

# WRD RETIREES

NEWSLETTER 155  
May 2012

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

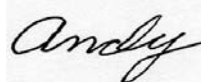
Hello, fellow retirees. This is my second message as President of WRD Retirees. It is amazing how fast time can fly by when we are busy, and that includes retirees. We in the Reston/Herndon area had a very mild winter with hardly any snow, and now spring is blooming all over. I have been working closely with Charles Nethaway, our newly-appointed Newsletter Editor, and he has done a great job putting together the May 2012 edition. We are adding a Newsletter Supplement as of this issue. See box on page 24.

Also, our Thirty-eighth Edition of the WRD Retirees Directory, May 2012, is ready. Compliments go out to Bill Boning, Al Condes, and Tom Yorke for this large endeavor. It takes a number of volunteers, 5-8, who visit the National Center, spending hours putting labels on envelopes, stuffing newsletters and directories into the envelopes, and sealing them. Our organization now has about 1,400 retirees and affiliate members and, for each, we have the name, spouse's name, date of retirement, address, phone number, and email address in the directory. On pages 2 and 3, we have revised the contact information for States and ongoing "Local Gatherings and Meetings." These contacts give you a chance to see when local meetings are held. Phone calls and email help keep the attendance up at these meetings. We are always glad to receive your meeting photos that we can include in the Newsletter.

Our Sixteenth WRD Retirees Reunion will be held September 20<sup>th</sup> through September 22<sup>nd</sup> in Boise, Idaho, and a lot of information and the **registration form** are included in this Newsletter. Again, thanks go out to another hard-working retiree, Kathy Peter, and her 10-person committee who have put together this fine reunion. Boise's Owyhee Plaza hotel is the location of the reunion meetings and 100 guestrooms with top-notch amenities are ours for the taking. Off-site fun may be had by all, from a river float to a winery tour. On Saturday there are two interesting, all-day visits in Boise and its surroundings, followed by a Gala Banquet in the evening. The committee has arranged a 3-day optional, post-reunion trip to Sun Valley Resort. All this information is included in this Newsletter, so now is the time to read-up, register, and sign-up for the events. We hope to see many of you in about four months!

The WRD Retirees Hydrologic Technician Scholarship program is continuing to progress, students' applications are being evaluated, and winners will be announced in a later edition of this newsletter. We are grateful for several contributions made to the fund that came in along with dues payments.

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, I had the privilege of attending a beautiful memorial "Celebration of Life" for Jim Biesecker, our very good friend. At the time of his death, Jim was the Editor of our Newsletter for more than ten years and was a past President of WRD Retirees. He was a very active volunteer and a man who enjoyed getting on the phone and/or sending email to Retirees all over the country, all this to fulfill his mission of "Keeping the Retirees connected!" At the celebration there were about 150 friends, relatives, and colleagues. Jim's wife, Joyce, worked very hard to arrange the celebration, inviting people from all over the country. Jim's and Joyce's sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren told us many interesting stories. Besides the family, there were many colleagues and friends who told stories about Jim, his personal vision and leadership, and the fun and passion for life that he had. We will miss Jim, and this was a fine send-off. He is surely getting together with Retirees in the Promised Land!



### Do I owe dues to WRD Retirees?

If you receive a paper copy of the newsletter, please check the mail label of the envelope for a number above the right side of your name. This number represents the last year your dues were paid. If the number is 2011, you have paid for 2011 and you owe dues for 2012. If the number is 2010, you owe dues for 2011 and 2012. If the number is 2009, you owe dues for 2010, 2011, and 2012.

Dues are \$10 per year and can be paid for advance years if you wish to do so. If you owe dues, make a check to WRD Retirees and mail it to "WRD Retirees, P.O. Box 280, Herndon, VA 20172-0280." Contributions are welcomed and appreciated, so indicate how much of your check is for dues and how much is a contribution. If you think an error has been made in recording your past dues payments, notify Bill Boning at [cwboning@verizon.net](mailto:cwboning@verizon.net) or [wrdretirees@usgs.gov](mailto:wrdretirees@usgs.gov). Please also send some "News" for the next newsletter!

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## WRD NEWS

### RECENT RETIREES

**Recent retirees automatically become members of WRD Retirees. Please treat these new members like old friends. Welcome them aboard and invite them to local meetings.**

#### **Northeastern Region:**

Walter Lee Loope, Research Ecologist, E9460 Orchard Street, Munising, MI 49862, 02/01/2012  
Deborah A. Molnar, Administrative Operations Assistant, 196 Mansion Road, Dunbarton, NH 03046, 01/16/2012  
Wayne Norling, Biologist, 4911 Whitcomb Drive, #5, Madison, WI 53711, 03/31/2012  
Blaine T. White, Supervisory Hydrologic Technician, 2651 Sunnyside Avenue, Langhorne, PA 19053, 03/03/2012

#### **Central Region:**

Dana L. Barbie, Hydrologist, 17445 Dornach Drive, Pflugerville, TX 78660, 02/03/2012  
Judith H. Donohue, Hydrologic Technician, 9212 St. Lucia Road, Fort Worth, TX 76123, 02/03/2012  
Glenn A. Laidlaw, Supervisory Hydrologic Technician, 94 Grandview Lane, Riverton, WY 82501, 03/31/2012  
Addis M. Miller III, Hydrologic Technician, 1441 Max Starcke Dam, Marble Falls, TX 78654, 02/03/2012  
Philip J. Soenksen, Hydrologist, 4331 Jacquelyn Circle, Lincoln, NE 68516, 03/31/2012  
Phillip C. Teeters, Hydrologic Technician, 2025 Saler Drive, Crowley, TX 76036, 02/03/2012  
James K. Vanzandt, Lead Hydrologic Technician, 40 Coralberry Road, The Woodlands, TX 77381, 02/03/2012

#### **Western Region:**

Joy A. Geiselman, Fish & Wildlife Administrator, 5201 Taurus Circle, Anchorage, AK 99516, 01/31/2012  
Katherine N. West, Information Assistant, 3854 Helvetia Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508, 03/01/2012

**Correction:** The following three retirees from the Central Region were shown in NL 154 as retiring on 12/31/2011. However, the correct retirement date for each of them is 02/03/2012.

Michael E. Dorsey, Supervisory Hydrologic Technician, 10620 Creekview Drive, Austin, TX 78748, 02/03/2012  
Robert D. Jarrett, Research Hydrologist, 135 Balsam Street, Lakewood, CO 80226, 02/03/2012  
Richard J. Lindgren, Hydrologist, 9711 Silver Moon, San Antonio, TX 78254, 02/03/2012

## **The USGS and the Afghan Geological Survey (AGS) in Kabul**

**By Will Stettner, Cartographer, USGS, Reston**

In 2004, the USGS was funded by USAID to make an assessment of Afghanistan's mineral resources. Will's involvement has been related to capacity building and the acquisition of reports archived at AGS. In 2006, the USGS published the Geologic and Mineral Resource Map of Afghanistan based on Russian maps that were published in the 1970s. Since 2009, USGS activities in Afghanistan have been funded by DOD Task Force for Business and Stability Operations. This funding resulted in the identification of 24 areas of interest for potential mineral development. Will has now made eight trips to Kabul, searching for and scanning AGS reports. These trips have resulted in the acquisition of huge amounts of geologic data and given him an opportunity to make many new friends in a very fortified and potentially dangerous city.

***Editor's note:*** Will gave a report on this subject at the May 2012 meeting of WRD Retirees in Herndon, VA. Will's address and phone: Will Stettner, Cartographer, U.S. Geological Survey, 903 National Center, Reston, VA 20192, at 703-648-4343.

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**Veronica Andreani** says to **Bill Boning**, "Happy New Year! Thank you for all you do for and with the WRD Retirees Newsletter and dues. Enclosed please find my dues and a contribution toward the scholarships. Thanks!"

**Dan Bauer** writes, "Sorry to hear about **Jim Biesecker**. Ya' never know. Life is short and we all are pretty fragile. **Mary** and I are fine. We just got back from a 3-week vacation in Hawaii. We had never been there before, and so we did enjoy it. We even tried snorkeling for the first time. Tell everyone 'hello' from an old friend."

**Larry Becker** writes, "**Virgene** and I are looking forward to next fall's Reunion in Boise. Best wishes for the new year."

**Gill Bertoldi** says, "Hope all is well, along with sending dues and a contribution to the Scholarship fund."

**Harry Blanchard** said, "I appreciate the work that you all do to keep us informed. Here is a short write-up on my last year. I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in March of 2011 and was operated on April 6th at the Emory Hospital in Atlanta. Chemo was started in May and continued through November. I was free of cancer on December 5. The blood samples that were collected in January 2012 and February showed elevated tumor markers. A PET scan was scheduled and they were unable to find any cancer. I am thankful for the many prayers during this time. **Claire** and I were married 59 years on March 8. We now have 2 great-grandsons and 2 great-granddaughters."

**Dale Blevins** says to **Bill Boning**, "Thanks for doing the good work for WRD Retirees. I enjoy it very much."

**Ed Bolke** exclaims, "I'll blame the lateness [of the dues] on not having a 'hard' copy of the Newsletter! Also, forgetfulness might be in play??"

**G. Allan Brown** and **Jean L. Brown** write, "Hi, WRD Retirees. We would still like to receive a copy of the WRD Directory by U.S. mail, and one copy is enough for both of us. Getting the WRD Newsletter by email is still fine with us. Thanks for all you are doing to keep us all in touch!"

**Charles Bryant** writes, "**Elizabeth** struggles with Alzheimer's. She has forgotten all in the family. I empathize with all of you who have had to go through this. We are living with our daughter and have strong family support. I turned 80 in September. I still look back on my career with WRD with a great deal of satisfaction. I have a few medical problems myself. I have neuropathy and cannot exercise. I have Diabetes II, Addison's disease, and Sjögren's Syndrome. I spent a week in October in a local hospital to determine the cause of a digestive disorder and also made a trip to Mayo Clinic for the same reason. Still no diagnosis. These are all aggravating and not deadly. I've suggested to the family that an epithet should be put on my gravestone saying, '*Here lies Charles Bryant, Died of Aggravation.*' I appreciate all the work you all do."

**Bob Bubeck** writes, "Here are my dues. 2011 was not a good year for me re health problem; but I am back in shape now. I would like to have a hard copy of the Directory. Regards!"

**Tony Coffey** says to **Bill Boning**, "I remember when you were in Texas and your coming to Oklahoma to visit **Jim Irwin**. Say 'Hi' to **Will Thomas** for me as he and I were good friends."

