 1955-56 he served as Chief of the Water Resources and Topographic Mapping Division. From 1956-1970 he was employed by the Dow Chemical Company as a Civil Engineer, Project Engineer, and Assistant to the General Manager. In 1970, he accepted a position on the staff of the Chief Hydrologist in Washington, DC, and in 1972 assumed the duties of Program Officer for the Water Resources Division. He retired from the USGS October 1, 1983. Surviving Francis are his wife of 21 years, Lonnie Vining Martin; son, William Blake Sessums and wife Gail of San Antonio, Texas; daughters, Betty and husband Dr. Mylan Van Newkirk of New Zealand, and Carol Paden of Smyrna Beach, Florida and New York; 3 grandchildren; 8 great grandchildren; stepchildren, Renette Autrey, Glenda Fillible, Walter Loren Martin, Christina Joy Mealue and Lenetta Jean Investor; 17 step grandchildren and many wonderful step great-grandchildren. Preceding Francis in death were his first wife of 43 years, Helen Sansing; his parents Richard and Bessie Sessums; brother, Roy T; and three sisters, Irma, Bertha and Bertie; son-in law, Paul Paden; and 2 stepchildren.

**Showen, Barbara S.**, a resident of Arlington, Virginia, died on Friday, April 21, 2006, at her home in Arlington, after a 10-year struggle with Multiple Myeloma. She was the beloved wife of Charles R. Showen for 53 years. She loved classical music and attending concerts. She was a member of the Women's Committee of the National Symphony Orchestra and participated in many activities, including the Decorator's Show House, Kinder Concerts, and the Welcome Center. She also loved interior decorating, gourmet cooking, needlework, knitting, and smocking dresses for her grandchildren. Along with her husband, she is survived by one daughter, Ellen S. Standish and her husband William of Charlotte, North Carolina, and two granddaughters, Laura and Shannon Standish both of Charlotte, North Carolina. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 124 Park Street, S.E., Vienna, VA 22180.

## Some Adventures of WRD Retirees George and Diane Gravlee

A number of WRD Retirees do volunteer work to aid their community and country. The following article describes the volunteer work of two such WRD Retirees, George and Diane Gravlee. The Gravlees currently live in Livingston, TX and their email address is [geodiagravlee@worldnet.att.net](mailto:geodiagravlee@worldnet.att.net). The following article is from the January 2006 Edition of "*Ladies Home Journal*" by Lucy Maher.

When George Gravlee retired from his job with the U.S. Geological Survey in 1994, he didn't take up gardening or golf. Instead he and his wife, Diane, a retired librarian, both dedicated Habitat for Humanity volunteers, began working three days a week at the Albany, New York, offices of their local affiliate. The couple, avid campers, also hitched their travel trailer to the back of their car twice a year and hit the road, visiting parts of the country they hadn't yet seen and participating in nearby builds manned by small groups of Habitat volunteers who came from across the United States to help out on understaffed projects.

But five years later they were ready for a change. So, with their two children married and raising families of their own, the couple decided to indulge their love of travel full-time. They sold their house, traded in their trailer and bought a deluxe 35-footlong motor home. Their itinerary: to crisscross the country visiting national historic sites and local points of interest, dining in quirky small towns, and dropping in on friends and relatives.

But that's not the only reason the RV lifestyle seemed so appealing. They knew it would allow them to become part of Habitat's Care-A-Vanners, a group of volunteers who travel the country in their RV's to builds in need of help. Indeed, the pair now trades hiking boots for hammers and participates in builds for four months each year. There are more than 140 such two-week builds annually, in which about 2,600 people - most of them retired seniors - take part. Some sign up for as few as one project a year; others, like the Gravlees, spend about a third of their time on builds. They participate in six to eight each year, in places as far-flung as Burlington, Vermont, and Sacramento, California.

"We've been very blessed in our life and feel this is what we have been called to do," says Diane, 62. "We realized that we could make a difference to a family and at the same time have fun." The compressed time frame in which Care-A-Vanner builds happen accounts for the easy camaraderie. Unlike regular Habitat builds, which take several months to complete because volunteers help out mostly on Saturdays, Care-A-Vanners help out in two-week increments. After a concrete slab is poured, a group of 18 volunteers works Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 3 PM on such things as framing the structure, installing the roof, doors, and windows, and putting in insulation and dry walling. "A lot of us are senior citizens," says George, "and after two weeks of strenuous labor, we're pretty burned-out."

Still, the time passes quickly as volunteers forge connections. "We are all focused on what we are doing, but there's a lot of chatting-especially about grandkids among the women," George, 65, says with a laugh. At the end of the day, "after we've all had a shower, we'll sit out in the shade and have hors d'oeuvres and socialize and decide where we are going for dinner." Weekends are reserved for laundry and errands, the occasional sightseeing trip, and church.

The Gravlees were infected with "Habititus" ("Extreme enthusiasm for the Habitat for Humanity Program," laughs George) in 1993 after spending a week on the Hawaiian Island of Kauai on an intensive seven-day build for victims of Hurricane Iniki. The category 4 storm a year earlier killed seven people, damaged countless homes along the island's southern shore, and destroyed acres of sugarcane, banana, and papaya crops.