**Robert Cory** sent us another letter about WRD in the '60s: "This is the third letter about my experiences working for WRD during the 1960's. The first writing addressed the lack of funding for an extensive marine program and the abrupt resignation of the geologist that was to head-up that program. The second writing was about my interview with Luna Leopold and proposal to study East Coast populations of lancelets (amphioxii). At my last writing, Dr. Luna had decided to grant a modest stipend so I could study and document the existence and ecology of offshore populations of amphioxii (lancelets) on the Atlantic continental shelf. Lancelets are 2-inch long, silvery, fish-like organisms considered to be a link between vertebrates and invertebrates. They possess a primitive backbone called a notochord. To conserve grant money, I tagged along or borrowed time on east-coast oceanographic research vessels. My first trip was on a vessel owned by the University of Georgia Marine Institute at Sapelo Island, GA. Unbeknown to me, the professor of marine biology at the University of Miami, Dr. E. Lowe Pierce, was invited to come along, making this a very notable trip. Dr. Pierce's appearance triggered a rather tense situation since I was an unknown entity and Dr. Pierce was a tenured professor whose primary research was the ecology of lancelets. By midnight, Dr. Pierce and I came to a friendly agreement. Subsequently, we collaborated on many offshore trips. Together we published my first peer-reviewed paper: Cory, Robert L., and E. Lowe Pierce, "Distribution and Ecology of Lancelets (order Amphioxii) over the Continental Shelf of the South-eastern United States." *Limnology and Oceanography* 12.4 (1967): 650-56. One of the most productive off-shore trips was on the R.V. Eastwinds out of Beaufort, North Carolina Marine Station. Aside from basic ecology, we discovered that lancelets were good to eat. In other parts of the world, lancelets are fished commercially. Our Asian cook on the Eastwind fried them up for a tasty breakfast of scrambled eggs and

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lancelets. We caught enough lancelets to freeze and then furnish to the National Zoo as an appetizer for one of their fundraiser banquets. We also supplied preserved lancelets to a Neurological Research Physician from Boston, MA, so he could study development of their primitive backbone. Another spin-off of the study was cooperating with Ernie Eddy, Electronic Technician from WRD headquarters, Washington, DC. Ernie had adapted a TV camera to fit into a cylinder that could be used for observing well casings. Ernie and I designed a crude sled fitted with a camera and lights. This rig brought us some free ship time out of the Sapelo Island Station. They collected and sold marine biological specimens. Towing the sled in the very clear water off the Georgia coast gave them an entirely new concept of how the specimens were distributed over the sea bed. Looking back, I am forever indebted to Dr. Leopold and Dr. Nace for granting me the freedom to pursue cooperative studies from the Columbia estuary to the Chesapeake Bay and from Maine to Florida. The period of the late 1950s and 1960's was transitional for the USGS, a great government agency!

"On a personal note, **Jane** and I are still hanging in there. Jane has become famous for her signature chocolate chip cookies, homemade soups, and prayers, nourishing friends and family in body and soul. I still work with honeybees and Christmas trees in a gradually diminished fashion. Congratulations to **Andy Anderson**, our new leader of the retirees."

**Russ Curtis** writes, "I just read my newsletter and am reminded how long I have been retired (18 years). I know almost all of those who recently passed away but none of the new retirees. **Lavonne** and I don't travel much anymore as her Alzheimer's is progressing slowly. We try to see our kids, grand kids, and great grand kids as much as possible, but mostly they have to come see us. I just completed ten years as the "Orchid Doctor" at the American Orchid Society. I still jog 5 miles a day while Lavonne walks 3 miles, and we swim for half an hour on most days. We spend most of our free time on our balcony here in Palm Beach watching the ocean go by, or in doctors' waiting rooms watching people who are much worse off than we are. I'm having fun learning to use my new iPad. It's perfect for me as I've always typed with one finger."

**Lynne Fahlquist**, Public Information Officer for USGS in Austin, TX, reported that the following folks retired in early 2012 in Texas. From Austin were **Ann Ardis** and **Dana Barbie**; from San Angelo, **Melissa Lane** and **Rick Lindgren**; from San Antonio, **Buddy Miller**; from Ft. Worth, **Phil Teeters**; and from Houston, **Ken Vanzandt**.

**Jim French** writes, "My thanks to all the volunteers who keep the newsletter coming. I was saddened to see the passing of **Bob Beall**, one of the serious volunteers and a true friend. It is sad to see, also, the passing of **Scott Keys**, **Ivan Johnson**, and **Mrs. Fred "Ora" Kunkle**. And thanks to the Survey for a long and happy career!"

**Mike Gentile** gives us a good report from Virginia Beach, VA. "**Helene** and I have been retired for 16 years. As with most retirees, we do not know where the time has gone. We have been living in Virginia Beach for 15 of those years. We have found this area to be a good one to which to retire. Medical facilities are very good and the airport is convenient for travel; although not quite as convenient as it was before it was expanded. Virginia Beach has lots to offer the retiree, and in the summer time there is much to see and do at the beach. They have redone the boardwalk, and it is a nice place to stroll most of the year. If one gets tired of the main beach area, there is a City Beach at the end of Sandbridge with a fishing pier that is not usually very crowded. In some ways, Virginia Beach still has retained many of its good small-town features. Most people tend to be friendly and readily speak to those that they do not know. Our neighbors are friendly and interesting. A number have been active-duty military, including aviators and Seals. Many after retirement have continued to be involved in anti-terror activities. We have our traffic jams but nothing like those in Northern Virginia. The one thing we miss is not having other Survey retirees with which to associate. As with most retirees, we enjoy reading the newsletter. When my son and his wife were living with us, we used to go fishing on the head boats. We both had a good time and a number of times literally caught several buckets full of fish at a time. Once a year he would vacation at a fishing camp in Canada where he fished for walleye, pick, muskee, and lake trout. We really enjoyed the fillets he brought back. In the last few years, Mother Nature has been catching up with us. About a year and a half ago, Helene fell and dislocated her ankle. In the process, she broke her ankle in two places. Unfortunately it has not healed right, and she is not able to get around as well as she likes and is not able to enjoy traveling. For my part, I have been on dialysis for 3 ½ years. Fortunately I am still doing and feeling good. It is the only real health problem that I have at this point. I can travel with some planning. I still work outside keeping up with my gardens. Among my hobbies, I have spent quite a bit of time working on our family tree. With the help of others, my family tree has been traced back to the 1700s on both sides of my mother's and father's families. As part of this effort, I prepared a tribute to my older brother and Helene's older brother. They both were killed in action in WW II. My brother was killed when his ship was sunk by a Kamikaze submarine, and Helen's brother was killed in heavy action during the Battle of the Bulge while serving with the 38<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. All of my brother's high-school classmates from the town we lived in, in West Virginia, were killed in WWII."

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**Harold Golden** writes, "Thank you for all your efforts. Best Wishes for a great 2012."

**Tim Hale** says to **Bill Boning**, "Happy New Year. Here are my WRD Retiree dues. Hope all is well up there in the frozen North. Look forward to seeing the gang out in Idaho later this year. Take care."

**Richard Hawkinson** says "Hope all is well." He also sent dues plus a contribution to the Scholarship Fund.

**Millard Hiner** and **Sharon** greet us with, "Hello all 'old timers.' I've been too long in getting some news to you all. Now I need to bring up my 'short term memory' and fill you in on some of **Sharon's** and my activities in the last couple of years. We haven't been to a reunion since Atlanta, but we will be in Boise as it is a short drive for us from our mountain 'abode' in the Pan Handle north of Orofino, Idaho, a little place called Pierce, old gold-mining community. We have been enjoying the wilderness that surrounds us for 10 years. My second career with [www.whitegyr.com](http://www.whitegyr.com) has kept me and three satellite offices busy since I retired in '95. Of course Sharon and I take time for travel at every opportunity. Sharon is still painting and displays her work on [www.artistalaska.com](http://www.artistalaska.com) which, of course, I put together for her and keep her on top of Google. She still paints mostly ALASKA. Our travels take us back to our eldest son's home in Anchorage, AK, and numerous trips to visit our middle son, daughter, and grandchildren in Montana. We have done a cruise to Mexico, visits to friends in Mexico, trips with friends to Hawaii, and just returned from a visit with our son and daughter who flew to Hawaii and met us for a lovely visit, a great winter vacation. Every winter finds us being 'snow birds' heading for the Southern states of Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico. We have a good balance of weather that way! The trips to our home town of Eureka, CA, are at least a yearly event as my high-school class of '56 gets together every year now, due to our 'advanced' ages. The stories get better every year. A big change will be coming our way this summer, as we plan to move back to Montana. Being closer to our children and not as 'isolated' as we are up here in the mountains is a necessary move to make at our age -- easier for everyone concerned. I love the newsletter and all the news. I am looking forward to a great visit with all in Boise. Cheers."

**Jo Ann (Schnepf) Huffman** wrote to **Bill Boning**, "Thanks for taking care of this and keeping me honest. We are heading off to Australia and New Zealand for a month -- looking forward to good wine and good times down under."

**Ivan James** writes, "The attached note, 'History of New England District,' was given to me by **Pat Walker** about the time he retired\*. His note indicates it was prepared for the Centennial briefing on May 2, 1979. I assume it was prepared by **John Baker**, the then district chief. As far as I know, it has never been published. It is interesting that he mentions the 'normal chlorine' map as I once used that along with current chloride levels and highway salting loadings in a mass-balance calculation to show that the effects of highway salting had only been partially realized in Massachusetts streams, thus showing once again the value of historical data. I send you my regards."

*\*Editor's note: The paper that Ivan gave us is included in the supplement to this Newsletter.*

**Hillary Jeffcoat** writes, "News from Tuscaloosa, AL, has concentrated around clean-up and rebuilding following the F-4 tornado that hit Tuscaloosa last year. **Mamie** and I were lucky not to have been in the path; however, our church community, Forest Lake, received considerable damage. Other news: groundbreaking ceremonies were held recently for a new research facility on the University of Alabama campus. A new Center for Water will have three significant water agencies under one roof; U.S. Geological Survey, Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Weather Service."

**Darwin Knochenmus** writes, "Thanks for the reminder on dues – I would never remember. We were keeping the airlines solvent in 2011 by traveling to France twice, Bulgaria, Peru, California, and Nevada. Tried to go to Egypt but the State Department said they wouldn't bail us out. Look forward to seeing you in the fall."

**Don Leifeste** wrote, "I hope you all had a good year and will have an even better 2012. Things are good here in Gonzales. We are both enjoying good health and financial stability. We stay pretty close to home except for trips to Georgia and Oklahoma to visit family. Our oldest grandchild graduated from college last year and has a job! Now we have two at the U of GA and one at NY University, another starting GA State this month, and two in high school. Can it really be real? TTL. Enclosed are dues and a donation. We would like to receive the printed Directory. Best Regards."

**Mary Lowry** writes, "I wish to say how very much I enjoy reading the WRD Newsletter, even though I know very few now mentioned. However, I enjoyed the articles sent in by **Pat Walker** and **Wayne Webb** from many years ago back in College Park office. My son, Jim, and I have a beautiful home in Highland's Ranch, CO and really love the mountain scenery out here. We are fairly close to Denver. I, too, loved to bowl until I was 90, but I no longer wanted to get up so early. I have reached 99 now and in fine health, but require a lot of sleep. I hope all the older WRD members are in as good condition as I am. "

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**Dorothy Malthy** writes from Lake Elsinore, CA. "Thank you for the newsletter. I enjoy it very much."

**Luther Mills** writes, "Thanks, Bill, for being patient with me. I enjoy reading the newsletter and look forward to getting it each quarter."

**Joe and Kaycee Moreland** write: "The Morelands joined about 130 other WRD (or maybe WSC, I can't figure it out any more) employees and retirees in San Diego to celebrate **Peter Martin's** retirement party on January 27th. We had a great time getting reacquainted with old friends from the Garden Grove, Laguna Niguel, and Loma Linda offices. It was a wonderful opportunity to see people we haven't seen in several years. Joe worked feverishly on reformatting his Creative Non-fiction memoir "A Place to Lay My Head" to make it available to Ebook readers. It is now listed for \$2.99 at Amazon.com (Kindle readers), barnesandnoble.com (Nook readers), Apples iBookstore (iPad readers), and Lulu.com (PC readers). The paperback version is available at Lulu.com (\$20.12 plus shipping and handling) but should be listed on on-line bookstores like Amazon and Barnes and Noble in the next few weeks. Joe is also offering autographed copies (send email to [joemorelandjm@gmail.com](mailto:joemorelandjm@gmail.com) if you'd like one) for \$17 and he'll even cover the shipping costs. If you'd like to find out more about the story of his childhood in rural Western Oregon, you can read a few sample pages at <http://www.freado.com/users/31158/joe-a-moreland>. Joe has been overwhelmed by the positive responses from readers. **Kaycee** has been busily preparing for a theme party to observe the 100th birthday of our historic home in Old Towne Orange and the April 14th sinking of the Titanic 100 years ago. Joe is boning up on how to look and act like a cruise ship captain but can't decide whether to emulate Captain Smith and try to be helpful or take Captain Schettino's approach and just get out of the way. Thanks to all who keep the newsletter coming."

**Ken Muir** writes, "Enclosed are my dues. The years sure seem to sail by -- all is well."

**Jim Mullen** writes, "Enclosed are my 2012 dues. I enjoy the newsletter. We are having a good time here, living in the shadow of Mt. Shasta. I spend a lot of time cutting wood, gardening, and fishing."

**Charles Nethaway** tells us, "This last year has been a tough one, with my wife, **Carole**, passing away in February 2011. I attended several bereavement sessions in Northern Virginia and kept busy traveling to see relatives in the West, driving over 12,000 miles in 2011. After Carole's inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery in April, I drove to Missouri to see my aunt; to Denver to see my mother; and to Taos, NM to see several of Carole's cousins who live in Albuquerque. In July and August I took another car trip, to Florida to see Carole's mother; along the Gulf of Mexico to see the white sands; up to New Orleans to Café du Monde; then to Little Rock to visit with a high-school friend; and up to Belton, MO for my 50<sup>th</sup> High School Reunion, Class of '61. I went back to my aunt in Missouri and my children in Lincoln as well as visiting the grave of my son who died as a child in 1983. November was time to fly to Colorado for both Thanksgiving and half of Christmas with my mother and my daughter's family and back to Maryland for second half of Christmas with Carole's daughter and her family. Now I am busy with this new activity, being editor of the WRD Retirees Newsletter after the shocking death of **Jim Biesecker**. He hired me in 1974 and was my mentor, one of the most influential people in my career, and a good friend as a retiree. Thanks go to **Dotty Woods, Bill Boning, and Andy Anderson**, especially, for helping with this transition! I am also beginning chemotherapy (late April) for the fourth time to put my multiple myeloma back into remission – going well—soon to be a 10-year survivor."

**Doug Posson** writes, "Greetings and Happy New Year. Please add the enclosed to the Tech Tuition Program. All the best!"

**Joe Robles** says, "Thanks for the great work you continue to do for the publication."

**Gerald Rockwell** sent to **Kate Flynn**, "Isn't retirement just the best? I still run, ride my bike, or ski at least 5 days a week. I don't go as far or as fast, but I still get out there. **Toni** and I took a 7-week trip to Italy this last year. The highlight of the trip was meeting some of Toni's long lost relatives and seeing her grandparents' home towns. We will definitely go back. The wine and food are just too tasty. I still do a little 'consulting' just to remind myself how good it is to stay away from real work. I also still volunteer with Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue. Go to our web site for some interesting reading at [www.tahoenordicsar.com/](http://www.tahoenordicsar.com/). Let us talk about grandkids ... mine is cuter, smarter, stronger, faster than yours☺."

**Joe Rosenshein** tells us, "In my spare time, I have been working on a book with **John Moore**. It is an outgrowth of a chapter that we wrote for another pending publication. The book has been completed and is at the publisher. With some luck, it will be published sometime in 2012. Shortly, I will get back to preparing an annotated family tree and follow that effort with a family history. The part of the history about my father will be interesting since he was drafted into the Tsar's army, escaped, and eventually came to the U.S. He served overseas in the U.S. Army in WW I. When



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the Army needed people to go into Russia to spy for them, he volunteered. He had a deep regard for this country. **Helene** spends much of her free time working on her crafts. She is quite imaginative at what she does, and no two items that she creates are the same. She just finished some very decorative holiday wreaths which she gave to some of the neighbors.”

**Stan Sauer** thanks us, “Thanks for the great work that all of you in the national office do in support of our organization. Best wishes for a great New Year!”

**Herbert H. Schumann** writes, “I would like to express my appreciation to those of you who keep the newsletter going for all of us retired members and of WRD. As the newsletter editor for the 350 member Scottsdale Chapter 1234 of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE), I have a good idea of the level of effort that goes into publishing our WRD Newsletter. **Bert Thomsen**, Phoenix Sub-District Chief, is an active member of our Scottsdale Chapter of NARFE, and I get to see him and **Sylvia Benson** (**‘Quail’** when she was with WRD) at our monthly luncheon meetings. Best regards to you and all of our members.”

**Bill Shampine** writes to **Bill Boning** “Here are my dues for 2012 and 2013. Thanks for all you do!”

**Steve and Jo Anne Sorenson** send us this update: “Retirement has been busy for us as it seems to be for everyone. Since retirement I have become somewhat addicted to travel, and since Jo Anne also retired in October 2010 we have been doing most travel together. In the last 13 months we have been to Spain, Grand Cayman, Peru, Hawaii, Wisconsin, and California (several times). In April, I completed the flight to Australia and New Zealand in my home-built plane, ‘Twin Puffin,’ with my brother **Rod**. This airplane was in the works for over 21 years and was finally flown for the first time in 2005. Details of this long trip can be seen on our blog. See [http://blog.travelpod.com/travel-blog/twin\\_puffin/1/tpod.html](http://blog.travelpod.com/travel-blog/twin_puffin/1/tpod.html). This year we are off to Australia in February and then to New Guinea for Scuba diving in March, Galapagos in April, Alaska in August, and hopefully a trip to somewhere in Europe in the fall. Our daughter and son are all grown up, and to our good fortune both still live near us so we see them often. It looks like we may be staying here in Reston for a while longer.”

**Earl Skinner** tells us, “I just received my February newsletter and I enjoy reading it very much. Thanks for a job well done. I also noticed, as others have reported, that I know less and less, the names of people who are retiring and joining us WRD Retirees. Even the names of some who pass on escape me. I don’t know if that’s due to vintage or vacuum, maybe both? I do know that at my age, I’m losing more and more friends and acquaintances. In fact, **Ruth** and I have attended 4 funerals in the past 2 weeks, and we are about ‘funeralled’ out. It’s truly sad to read of the passing of WRD colleagues whom I have known and were special to me. Still, it’s good to be kept informed. Thanks for doing that for us ‘outliers.’ I resigned my volunteer status with Cleburne County Cares, a homeless prevention, feeding, and safety-net organization for those who are disenfranchised or face a financial crisis from time to time. However, I’m still busy with church; serving on the Church Board, teaching a senior-adult Sunday-School class, and singing in the choir. We do a Christmas and Easter cantata each year, in addition to doing choir numbers during morning worship services. I still raise a garden; keep the lawn looking reasonably presentable, trees trimmed, flowers blooming, and a myriad of birds well fed. Both Ruth and I are in pretty good health. We travel to a few places, but neither of us like travel. So, our trips are short in both distance and duration. Usually just visiting family, going to High-School and College reunions, attending district, church-related meetings, and, as of late, attending funerals. I don’t know for sure if we’ll be at the National WRD Retirees get-together in Boise. I ‘will volunteer’ to do more fishing this year. I’ve been just too busy these past few years. When a fella is too busy to go fishing, he’s entirely too busy. I plan to rectify that this year. Living within 5 minutes of what is perhaps the best trout-fishing stream ever, I will work more diligently to catch rainbows, browns, cut throats, brookies, and hybrids this year. People here, except old Earl, fish year-round. Even he will try to do more of that, too. I have formed a KFC (Kids Fishing Club) at church and make sure the kids go fishing in the area ponds, lakes, and streams several times each year. I’m in the middle of writing a mystery novel – *The Hell-Cat Incident*. Hell-Cat is a private hunting club near where I live. I just completed chapter eleven of what is to be a twenty-chapter masterpiece – maybe! I write articles for the local newspaper, ‘The Sun-Times,’ from time to time and contribute to a quarterly magazine they publish, ‘Lake Lifestyles.’ In January, I researched and wrote articles on the Civil Conservation Corps (CCC), and Camp Herber that was located here in Herber Springs, Cleburne County, AR, from 1935 to 1942. A condensed version was published in ‘Lake Lifestyles’ and a full version in the ‘Sun-Times.’ I had fun doing it. I still owe the local Historical Society a year-by-year synopsis of articles about the CCC published in the local newspaper during those years. The microfilms of the issues for those years and other bits of information from the Historical Society were the main sources for my research. I just this week submitted an article for publication that highlights a young, local National Guard woman who recently completed advanced training in Blackhawk Helicopter Mechanics. Thank you, Newsletter Staff. You are appreciated.”

## NEWS OF RETIREES

**Gloria Stiltner** tells us about her recent move: **Gloria and Roy Stiltner** are happy to report that after waiting out the real estate market for 3 years they have sold their Waterford, VA, Stonebrook Farm to a couple from McLean, VA. "This has enabled us to move to our 207 acre farm in Monroe, VA, just 7 miles north of Lynchburg, VA. We have gutted and fully renovated a 110-year old large farm house adding 6 bathrooms, a large addition, and a 3-car garage. The glass window wall in the addition gives us a view of Tobacco Row Mountain and we, at any time, can see 14 peaks, thus we have kept the name of the farm at Peaks View Farm. We requested from Amherst County to allow us to rename our private road, Stonebrook Lane, so we were able to bring a little bit of our old farm with us. In addition, we brought down heart of pine boards from our Waterford 1843 stonebank barn and a local guy made us an 8-foot table for our breakfast room out of this wood. It is a treasure. It is truly beautiful here. Roy will be busy building and renovating the outbuildings and getting ready for our beef cattle herd. None too soon since there is a big shortage of beef in the USA. Gloria will continue with her real estate business with Prudential Pen Fed Realty doing most of her business by referrals and driving back and forth to Leesburg, VA. In 2011 she was honored by her office for having done over 100 rentals. She was given her own parking place with a metal sign that said "Parking for Rental Queen Only." For 2010 and 2011 she was a recipient of the Prudential Real Estate Agent Leading Edge Award. This is for sales of over \$4,000,000 in each year."

**Chet Thomas** writes, "I look forward and enjoy the "newsletter." **Marion** and I are fairly well. WRD Retirees do a great job with the Hydrologic Technician Scholarship Program. Keep it going!"

**Ruth Thornberg** writes to **Bill Boning**, "Thanks for the info on dues. Here are my dues plus some extra to just be added to the Scholarship Program. Also, I would definitely like to continue receiving a paper copy of the Retiree Directory, please, YES! I try to remember to send a 'yes' reply to the WRD Retirees email also. I hope you had a nice holiday and I so enjoy the Retirees Newsletters and reading about so many folks I knew during my many years with WRD. Thanks again."

**John D. Warren** writes, "I enjoy the newsletter very much. I graduated from the Citadel, the military college of South Carolina, in 1949. I lost contact with all those I finished school with. I received a copy of the bulletin of all the men that finished during the years 1948-1950. I contacted three in South Carolina and had lunch with them when we visited there. We now stay in touch. I hope that the newsletter will publish an article that I wrote about the type of stream flow in south Florida\*. There is no other State that has the same water problems as the Everglades. I was 84 last September. **Millie** and I spent the month of September with our daughter in California. A week after coming home, I fell and broke my left hip. I spent 1 week in the hospital and 5 weeks in a rehab center. I weighed 180 when I went in and now weigh 160 pounds. My son from Boston, daughter from California, and my other son that lives here in Brandon, FL were all here for a week to help Millie and to see me. I am still walking with a walker and now able to walk around the block. I am doing real well!"