For seven days straight, the Gravlees and more than 100 other volunteers from across the United States joined an equal number of local residents in building seven two-three bedroom homes. It was a particularly arduous build, not just because it was very hot there, but because of the sheer amount of labor involved. "Some nights we would go back to the work site and finish up something to keep our house on schedule," says Diane. "One evening we worked with flood lights laying floor tiles."

By the end of the week, the couple was hooked. Though at the time there were about 10 projects a year in need of volunteers and each site was responsible for attracting its own crew, today the Care-A-Vanner program has a dedicated program manager who disseminates build information via a quarterly newsletter and monthly e-mail updates to interested volunteers at [www.habitat.org/rv/getinvolved.spx](http://www.habitat.org/rv/getinvolved.spx).

Since hitting the road full-time, the Gravlees have volunteered on more than 58 builds in 32 states, visited countless places on the map, and regularly dropped in on son, Scott, who lives in Ohio with his wife, Tiffany, and their two kids, as well as daughter Brenda and her husband, Gary, and their two children, who live in Connecticut. In between builds, if they are not staying at campgrounds, they park their motor home in the driveways of friends and family for two to three days at a time to visit and explore the area.

But while they surely give a lot to Habitat, they get back even more. Diane especially enjoys teaching other women building skills and watching their confidence blossom. "They come and say they're not going to be able to do anything," she says, "and all of a sudden they're putting up siding and installing baseboards."

Next year, in addition to traveling to Slidell, Louisiana, to help rebuild 21 Habitat homes that were damaged by Hurricane Katrina, the Gravlees plan to spruce up a two-bedroom house they bought in Greenwood, South Carolina. "We plan to use it as a travel base for now," Diane says, "but it will be where we settle down when the time comes." Do they ever run into the same faces? "We often see people that we've been on builds with over the years. Our Christmas card list is very long!"

**George Ferguson's**



**100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration**



L to R: Milt Hackett, Joe Cragwall, and George Ferguson examine the walnut plaque presented to George by his WRD Retiree colleagues on his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.



L to R: George; daughter, Joan Ferguson; and Hal Langford enjoying a story at the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.

## Local Meetings and Gatherings

**Nebraska District Retirees:** This picture was taken at a recent monthly breakfast meeting. Retirees meet on the second Tuesday of the month at the Village Inn, 111 South 29<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE, at 9:30am. Visitors always welcome!



L to R: Dick Boohar, Steve Hull, Dick Harmon, Neil Stuthmann, Jean McKinney, Klyda Steele, Sandy Downs, Gordon Jamison, Marjorie McDonald, Elaine (hidden) Jamison, Joann Engel, Glenn Engel, Judy Boohar, Abraham Chen, Lou Ann Quinn, Phil Quinn

## TREASURER'S REPORT, FIRST QUARTER 2006

Treasurer Celso Puente reports that the organization had \$6,958.57 in its treasury at the end of the first quarter for calendar year 2006. Receipts for the quarter were \$4,015.00 from dues and contributions. Disbursements for the quarter were \$3,060.54 for printing and mailing of Newsletter 130, including a \$400.00 loan to the Wisconsin Committee for the 2006 WRD Retirees Reunion in Madison.

During the quarter, a total of \$769.00 was received in contributions above dues from 56 members. Special thanks for contributions of \$6.00 or more go to: Angel F. Class; Warren Anderson; William F. Lichtler; Robert B. Wall; A. S. "Steve" Van Denburgh; Theodore Sieger, Jr.; Mrs. Earl "Elizabeth" Smith; Cavis B. Ham; Dewitt and Rose Kelley; Chester E. Thomas, Jr.; Mearle M. Miller; Donovan "Don" Kelly; Richard A. Craig; Charles D. Whiteman, Jr.; Herbert H. Stevens; Hugh Hudson; Roger K. White; Wayne G. Curtis; C. R. "Russ" Wagner; Timothy W. Hale; Della Laura; Benjamin H. Whetstone; James and Ada Hatchett; Dennis K. Stewart; Richard A. Gardner; Melvin Johnson; Albert C. Harr; James P. Meckel; Robert Adsit; Edwin Gutentag; C. A. Pascale; James H. Barks; Robert E. Steacy; Mrs. Wilson Bonham "Harriet;" Roger Waller; Patricia Mc Alwee; Tom Werth; Richard O. Hawkinson; Robert L. Cory; Chester Zenone; Charles Ewart; Beverly Pittarelli; Ronald E. Rathbun; Jerry Lindholm; Mary J. Dunn; Jerry C. Stephens; Richard McCullough; John R. Ritter; Mary L. Garrelts; Eugene Patten; Richard and Elizabeth Snyder; Sharon B. Mathey; Jerald F. McCain; Harold Eddins; Lorraine M. Kohout; Edward A. Sammel; Robert W. James; Gary D. Cobb; and Celso Puente. Contributions of less than \$6.00 from 23 members also are appreciated.

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