*\*Editor's note: John's article is included in the supplement to this Newsletter.*

**Frank C. Wells** writes from Liberty Hill, TX, "Enclosed is a check for my 2012 WRD Retirees dues. I would like to receive a printed copy of the WRD Retirees Directory this spring. Thanks."

**Owen Williams** wrote, "I am living very happily with my wife, **Rose**, in the Heritage Hunt Community for Senior Citizens in Gainesville, VA. I take this as a sign that I have finally grown up. In 2012, I will have belonged to the Park-West Lions Club in Manassas, VA, for 30 years. I have enjoyed it immensely. A great bunch of guys (I'm including the ladies) and a lot of good feelings helping others. In addition, I sing solos in church once a month and I love it. My one daughter, Megan, lives in DC with her boyfriend Eric Sandberg and works for National Public Radio (NPR). My other daughter, Lindsey, is married to Mike Colgan and lives nearby in Haymarket, VA, with their 4 daughters, Sydney, 8 years old; Riley, 6 years old; and Lily and Avery, 4-year-old twins. Rose and I had spent Christmas Day with them all. Total enjoyment! My daughter, Lindsey, certainly has her hands full, so Rose and I babysit as much as we can. I have to admit I miss everyone from WRD. It was an ideal environment for work and making friends. I always felt honored to be working with so many brilliant people."

**Chet Zenone** writes to **Charles Nethaway**, "Thank you for accepting the position as editor of the WRD Retirees Newsletter. You have already been contributing a lot to the retirees' organization, and we appreciate your taking on this important task – to keep our 'family' of WRD in touch with one another. Please let us know how we can help to continue to make the NL a great communicator re 'all things WRD retirement' — as our late leader **Jim B.** did, and even make it better!! Go placidly amid the noise and the haste."



## MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS

### Texas District Retirees who attended Mike Dorsey's Retirement Luncheon in late December 2011



Front row L to R: Freeman Andrews, Frank Wells, Bob Burchett, Alicia Ranzau, Gail Sladek, Dee Lurry  
Second row L to R: Willard Gibbons, Raynond Slade, Searcy Jacobs, Ed Ranzau, Mike Dorsey, Rene Barker, Paul Rohne, Roger Lee, and Peter Bush

### WRD Indiana Retirees met for lunch at India Palace in Indianapolis on April 5<sup>th</sup>



L to R: Jerry Davis, Cheryl Silcox, Sharon Goss, Debbie Majors, Lee Watson, Rick Goss, Sonja Sanders, Jeff Martin, Dave Cohen, and Jim Stewart.

### Reston-Herndon, April 2012 Luncheon



L to R: Hal Langford, MaryJo Baedecker, Tim Smith and Dick Engberg



Bill Mann and retired Chief Hydrologist Phil Cohen

## Remembering Jim Biesecker

My friend, Jim Biesecker, was a big man not only in stature but in the life he led. I was acquainted with Jim for many years, at USGS, as he progressed in the Water Resources Division. I did not realize what a big guy he was in real life. Over the years since he retired, Jim was a driving force and great personality in our WRD Retirees. The Reunions will never be the same without Jim. Just being around Jim gave me a real feeling of respect for who he the man really was. As a family man, friend, supporter of Penn State, and as a volunteer, Jim proved to me that he was a person to be respected. Jim loved his family, and often spoke about his wife Joyce and how lucky he was to have her. He loved a good joke, good food, and good wine. Our fishing trips proved to be a great time for socializing, spending time being serious, and all the while looking forward to having fun playing cards or watching TV. No matter how many people were on our fishing trips with us, Hal Langford, Jim Biesecker, John Shanton, and I had responsibilities, to make sure our trips were a success.

If Jim hadn't buttered me up, with all the help he could give me if elected, and badgered me to take this job, (with help from Hal), I am sure I would never have thought about being President of the WRD Retirees. I am quite busy learning many things about the Retirees that most of us as members take for granted, but it is very rewarding.

I am proud to be able to call Jim Biesecker my friend.

*--Andy Anderson, President, WRD Retirees*

### First Impressions

Jim's management style included getting to know his employees and cooperators face to face. That usually meant lots of travel. My FIRST trip with Jim was to the Federal Center in Denver to visit our Central Region team. I had a high school friend who lived in Denver so I met her at my hotel before dinner. Jim wanted to get to know me better and meet my friend, Pam. Always the host, he arrived at my room and asked if we wanted a gin and tonic. Jim fixed us a glass of gin (no tonic, no ice, and no lime). I think Jim also used this recipe for martinis.

### Family Man

I had a late in life pregnancy and did not tell anyone until I was past the first trimester. At the annual Christmas party, Jim noticed that I wasn't drinking and guessed the truth. He granted me extended maternity leave so I could spend 5 months getting acquainted with my newborn AND even promoted me 4 months after I returned to work. The most distressed I ever saw Jim at work was when his children were in trouble or his wife was ill.

### Loyalty

Jim was always a loyal friend. Unfortunately this trait extended to his alma mater, Penn State. Jim loved football and was an avid Penn State fan and season ticket holder. As a Maryland grad, I suffered every fall when Jim teased me unmercifully. Penn State and Maryland possess one of the most lopsided series in college football. The teams met in interrupted stretches from 1917 until 1993, and Penn State won 35 of 37 meetings. Maryland's sole win came in 1961 before Jim and I met. He used to bring ticket stubs to work autographed with the lop-sided scores. Too bad for me that in 1989 when Maryland tied Joe Paterno's 13th-ranked Penn State, I was on maternity leave.

*--Wendy Budd, Information Systems Division, retired*

**Maryjon McAvery** writes directly to Jim,

Dear Jim, as I write this it has been 82 days since you left us. Even though the sun still comes up and the moon still rises and the birds still sing my world, and the world of all who loved you, is diminished without the security of knowing you are in it. I have so very many memories of times we shared and they are all warm happy memories. Stopping by a divvy restaurant on the side of the road to Flagstaff. Man on horseback, with a rifle strapped to the saddle and a six-gun on his hip, out front. Sawdust on the floor and you ushering the waitress aside to insure they would prepare a non-meat meal for me. Not their tradition fair but who could refuse you. On the same trip, dozens of stops so I could take cactus pictures. Always thinking of others and how to make them happy. White Russians lovingly mixed in a trashcan. Always willing to listen to an idea even when your initial opinion was set in another direction. Your mind operating at lighting speed to make decisions. Decisions that were almost always the right ones. As a husband and father your face always lit up when you spoke of your wife and children. It was obvious to everyone how much you adored and treasured them all. How proud you were of every single accomplishment and how perfect you felt they were. It is so important in life to have someone who thinks you are perfect just the way you are. You gave them all that and so much more. I respected you, I admired you and most of all I loved you. My parents only had one child but

life gave me friends who were/are as good, or maybe better, than siblings. My friend, my big brother, I will hold you close in my heart always. Maryjon

**--Maryjon McAvery, retired, ISD**

Jim was always much bigger than life.

**--Denise Wiltshire**

I met Jim in 1966 or '67 when he and John George came from Harrisburg to D.C. for a meeting with Walt Durum, Herman Feltz, and me. Congress was about to pass the first 'National Water Quality Act,' which would lead to the birth of EPA. We wanted to get some early recognition for WRD. So with a little year-end money, we had people come in from New York to Alabama to plan the first area look at coal-mine drainage in Appalachia. A few days later, teams were in the field, measuring and sampling streams that were receiving drainage from coal mines. All the data collected were sent to Jim, and he and John, and others in the Harrisburg office prepared the first regional report on stream pollution from coal mines. Jim was senior author, and it was published as a USGS Circular. I do not remember the number, but maybe John Shanton does. His shop prepared the report for publication.

**--Jim Blakey**

Jim was a fireball. He enjoyed people. He flourished when building things, whether it was streamgages or scientific programs or teams of people to tackle difficult challenges. He liked being first.

I first worked with Jim when he was the Assistant Chief Hydrologist for Scientific Publications and Data Management. In that job he became the fearless leader of the new program called the Distributed Information System – a national network of minicomputers to be installed in every District Office around the country. It would be the first national computer network in a civilian agency. It was the largest procurement in the history of the Department of the Interior. He liked being first.

When he was the Assistant Director for Information Systems, the Director, Dallas Pack, asked Jim to do another complicated first – to establish an international organization of national Geological Surveys to share information, technologies and experience related to IT. The USGS was the western world's largest national Geological Survey and Dallas trusted Jim to take the lead for all national Geological Surveys. Of course he did. The first meeting was held in Reston. The first nine members became the core of an organization led by Jim's abundance of enthusiasm that grew year by year to share what we all were doing with the expanding world of computers, networks, applications and data.

Jim also was at the forefront of the newly recognized phenomenon of Global Climate Change. He sponsored USGS membership in a small group of science agencies – the National Science Foundation, NASA and NOAA and the USGS – to get a handle on the enormous amount of data and information related to global warming. He and his peers in the other agencies not only developed the first protocols for the long-term preservation and sharing of global climate data, their work was recognized with awards from national publications. It was prescient as today "data science" is the hot topic at every leading university.

Another first, a CDROM called Arctic Data Interactive was developed under Jim. It was simply the very first digital scientific data publication. It was a breakthrough technological prototype that was a precursor to today's "click on this URL or image" method used on every internet browser. With it he and the USGS received the top prize, the Presidential Design Achievement Award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Wow. With it came a reception in the White House at which he was able to introduce Gordie Eaton during his first week as new USGS Director to then-President Clinton. Still another first.

I really enjoyed working with Jim because he was willing to take chances to make major advances in whatever endeavor he saw would help the USGS. With his leadership, enthusiasm and intellectual acumen always on target, we all rose to the occasions to help advance the science of this world-class organization – and have great fun doing so.

**--Doug Posson**

I worked for Jim in four organizations and five different positions, in Colorado and Virginia. This spanned more than 20 years, more than half of my Federal career. These jobs were all highlights – working with Jim was a highlight in itself, no question. It was Jim who became my informal mentor, just as he was a mentor to a huge number of people, perhaps to just about everyone he touched.

Jim had a combination of charisma and vision, of intelligence and intuition. Of course, he wouldn't admit to intuition because he was a Myers-Briggs ESTJ personality type, basically a bull in a china closet. I considered his management style as General Patton's, and I liked it!

Jim was an engineer by education and carried his can-do attitude into WRD as a hydrologist in Pennsylvania and Colorado. He published many professional papers. One early paper related coal-mine drainage and water quality in all of Appalachia, and the team had lots of data to process.

It was some time in those early work experiences when Jim realized that newly acquired computer technology was going to be highly useful, in fact necessary, for the WRD and Survey mission. Jim would spend much of his career facilitating the development of powerful information systems for all Survey Divisions and as a way to collaborate with international agencies.

Example of Jim's methods: After Jim moved to the Northeastern Region in the late Seventies, he bought into email, a highly controversial decision, "a waste of time," said many, and began using email with Districts Chiefs and Regional staff, and only email, to announce certain Regional directives, times of meetings, requests for information, and so on. Jim's region was the first to use email as an official method of communication. Everyone from secretaries to the Deputy Regional Hydrologist thought Jim had gone off his rocker. Not so – Jim was just years ahead on the time line. He was the quintessential "early adopter." And this was why it was so fun to work with him.

As for the WRD Retirees organization in general and the Newsletter in particular, this was a natural fit for Jim, the extrovert and communicator. Joyce told me the other day that Jim loved the WRD Retirees as a way for career friends to stay connected. He enjoyed editing the newsletter, too, as a way to let people know about current WRD activities, facilitate local get-togethers as well as the reunions, share photos, and provide a way for people to let each other know what they are up to.

Jim told Joyce that he planned to continue editing the newsletter as long as he could. And so he did.

May you rest in peace, Jim, my friend. We'll see you later.

***--Charles Nethaway***

I worked with Jim for more than 10 years on the newsletter and many of you probably have no idea how important it was to Jim. My part was minute compared to the time and effort he put into it each quarter. He wanted to keep his WRD family in touch with each other and well informed. Before Jim took over the newsletter it consisted of just a few pages, and over the years he increased it to 20 and then to 24, with a large portion of each newsletter consisting of "News of Retirees." When each newsletter was near completion, he was always concerned about his computer crashing and would email the contents of the newsletter to me for safekeeping until it could be finalized. Even Newsletter 154 was completed by Jim before his recent surgery, never knowing that it would be his last. I told him several times throughout the years that I was ready to give up my small part and he always seemed to convince me, in a way that only Jim was capable of, to continue helping him. I most certainly will miss our quarterly meetings checking over that final version of the newsletter.

***--Dotty Woods***

Jim thoroughly enjoyed his retirement, and that was in part because of his work on the WRD Retirees Newsletter. It kept him in touch with friends and colleagues. He felt strongly that people should stay connected.

Among his great pleasures were the bi-annual reunions. He was always involved in some way and could usually be found in the hospitality room – often at or behind the bar. He was looking forward to joining friends in Idaho in September, and I'm sure that in spirit he will still be there.

***--Joyce Biesecker***

**SIXTEENTH WRD RETIREES REUNION 2012**  
**Boise, Idaho**  
**Thursday, September 20th through Saturday, September 22nd, 2012**

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### Hotel and transportation from airport

The Reunion will be held at the Owyhee Plaza Hotel in downtown Boise. The hotel has 100 guestrooms. Special amenities include in-room coffee makers, hospitality bar, hair dryers, irons and ironing boards, cable television, high speed wireless Internet access and executive work area.

**The Owyhee Plaza address is:** 1109 Main Street, Boise, ID 83702

**For reservations:** call **1-800-233-4611**. If you use their web site <http://www.owyheeplaza.com/> you will need to follow up with a phone call to get the USGS WRD Retirees' rate.

Room rates are \$75 for Single/Double, \$85 for Triple/Quad and \$125 for Suites. There is no charge for parking at the hotel.

Major airlines serving Boise are Southwest, United, Delta, US Airways, Frontier, Alaska, and American. The hotel has a courtesy shuttle from the airport ("Boise Shuttle Service"). Call 800-233-4611 when you arrive at the airport, then walk to the "Courtesy Shuttle" green curb right outside the baggage claim and look for the green & red vans. Also, with advance notification to the Owyhee, the Boise Shuttle Service can arrange for access-available vehicles. The airport is located just 15-minutes from downtown and there are several taxi services available.

If attendance exceeds the space available at The Owyhee, please contact Kathy Peter (kdpeter@gmail.com or 208-761-2989) for suggestions. There are several nearby hotels that are within easy walking distance of the Owyhee.

### Please register and make your hotel reservations as soon as possible.

Registration for the Reunion and Hotel Reservations must be made by August 15, 2012. To register, please print, complete, and mail the form at the end of this message or print the online form at:

<http://www.wrdretirees.org/Reunion2012>

You can pay by check or with a credit card by going to [www.PayPal.com](http://www.PayPal.com) clicking "Send Money" and make an online payment to the email address [WRD.Reunion.2012@gmail.com](mailto:WRD.Reunion.2012@gmail.com)

### Weather

Boise is a great place to visit in September, temperatures average in the high 70s during the afternoon and in the low 50s at night. The altitude of downtown Boise is about 2500 feet. Located near the western boundary of the Mountain Time Zone, sunset in late September is about 7:40 PM, making for long, cool, lovely evenings in Boise. Downtown Boise is alive in the evenings because of the numerous restaurants, bars, movie theaters, and clubs.

### Schedule of events

#### **Thursday, September 20, 2012**

##### **"The Escape" Full Day North Fork Cabarton Reach of the Payette River**

**Float Trip 8 AM - 5 PM:** Requires arrival in Boise no later than Wednesday, September 19, 2012. This tour will be an all-day float trip with Cascade Raft and Kayak Company of the Cabarton Reach of the North Fork of the Payette River. "Spectacular scenery with glimpses of Idaho's abundant wildlife highlight this full-day trip as you glide through eleven miles of dense, remote forest. Relax in the warm water, enjoy your delicious riverside lunch on this Class II-III section, and let the river wash the world away." Lunch, life-vests and cold-water gear (if needed) are included in the payment to Cascade Raft and Kayak Company. Please note, you must make reservations with the





**Cascade Raft and Kayak Company.** Specific contact information is on the registration form. \$85 for Float, \$25 for transportation from hotel to launch and from take-out.

**Reunion Check-in: Noon to 6 PM.**

(Official hotel room check-in time is 3:00 PM). Information packages containing Reunion functions will be available at a 'Reunion check-in' desk between 12 PM and 6 PM. The Hospitality Room will open at 12 PM. Included in registration.

**Informal Reunion 'kick-off' gathering 6 PM to 9 PM** will include a free 1<sup>st</sup> drink coupon for those participating in the kick-off gathering, a cash bar, and plentiful hors d'ouvres. \$25.

***Friday, September 21, 2012:***

**Business Meeting, 9 AM to 11 AM** All retirees and spouses are invited to participate in the business meeting. Agenda for the meeting will follow at a later date. Included in registration.

***Afternoon of free time to tour Boise on your own.***

**Optional Tour of Snake River wineries and orchards - 1 PM to 6 PM.** This tour will travel southwest of Boise to visit the West Snake River Valley Wine Country. Long known for its fruit orchards, more than two dozen wineries in this part of the Snake River Valley take advantage of the soils, climate, and irrigation water to produce a variety of wines. It is also the perfect time of year to try some local apples and other fruit. Transportation is \$30. Cost does not include any tasting fees that may be charged.

**Dinner on your own** There are many good restaurants within a short walk of the Hotel, including the dining room in the Owyhee Plaza.

***Saturday, September 22, 2012***

**Optional Tour Birds of Prey 8:45 AM to 5 PM** This tour will include a visit to the Peregrine Fund's World Center of Birds of Prey, Swan Falls Dam, and Canyon viewing area. The Peregrine Fund is a non-political, solution-oriented, and hands-on organization, with a mission to restore rare species through captive breeding and releases, improve capacity for local conservation, conduct scientific research and environmental education, and conserve habitat. The Velma Morrison Interpretive Center is a part of the World Center for Birds of Prey where visitors can enjoy seeing a number of raptors and learn about raptor biology, raptor behavior, falconry, and the various projects of The Peregrine Fund. You will see birds up close and flying demonstrations. Please see Bruce Parks excellent description of the Birds of Prey Center in the February newsletter and his work there as a volunteer or the Birds of Prey website. \$40; transportation, lunch, and the Center entrance fee are included. Walking on flat surfaces, some dirt.



**Optional Tour Boise "The City of Trees" 8:45 AM to 5 PM** This tour will take you around historic Boise and include stops at the Old Penitentiary, the MK Nature Center, and the Basque Center. \$40; transportation, entrance fees, and lunch are included. Walking on flat surfaces, mostly paved.

**Gala Banquet: 6 PM to 10 PM** -- Will include closing remarks by the WRD Retirees' President, and awards ceremony. \$35

***Sunday, September 23, 2012 - Tuesday September 25, 2012 Optional Reunion Post Trip to Sun Valley***

You will spend two nights at the [Sun Valley Resort](#), seen in classic movies like "Sun Valley Serenade" and site of the annual gathering of media moguls, the "Allen & Co. Sun Valley Conference", or a Ketchum hotel of your choice. The Resort is adjacent to the historic town of Ketchum on the Big Wood River, one of the top trout streams in Idaho. The bus trip from Boise will take you over Banner Summit to the upper Salmon Basin, through Stanley, past the Sawtooth Mountains, and over Galena Pass down the Big Wood River Valley to



Ketchum. The return trip will take a different route, traveling by way of the famous Thousand Springs of the Snake River Canyon near Hagerman.

Enjoy all that the beautiful Sun Valley has to offer. Swim in one of the resorts three swimming pools, including glass-enclosed hot pools. Shop in the Village or visit downtown Ketchum (using the free shuttle bus or walking on the bike path) to check out the shops, galleries, and unique restaurants. You also can rent bikes at the resort and take the bike trail into town and for many miles along the Wood River. It isn't too hilly (unless you decide to cross the pass to the Salmon River Basin!), and is a great way to enjoy that fresh air. If you like to chase a little white ball while you are walking, reserve a tee time at the Resort course, recognized by Golf Digest as one of the top 75 resort courses in North America. Clubs are available for rental. Be sure to check out the Duchin Lounge and see how many of the celebrities you can identify in the historic photos in the hallways of the Lodge. Don't miss Lucy and little Ricky!

The cost covers the bus and box lunches and drinks for the trip over and back.

You will stay at the Sun Valley Resort for 2 nights, check in on 9/23/2012 at 4 PM and check out 9/25/2012. You have a choice of rooms and condominiums. The Lodge is the beautiful, historic main building that is adjacent to the ice skating rinks and houses the Duchin Lounge. The Inn rooms are also lovely and a short walk from the Lodge. The Condominiums have multiple bedrooms, are within walking distance, and there is a free shuttle around the resort and downtown. We did not reserve a block because they required a non-refundable down payment on the block and we expect rooms to be available because late September weekends are not in a high demand season, and you get the flexibility to choose rooms that fit your needs.

To reserve at the Resort, call the hotel directly at 1-800-786-8259 or register online at:

<http://www.sunvalley.com/trip-planner/lodging/>

When you make your reservation you will be charged for the first night. That charge is refundable (minus a \$25 cancellation fee) if you cancel more than 30 days before scheduled check in on the 23rd.

Or, look for other lodging in downtown Ketchum at: <http://www.sunvalleyreservations.com/lodging>

Be sure to specify downtown; the bus will drop you off and pick you up on Tuesday.

*\$150.00 for bus and box lunches.* The bus will leave Boise on Sunday (September 23) at 9:00 AM and leave Sun Valley to return to Boise at 9:00 AM on Tuesday (September 25). Estimated return to Boise is 4:00 PM, so plan flights accordingly.

### **For More Information:**

Kathy Peter, Chair (ID) [kdpeter@gmail.com](mailto:kdpeter@gmail.com) 208-761-2989

Dan Ackerman (ID) [ackerman@cableone.net](mailto:ackerman@cableone.net)

Dave Appel (WA) [appeldh@colfax.com](mailto:appeldh@colfax.com)

John Briggs (OR) [jcbriggs2@comcast.net](mailto:jcbriggs2@comcast.net)

Bill Emmett (CO) [WilliamWEmmett@gmail.com](mailto:WilliamWEmmett@gmail.com)

Pauline Morgan (NV) [Com112831@aol.com](mailto:Com112831@aol.com)

Bruce Parks (ID) [parksbruce@yahoo.com](mailto:parksbruce@yahoo.com)

Deb Parliman (ID) [dparliman@yahoo.com](mailto:dparliman@yahoo.com)

Ivalou O'Dell [ivalou@cableone.net](mailto:ivalou@cableone.net)

Chet Zenone (OR) [chetwrz@live.com](mailto:chetwrz@live.com)

## SIXTEENTH WRD RETIREES REUNION 2012

**Boise, Idaho**

**Thursday, September 20th through Saturday, September 22nd, 2012**

Complete the following form, keep a copy, and mail the completed form, with your check payable to "WRD Retirees 2012" to:

WRD Retirees Reunion  
c/o Kathy D. Peter  
11208 W. Hickory Bark Dr.  
Boise, ID 83713

You can pay with a credit card using PayPal by [clicking here](#) and send the payment to the email address [WRD.Reunion.2012@gmail.com](mailto:WRD.Reunion.2012@gmail.com)

**REGISTRATION—DEADLINE AUGUST 15, 2012** - Refunds are available prior to the August 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Registration Fee</b>	Number _____ @ \$40 per person	\$ _____
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**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2012**

<b>"The Escape" North Fork Cabarton Reach of the Payette River Float Trip: cost \$85 to the Raft company.</b> Reserve directly with: Cascade Raft and Kayak, <a href="http://www.cascaderaft.com">www.cascaderaft.com</a> , Phone 800.292.7238 (8 am to 5 pm) <b>Reunion-provided Bus transportation cost is \$25</b>	Number: _____ @ \$25 per person for bus	\$ _____
<b>Informal Reunion 'kick-off' gathering 6 PM to 9 PM</b> (cash bar after 1 <sup>st</sup> drink)	Number _____ @ \$25 per person	\$ _____

**TOUR** Busses are reserved for each tour. Cancelled tours due to lack of participation will either be refunded or we will try to accommodate the participants in the remaining tour.

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2012 (Afternoon Optional Activity)**

<b>Tour of Snake River wineries and orchards. 1 to 6 PM</b>	Number: _____ @ \$30 per person	\$ _____
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**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2012**

	Number @ \$40 per person and lunch choice			
	Ham and Swiss	Turkey and Cheddar	Vegetarian	
<b>Birds of Prey 8:45 AM to 5 PM</b>				\$ _____
<b>The City of Trees 8:45 AM to 5 PM</b>				\$ _____
<b>Saturday Gala Banquet 6 to 10 PM</b>	Number attending _____ @ \$35 per person			
	Prime Rib	Salmon	Vegetarian	\$ _____

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2012 - TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 2012** Optional Reunion Post Trip to Sun Valley. Please refer back to 'REUNION POST TRIP -- Sun Valley Resort' for accommodations cost.

Transportation to and from Sun Valley (see details for hotel above).	Number attending _____ @ \$150 per person	\$ _____
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<b>Total (registration, reception, banquet, tours)</b>	\$ _____
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Questions? [WRD.Reunion.2012@gmail.com](mailto:WRD.Reunion.2012@gmail.com) or call Kathy Peter at 208-761-2989

## Bibliography: On-line Articles about Hydraulic Fracturing

By Tim Smith ([etsmithsiri@aol.com](mailto:etsmithsiri@aol.com))

Below is a selection of articles about hydraulic fracturing (fracking), with links for each one. This is not exhaustive, and new items are occurring continuously. To see the source of these and many other articles and papers, please refer to the Reports and Publications page of the Sustainable Water Resources Site at <http://sites.google.com/site/sustainablewaterresources/>

*Hydraulic Fracturing*, IWA Water Wiki, London, UK, 2011

[http://iwawaterwiki.org/xwiki/bin/view/Articles/Hydraulicfracturing?utm\\_source=WaterWiki+Connect&utm\\_campaign=d35541fcab-wikinews\\_June11&utm\\_medium=email](http://iwawaterwiki.org/xwiki/bin/view/Articles/Hydraulicfracturing?utm_source=WaterWiki+Connect&utm_campaign=d35541fcab-wikinews_June11&utm_medium=email)

This online article covers the whole process of hydraulic fracturing, used for the recovery of natural gas from shale rock. The contents include method, environmental and health effects, lawsuits, regulation, chemical constituents used, and other topics. Commentary is included from consultants and the Ground Water Protection Council.

Government Accountability Office, *Impacts of Potential Oil Shale Development on Water Resources*, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, GAO-11-929T, 2011.

<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d11929thigh.pdf>

GAO's testimony is based on its October 2010 report on the impacts of oil shale development (GAO-11-35). This testimony summarizes (1) what is known about the potential impacts of oil shale development on surface water and groundwater, (2) what is known about the amount of water that may be needed for commercial oil shale development, (3) the extent to which water will likely be available for such development and its source, and (4) federal research efforts to address impacts to water resources from commercial oil shale development. For its October 2010 report, GAO reviewed studies and interviewed water experts, officials from federal and state agencies, and oil shale industry representatives

Soeder and Kappel, *Water Resources and Natural Gas Production from the Marcellus Shale, USGS Fact Sheet 2009-3032, May 2009*. This document gives background information about the Marcellus Shale formation in the eastern U.S. The document can be found at

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2009/3032/pdf/FS2009-3032.pdf>

Kirker and Burger, *Just the Fracking Facts, University of Pittsburgh, Swanson School of Engineering, 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Freshman Conference, April 9, 2011*. This paper can be found at:

<http://136.142.82.187/eng12/history/spring2011/pdf/1267.pdf>

The Marcellus Shale formation stretches from Tennessee to New York, and it is estimated that there may be enough natural gas housed in these structures to supply the United States for approximately 100 years at current consumption rates. Positive effects include possible lower energy costs, about 280,000 jobs, and millions of dollars in local revenue. The fracking process involves cracking open the shale by injecting water, sand, and chemicals at extremely high pressure. However, along with the produced gas there are risks, benefits, and implications for sustainability.

EPA has published a report in February 2011, *Draft Plan to Study the Potential Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing on Drinking Water Resources*. This report can be found at:

<https://docs.google.com/open?id=0B8FZ9WSEG7a2VTdqdTI6OGhSZzZhME9tR1NCbWIIQQ>

This report covers the concerns about risks to drinking water supplies from the hydraulic fracturing process. EPA is now undertaking studies to determine the effects. There will be Retrospective Case Studies to investigate reported instances of drinking water resource contamination or other impacts in areas where hydraulic fracturing has already occurred. Three to five sites across the US will be investigated. A report of interim research results will be completed in 2012, mostly focusing on the Retrospective Studies. Prospective Case Studies will involve sites where hydraulic fracturing will occur after the research is initiated. Sampling will be done before, during, and after the process is carried out. Two to three sites in different regions of the US will be included. A second report in 2014 will include more information about the long-term results of the research.

Glassman, Diana, et al, *The Water-Energy Nexus, Adding Water to the Energy Agenda*, World Policy Institute, March 2011.

This is a large study that involves many sources of energy, only one of which is natural gas from hydraulic fracturing. It is one of the most comprehensive efforts found to date.

[http://www.worldpolicy.org/sites/default/files/policy\\_papers/THE%20WATER-ENERGY%20NEXUS\\_0.pdf](http://www.worldpolicy.org/sites/default/files/policy_papers/THE%20WATER-ENERGY%20NEXUS_0.pdf)

To enhance the quality of discussion and decision-making on the water-energy nexus, this policy paper provides the context needed to evaluate key tradeoffs. We present a comprehensive, user friendly guide to the most credible available data about water consumption per unit of energy produced across a spectrum of traditional and alternative energy technologies. We identify data holes and important issues that merit further attention. Based on existing data, the most startling finding is that (with some notable exceptions) both traditional and existing alternative energy technologies are evolving toward higher water consumption per unit of energy produced.

Natural gas produced by a technique called hydraulic fracturing is a game-changer that could alter the entire energy mix of transportation fuels and electricity generation. The main water issue here involves pollution, which is beyond the scope of this paper; however, additional research is needed on consumption, particularly in order to reflect substantial changes in the technology and its application to oil. Current data indicate that natural gas produced by hydraulic fracturing consumes seven times more water than conventional gas extraction but roughly the same amount of water as conventional oil drilling.



***Wasps in the Bedroom, Butter in the Well:  
Growing Up During the Great Depression***

**June Pair Kilpatrick**, wife of **Fritz Kilpatrick**, who retired from the Reston office of USGS in 1986, has published a family memoir, *Wasps in the Bedroom, Butter in the Well: Growing Up During the Great Depression*. June's parents were struck hard by the Depression when the rayon mill in Hopewell, VA, where her father worked, was raided during the night by unionizers. Shutting down the machinery quickly destroyed both the machinery and the material being manufactured. Overnight, nearly 2000 jobs were lost. Thus began the little family's Depression odyssey, from job to job and thus from town to town, house to house, and school to school, finally to the depths of rural Virginia where lamplight and outhouses served for electricity and plumbing. "Wasps" (Inkwater Press, Portland, Oregon) is available in print, 318 pages with 40 photographs, \$16.95; and Kindle eBook, \$5.99, through Inkwater Press, Amazon.com, or BarnesandNoble.com. Add \$3.05 for postage if ordering directly from June, 15901 Berkeley Drive, Haymarket, VA 20169.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Jean Barnes**, of Meridian, MS, wife of WRD Retiree **Harry Barnes**, passed away peacefully at home on May 4, 2012, at the age of 84. She had suffered from Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's in her later years. They married in 1947 and had celebrated their 63rd anniversary. Jean was born on March 1, 1928, in Chunky, MS. Harry retired in 1980 when he had been Chief, Surface Water Branch for 7 years. He began working for the USGS in 1950, first in Mississippi, then in Atlanta as the Southeastern Region Flood Specialist. Prior to transferring to Reston in 1973, Harry was the District Chief in Tennessee. Harry welcomes phone calls from his Survey friends.

**Patricia Ann "Patsy" Campbell**, active employee of WRD and a lifelong resident of Leesburg, VA, passed away January 5, 2012, at age 57. Patsy was born August 22, 1954 in Leesburg to the late David Tony Campbell, Sr. and Mrs. Bernice Bryant Campbell. She graduated in 1974 from Loudoun Valley High and began a 37-year career with the USGS in Reston, VA. Patsy worked in the USGS library when she was 15 years old. She started at USGS in 1974 as a Clerk Typist in Human Services and then worked in the Geologic Division and moved to the Water Resources Division in about 1975, earning her title as Electronic Publications Specialist. She was a member of the First Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Leesburg. She loved to sing and was in the choir. She will always be remembered as "Beautiful Patsy" a loving mother, grandmother, sister, daughter, and friend. Her USGS family will sure miss her beautiful smile and laughter. Patsy is survived by her daughter, Leslie; son, Jason; mother, Bernice; 5 siblings, James, Helen, Edith, David, and Brenda; six grandchildren; one brother in-law that preceded her in death; 15 nieces and nephews which 4 preceded her in death; and 7 great nephews and nieces. Thanks for this "In Memoriam" go to Patsy's colleagues and friends, Marilyn Billone and Sharon McKinney. Memorial contributions are being accepted to the Patsy Campbell Memorial Fund, Account No. 0000159152219 c/o BB&T Bank, 141 Rubens Circle, Martinsburg, WV 25403.

**Michael Lee "Mike" Field**, 70, of Gore, VA, entered into rest on Monday, March 26, 2012, in Winchester Medical Center. Mr. Field was born in Muskegon, MI, the son of Vivian Field of Gilbert, AZ, and the late Bernard "Bud" Field. He moved to Arizona with his family in 1951 where he married and started a family. While working for the USGS, his family was transferred to Virginia in 1973. In Reston, Mike worked with the groundwater modelers in the Northeastern Region, then in the Data Relay Project. His wife, **Aloma**, was the Data Relay secretary until she transferred to the Northeastern Regional Hydrologist's Office. After retirement he and his wife moved to Gore, where he drove a school bus for Frederick County Public Schools. Surviving with his mother and wife are his children, Becky Field-Ross and husband, Larry; Annette Field and husband, Stephen Potter, and Mathew Field; stepchildren, Maria L. Pruitt and William L. Perdichizzi; sister, Margaret Burns and husband, Bill, of Golden Colorado; brother, Mitchell Field and wife, Becky, of Gilbert, AZ; four grandchildren, Joshua Butcher, Ashley Ross-Hayden, BrookeAnne Ross, Dakota "Cody" Butcher and two step-grandchildren, Jennifer Pruitt and Joey Pruitt, III. Arrangements were handled by Omps Funeral Home, Amherst Chapel.

**Michael Galvez** of Sacramento, CA, passed away on August 13, 2008, at the age of 63. Michael was born on August 6, 1945. He retired from WRD in 2005.

**Melvin "Mel" Hanes** passed away quietly at his home in Centreville, VA, on Friday, February 10th at the age of 91 after a short battle with cancer. Mel, originally from Baltimore, was born on October 22, 1920. He was married to **Margaret** (Murray) Hanes of Rosyth, Fife, Scotland for nearly 50 years. She preceded him in death in July of 1992. He is survived by his children, Verna E. Hanes, MD of Ronceverte, WV; Melvin Angus Hanes of Houston, TX; and Lorna Margaret (Hanes) Morrison (Terrance) of Niceville, FL; 8 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren. Mel is also survived by Laura Scheuring and her 3 children who were like a second family to him. Visitation and Masonic services were held Thursday, February 16, 2012, at Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home in Alexandria, VA.

**Robert E. Hansen**, 81, of Iowa City, passed away peacefully on Thursday, March 29, 2012, at Briarwood Health Care Center where he was also under the care of Iowa City Hospice. Robert was born on May 11, 1930. He was a geologist and hydrologist and worked in the Iowa District for his entire career. Robert retired from WRD in 1988. Survivors include his wife, **Mary**, of Iowa City; a son, Rusty (Becky Soglin) of Iowa City; and two daughters, Jennifer Hansen of Duluth, MN and Kathleen Hansen of Iowa City. Robert was preceded in death by his parents; a sister, Roberta McGhee Gorman; and a son, Paul Jay Hansen.

**Alice A. Kennedy** (nee Noon), passed away on June 24, 2011. Alice was the beloved wife of the late **Edward Kennedy**, loving mother of Patricia, John, Joan, Jasper, Bairbre, and Robert, cherished grandmother of 5 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren, dear sister of Joan Noon Kirkwood, Patricia Noon Kopf, the late Victor Jr., Robert, and John Noon. Services were held at the Sterling-Ashton-Schwab-Witzke Funeral Home of Catonsville, MD. Interment was in All Saints Cemetery in Reisterstown, MD. Her husband, Edward, retired WRD employee, passed away on August 25, 2007, at the age of 89. Ed worked for the USGS from 1939 until his retirement in 1980. After graduating from the

## IN MEMORIAM

School of Engineering, University of Maryland, at the age of 19, Ed was assigned to surface-water projects and leadership roles in Maryland, Kentucky, and Kansas, where he covered the disastrous 1951 flood; Tennessee, where he became the District Chief; and then to Virginia in the Headquarters Surface Water Branch until his retirement.

**John Patrick "Pat" Maguire** passed away Thursday, March 22, 2012, in Austin, TX, at the age of 68. Pat was born in Austin to James Maguire and Pauline Josey Maguire on August 10, 1943. He grew up in and lived in Austin his entire life. Pat graduated from Austin High School and worked at the USGS up until retirement. Pat is survived by his two children, Kathleen "Kathy" Maguire Murray and Brian Patrick Maguire; 5 grandchildren, PFC Jonathan Roy Murray and Mia Murray, and Layla, Ana, and Brian Maguire, Jr.; and many loving nieces, nephews, and cousins. He is preceded in death by both of his parents, his sisters, and his wife, **Sue** Jokerst Maguire. Arrangements were made at the Cook-Walden Funeral Home in Austin and interment was at Mount Calvary Cemetery.

**Russell Lonnie "Russ" McAvoy** of Roseland, VA, died on March 28, 2011, at the age of 85. He was born in Michigan on August 19, 1925. His parents were Lonnie and Marion McAvoy from West Virginia and French-Canada, respectively. After graduating from high school in 1943, Russ enlisted and served in the Regular Navy, Photographic Squadron 1, Pacific Fleet, after training in math, science, meteorology, navigation, and flight training in the Navy's V5 and V12 programs at Wooster, Ohio. After his discharge at the end of the war, Russ enrolled in Bridgewater College, VA, 1946-1948, and graduated with a B.A. in chemistry. McAvoy's first post-college job was as a chemist for the Rustless Steel Corporation in Baltimore where he performed analyses on alloys. Russ' USGS career began in 1949 in the Quality of Water Branch in Charlottesville, VA, as a chemist, then chemist-in-charge of laboratory and field work while taking courses at the University of Virginia. In 1952, Russ transferred to Palmer, AK, to run the laboratory there, managing reconnaissance of water parameters for five daily and several hundred intermittent sampling sites. While stationed in Palmer, he was detailed to Washington, DC for 5 months to work on special water analyses, methods, and techniques. Russ continued to accept positions of increasing responsibility throughout his career, and in 1976 after a new Central Laboratory was established in Denver, Russ became its first Chief. He retired in 1980 after 34 years of Federal service, including his two years of active-duty Navy in WWII. After retirement, Russ remained active. In 1989, he was a Regional Engineer for the Division of Waste Management in Radford, VA, and spoke to the New River Resource Authority on the efficiency of a proposed landfill.

**Joyce Ann Phipps**, of Fairfax, VA, passed away on October 28, 2011. She was the beloved wife of 55 years to **Dr. Richard L. Phipps**; loving mother of John W. Phipps; and grandmother of Brian Johnson. Mrs. Phipps was predeceased by her daughter, Cynthia Lee Phipps and her brothers, Jack and George Goegle.

**Virgil Leroy Spiers** of Grand Prairie, TX, passed away on April 17, 2011, at the age of 85. Virgil was born on January 9, 1926, in Oakley, KS. He was a B-24 Sperry Ball gunner in the Army Air Corp. from 1944 to 1946, destined but never sent to attack Japan. Virgil married **Betty** M. Chastain on July 15, 1951, the love of his life, whom he first met on a blind date in May 1951. In 1954, Virgil joined the USGS as a young "hydraulics" engineer – in one sense, his final career move. As a young engineer, Virgil moved first to Santa Fe, NM, his first WRD posting, then to Carlsbad, Wichita Falls, San Angelo, Council Bluffs, and finally to Rockport, IL. As Virgil, Betty, and their family moved again and again, he progressed in his career to District Chief Engineer, managing surface-water data for major river systems in each district. He retired in 1984. After his retirement and with a strong desire to be as close as possible to their children and grandchildren, they relocated back to Texas, first to Eastland and then to Mineral Wells, and finally into the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Virgil is survived by his wife who now lives in Arlington, TX. He is also survived by three siblings; children, Mark Spiers, Janiel Henry, Craig Spiers, and Jilynn Davis; 6 grandchildren; and 4 great-grandchildren.

**Billie Eugene Wasson**, a tree farmer, hydrologist, and veteran of World War II, passed away at his home on April 28, 2006, in Kosciusko, MS, at the age of 81. Billie was born on April 15, 1925 in the Shady Grove Community of Attala County. He was the eleventh of fifteen children of Bessie Wade Wasson and Zachariah A. Wasson. Billie graduated from Kosciusko High School in 1943 and Mississippi State in 1948. He was in the Navy v-12 officer training program, was commissioned Lieutenant JG, and served in the South Pacific during World War II. He was a hydrologist with the USGS for 30 years and was also a tree farmer. Mr. Wasson was Mississippi Forestry Association's East Central District Tree Farmer of the Year in 1998. Billie is preceded in death by his son, Billie James; daughter, Margaret Ann; his parents; his sisters, Wilma Forrester and Aline Alkin; and his brothers, Zack Bailey, Resa, Ocran, Persy, David, Carroll Wade, and James. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, **Sarah** Sloss Wasson; his daughters, Sara Byrd and her husband, Jim, of Overland Park, KS; Mary Bess Bryant and her husband, John, of Kosciusko; Lacy Nielson and her husband, Steve, of Little Rock, AR; and Ellen Wasson of Albuquerque, NM; and his sons, John Wasson of Kosciusko and Gene Wasson and his wife Tara of Madison. Billie is also survived by 3 sisters, 2 brothers, and 12 grandchildren. Graveside services were held at Parkway Cemetery in Kosciusko.



## MEMORIAL

### Horace Maxson “Bab” Babcock 1917-2012

Horace Maxson Babcock passed away on March 16, 2012 at the age of 95. Horace or “Bab” as he was known by most of his friends and associates began his career in 1939 with the USGS as a Junior Engineer in the Tucson District office of the Ground Water Branch of the Water Resources Division. By 1941 he was made assistant to the District Engineer and was responsible for supervision of field investigations in Arizona. Bab worked on numerous field projects around the state but the most significant of his work occurred in the Safford Valley because that is where he met a high school teacher named Mary Helen Morgan who he married in December of 1940.



Bab’s career with the USGS had a slight interruption while he served in the Navy from 1942 to 1945. During this time, he was the commanding officer of the USS Extractor when it was sunk in a friendly fire incident by an American submarine, the USS Guardfish, on January 24, 1945 near Guam. He then commanded the USS Catbird until honorably released from active duty on November 7, 1945. (The sinking of the Extractor is covered in the book “Nothing Friendly in the Vicinity” by Claude C. Conner, 1999 Bluejacket Books, Naval Institute Press Annapolis, Maryland.)

Upon release from the Navy, Bab returned to the USGS in Arizona and was assigned to the Phoenix office where he worked on various ground-studies. His first two sons, Thomas and Joseph, were born in Phoenix. In 1949, he transferred to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he supervised the Missouri River Basin studies in Wyoming and western Nebraska. In 1951, he was named District Supervisor for Wyoming and served in that capacity until 1958. He was responsible for all ground-water aspects of water-resources programs for the USGS in Wyoming and worked closely with other Federal and State officials on current and potential future water problems. Cheyenne is also where his first daughter, Catherine, and third son, Richard were born. In 1958, Bab was transferred to the USGS National Office Washington DC, where from 1958 to 1963, he served as Chief of the Operations Section and then as Assistant Chief of the Groundwater Branch. In this capacity, he was responsible for assisting in the management of all ground-water field and research studies throughout the United States and its territories. Another significant event that occurred during this time period was the birth of Bab’s second daughter, Margaret, in 1961. In 1963, he returned to Arizona to reorganize the diverse water-related activities of the USGS in the State, making Arizona one of the first three States to be reorganized into a program that was then extended into all fifty States.

Bab retired in 1977 as the USGS Arizona District Chief and in 1985 as the Federal Commissioner for the Pecos River Commission where he had served by Presidential appointment since 1971. After his retirement from the USGS, he continued his career as a consultant to the World Bank as an internationally recognized authority on arid-zone hydrology for programs in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal, Philippines, Sudan, India, and Egypt. He wrote over 46 technical reports and papers on water resources issues, supplies, and problems in the Western United States.

Bab was awarded an AA Degree from Phoenix College in 1936, a BS Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Arizona in 1939, and a Professional Degree (Honorary) for outstanding achievement in Hydrology from the University of Arizona in 1955. He also was awarded the Outstanding Performance Award in 1963 and the Meritorious Service Award for the Department of the Interior in 1969.

He was preceded in death by his bride of nearly 60 years Mary Helen (Morgan); two of his sons Richard and Thomas; his two sisters Grace and Mary; and five of his six brothers, Ernest, Elkanah, James, John, and Grant. He is survived by one brother, Ross; his two daughters, Margaret and Catherine; and one son, Joseph; six grandchildren, Catherine, Elizabeth, Laura, Adam, David, and Joseph; as well as six great grandchildren, Sarah, Amanda, Catherine, Dennis, Laura Ellen, and Dimetrius.

Horace lived a long and full life and will be remembered by his family in a way summarized by a quote from the last stanza in one of his favorite poems “Invictus” by William Ernest Henley. The verse reads: “It matters not how straight the gate, how charged with punishment the scroll, I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.”

By: Joseph Babcock

## MEMORIAL

### James E. (Jim) Biesecker 1941-2012

James E. "Jim" Biesecker died at his home in Leesburg, VA, on January 24, 2012 after having surgery on the previous day. He was 71 years old, much too young to leave his family and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) family. The entire Biesecker family lost a loving husband, father, and family man. The USGS lost an outstanding leader and an icon on everything he touched. Jim, who was born and raised in Sharon, PA, is survived by his wife, Joyce, of more than fifty years; three sons, Brian, Keith and Bruce; two daughters-in-law; six grandchildren; and a sister, Jane.

Jim graduated from the Pennsylvania State University (PSU) in 1962 with a B.S. degree in Civil and Sanitary Engineering followed by an M.S. degree in Sanitary Engineering from PSU in 1963. Jim was selected for graduate school training by the USGS and finished all course work towards a PhD at Purdue University.

Jim began his career with the USGS in 1963 by accepting a position with the Quality of Water Branch of the Water Resources Division (WRD) in Harrisburg, PA, as a Hydraulic Engineer, GS-7. He was assigned to an interdisciplinary team appraising the water resources of the Schuylkill River Basin. By 1964, he was promoted to the leadership position on the Schuylkill River project. From that point on, which was early in his career, he never held a position in which he was not a leader of some degree. In 1968, after his schooling at Purdue ended, he transferred to the Washington D.C. office at the Quality of Water Branch. While not the Branch Chief, he assumed many leadership positions, including writing technical guidelines for the WRD operational programs, leading technical reviews of District programs, developing of the water quality aspects of a National Hydrologic Bench-Mark Network Program, and working on a task group to study the concept of centralized water-quality laboratories.



From 1972-1978, Jim served the USGS in the Colorado District in Denver. First, he was the Chief, Hydrologic Studies Section, where he supervised 35 employees, more than many other districts had in total. In 1973, he was selected as District Chief, with a staff of 80, one of the largest Districts in the country with respect to number of employees and size and quality of program. In both of the above capacities, Jim served on many statewide water committees, task forces, and commissions, many times chairing them.

In 1978, Jim became the Regional Hydrologist Northeast Region (NR), which included 19 states. His largest impact was to significantly enhance interpretive programs while maintaining the integrity of the data program. One of his major desires was to bring all the Northeast Region Districts into the world of computer power and he made the NR the first region to develop a high-level Regional Computer Specialist position to impart computer knowledge to the Districts.

In 1981, Jim became the Assistant Chief Hydrologist for Scientific Publications and Data Management at the Headquarters level at WRD where he excelled in the leadership of both aspects. He put together a task force, which significantly shortened and improved the reports production, review and processing system, mostly by delegating control to lower levels. Jim was also prominent in establishing a distributed computer network for the WRD with powerful computers in each District Office. This was a major undertaking and may have been the first of its kind in the USA. He also planted the seeds for a future system that put a computer on every employee's desk.

Jim became so prominent in all aspects of information management in WRD that in 1990 the Director of the USGS selected him as the Assistant Director for Information Systems and the Chief of the Information Systems Division. In this dual role, he served as the senior policy official and chief advisor to the Director of the USGS on matters relating to information management, dissemination, and technology.

In 1995, Jim returned to the WRD as a senior advisor. He retired in 1996. During his career, Jim authored or co-authored over 50 publications and gave countless presentations, both technical and managerial. Jim was the recipient of a number of awards during his career, including the Meritorious and Distinguished Service Awards of the Department of the Interior. He also received two more awards of even more significance: Presidential awards from Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton for moving the USGS forward to the highest level in technology transfer.

Since his retirement, Jim served as Editor, WRD Retirees Newsletter, until his passing and all who received the newsletter know he did an outstanding Job. He had also continued associations with his many colleagues and enjoyed life during retirement. He and Joyce attended all the WRD Retirees Reunions and they traveled extensively in Europe with friends and most recently to Australia. Jim also went fishing at least once each year to Cape Hatteras, NC, with former colleagues. Jim, Joyce and their long-time friends, Tom and Jeannie Yorke, attended Penn State football games together since graduation.

Jim Biesecker was an exceptional employee for the USGS. He was extremely intelligent, very forward thinking and his leadership and management skills were second to none and were always put to use on the highest-level programs. He was also the most personable and fun-loving man I have ever known. I am sure there are multitudes of USGS folks who are missing Jim very much, including me.

By: Herb Freiburger  
Contributions from Tom Yorke, Hal Langford, Jim Blakey, and Charles Nethaway

**MEMORIAL  
WILLIAM "BILL" SCHNEIDER**

**1921-2012**

William J. Schneider was born on September 20, 1921, in Brooklyn, New York. He died in Riverside, California, on February 16, 2012, at the age of 90, one year after he had a stroke. In the last year of his life he developed congestive heart failure, and he passed away while under hospice care and with his children nearby.

Bill's was first-generation American. His parents were William George Schneider, a painter from Germany, and his mother, "Minny," was eastern European. Bill had two brothers, George and Warren. Bill enlisted in the Army early in World War II and served in Europe and Japan.

After the war, Bill enrolled at Ohio State University. While at OSU, he met and in 1946 married Willa Marie Terrell (1924-1996). They were married for 28 years had four children, Patricia Giacquinta, David, Beth, and Keith Schneider. He also had four grandchildren: Reed Schneider, Maggie Schneider (unfortunately she was killed on her way back to the University (Duke) by a drunk driver in 2004), Paige Buros (married in 2009), and Delaney Schneider (currently going to school in New Mexico).



While at OSU, Bill became an aide for the USGS, 1949-1951. Upon graduating from OSU, Bill joined WRD in the Surface Water Branch in Columbus, serving there from 1951 to 1957. Bill was then transferred to Albany, 1957-1959, where he studied the impact of reforestation in New York. Then, in 1959, Bill was transferred to Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia and lived in Annandale, then McLean. Bill worked out of Headquarters until 1980 when he retired and added one more year as a rehired annuitant.

Although Bill spent the much of his career officially assigned to the Virginia Headquarters of WRD, he took every opportunity to be on the road, traveling to Idaho, Alaska, and Florida to do analytical and environmental impact studies. Bill loved taking on assignments that required traveling. He did an analysis of the effects of strip mining in Idaho. In 1966-1967, Bill was a team member of a group that was detailed to Thailand and Laos to analyze the hydrologic system in the Lower Mekong River. He was on an interdivisional committee to develop standards for the delineation of surface-water entities on topographic maps. Part of this effort involved analyzing aerial photography, including Eros photography, of the Everglades. Bill studied the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska.

Bill considered the highlight of his career to be the environmental impact study that he did in relation to the construction of the Alaska Pipeline. North to Alaska, Bill would spend a few weeks there, then a few weeks back in Virginia.

When Bill was a rehired annuitant, he continued to study the surface- and ground-water systems in the Everglades, making several trips to the Miami office. He also served as senior advisor to staff scientists involved in complex environmental problems throughout the country.

Soon after Bill officially retired for good, he turned to the WRD Retirees Newsletter and became editor. He loved doing the newsletter and enjoyed getting together with old friends of similar background. He resigned as editor when he moved to California to be near one of his children due to his declining health. Beth, his daughter, remembers that he moved in 2001 because his scheduled flight to California got canceled because of the 9-11 attacks and the grounding of all flights for several days.

One of Bill's long-held hobbies was stamp collecting. He had many stamp albums and continued this hobby for years. Bill also had a woodworking shop when in McLean and crafted a lot of furniture for the home. After retirement, Bill continued to travel, especially to see his children on "the circuit," to California, Canada, New York, and New Mexico. He was able to keep his 100,000-mile frequent-flier membership and received free tickets and other perks. Beth and Bill traveled to Miami in those last years and visited the Everglades. Bill was able to give Beth a full briefing on the hydrology of the Everglades!

He and his children went out to the ocean, and although he could not swim, he braved a two-man kayak with Beth. Sure enough, they capsized. After help from both Beth and Keith, he made it ashore. Just one more fun experience!

By: Charles Nethaway  
Contributions from Beth Schneider

## TREASURER'S REPORT, FIRST QUARTER 2012

Treasurer Celso Puente reports that the organization had \$20,604.27 in its treasury at the end of the first quarter for calendar year 2012. Receipts for the quarter were \$8,230.00 from dues and contributions from 365 members. Distributions for the quarter were \$664.90, including the costs for the printing of the WRD Retirees Newsletter. During the quarter, a total of \$1,330.00 in contributions was received from 76 members.

Special thanks for contributions above dues go to:

Everett Richardson, Charles Nethaway, George T. Cardwell, Richard A. Gardner, Jimmy Pond, Gerald Rockwell, Gilbert Bertoldi, C. A. Pascale, Ruth Thornberg-Yeager, James F. Blakey, Beverly Josefson, Gerald Parker, Bruce Foxworthy, Celso Puente, Wayne Webb, Gary Gallino, Colleen Babcock, Walter Swain, James Peters, Allan and Jean Brown, Stanley Sauer, Robert and Carolyn Wakelee, Gary Cobb, James R. Slack, James B. Hood, Douglas Posson, Joe A. Moreland, Chester Thomas, Harold D. Golden, Charles Showen, Raymond Smith, Eileen R. Smith, Theodore Arnow, Donald Vaupel, Joe Rosenshein, Verne Schneider, Vincent Lai, Warren Teasdale, Bobby D. Ramsay, Jody Eimers, Richard Luckey, Donald Leifeste, David H. Appel, Leland Hauth, Allan M. Lumb, Debbi and Rick Lumia, William P. Bartlett, Gary Turney, John D. Warren, Robert G. Simpson, Veronica Andreani, Philip Cohen, Craig Bentley, Herbert Freiburger, Ferdinand Quinones, Ronald Rathbun, Frederick C. Dreher, Richmond Brown, Billy Paul Robinson, Kenneth Markham, Paul D. Hayes, Margie Shapira, Norman Hutchison, Sharon B. Mathey, Rick Grover, Carole L. Thomas, Dot Niles, Roger Rumenik, Chester Zenone, Irwin Kantrowitz, Robert Knutilla, Charles Bryant, Jo Ann Eggers, Robert Brennan, and Keith V. Slack.

### Introducing WRD Retirees Newsletter Supplements

We received an excellent suggestion from Retiree **Jim Daniel** of Las Vegas, Nevada about using some stories that might not fit into the Newsletter. President **Andy Anderson**, Web Site manager **Ken Lanfear**, and I thought about how we could do this. We decided we could receive items by email and put them in a modified newsletter format, and post them on our WRD Retirees web site. We will also distribute the Supplement to our normal email list.

We encourage you to send us articles, even long ones, on any subject of interest to fellow retirees. You may send photos, either by themselves or with the articles, with dates, captions, and names of people, if known. So, put on your thinking cap, rummage through your unpublished notes, and send stuff our way. The first Supplement will include articles by **Jim Daniel**, **John Baker**, **John D. Warren**, and **Brian Kelk** of England.

You can find this first Supplement on our WRD Retirees web site at [www.wrcretirees.org](http://www.wrcretirees.org), clicking on **Newsletter** in the column of subjects under Content. On the Newsletters page to the right, under May 2012, there will be a unique connection for the Supplement, posted as [May 2012 \(S\)](#).

Please contact me if you want to discuss ideas about potential articles. I'm always glad to be a sounding board!

--Charles Nethaway, WRD Retirees Newsletter Editor

[Click here to go to the Supplement.](#)