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# USGS RETIREES

NEWSLETTER 177  
November 2017

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hope this newsletter finds all of you doing well. I hope everyone is having a great Year. Don't forget to plan to attend the next reunion scheduled for September 13-15, 2018 in Minnesota. Those of you who have attended past reunions seemed to have a great time. Consider calling a retiree that you have not seen at the reunions lately and invite them. If they are not Retiree Organization Members, invite them to join AND attend the next reunion. Such personal invites could have significant effect and a good way to refresh friendships.

Please note the telephone number to contact the Retirees' Secretary has changed. The new telephone number is (703) 596-5468, and is annotated in the side-bar of this page.

A major action item for this newsletter by the retirees is the **ELECTION OF USGS RETIREES OFFICERS: 2018-2019 BIENNIUM** on pages 2 and 3 with accompanying resumes, and the **ELECTION OF USGS RETIREES OFFICERS: 2018-2019 BIENNIUM BALLOT** on page 3. As noted, names of volunteers have been added; however, a write-in name option is available. No organization is sustainable without the support of volunteers.

Our Thanks to Andy. Andy Anderson has expressed a desire to step-down as Secretary. We extend our grateful thanks to Andy, USGS Retirees Secretary, for his years of service and all the hard work. He has been doing a tremendous job for many years and will be missed. Andy carried out an enormous range of tasks, like collecting mail from the PO Box in Herndon, and posting all checks before sending them on to our Treasurer. He updated the Excel spreadsheet of members, which is used to make the mailing labels and the "paid through" file, the date that appears on your mailing label. Andy also covered office email and telephone duties. Coordinated with the Editor and Layout Editor for each quarterly newsletter. When we held the quarterly mail outs, Andy has been our host and arranged for a conference room, got the mailing labels printed, provided envelopes and supplies, and interacted with the USGS mail room to get the newsletter and directory to you. We have new volunteers in Reston that will be helping with this job. Thanks again, Andy, and don't be a stranger!

This is also a reminder to all the state reps to stay in touch with the local office on regular basis, so we can keep apprised of retirees and other activities. We don't get notifications like we used to. Thank you for all you do for the Retirees.

This will be my last message because this is my last year to be your President. I hope all of you are doing well and thank you for all the help the last two years.



## ELECTION OF USGS RETIREES OFFICERS: 2018 - 2019 BIENNIUM

It is election time. The slate of candidates, selected by the Board of Directors, is shown below with a brief biographical sketch for each.

**President, James ‘Jim’ Stark:** Jim is an Emeritus Scientist, having recently retired as Director of the Minnesota Water Science Center and a new Retirees’ member. Jim’s educational background includes a BA degree from the University of Minnesota, MS degrees in geology and in water resources from the University of Wisconsin, and an MBA from the University of St. Thomas. Jim began his career in the Michigan District and worked in the Utah District prior to transferring to the Minnesota District. In Minnesota, Jim held positions as staff hydrologist, groundwater specialist, National Water Quality Assessment lead, studies chief, and as Center Director. Jim, and his wife Carol, live in St. Paul, MN. They have two grown children and two grandchildren. In retirement, Jim stays involved in the activities of the Science Center, and with several outside activities ranging from officiating youth basketball, to volunteering at his church, and as a board member of the Minnesota Land Trust.

**Vice President, Alberto “Al” Condes:** Al began his career with WRD as a streamgager in Arizona. After a 4-year leave of absence to serve as a lieutenant in the US Air Force, he returned to the AZ District to work in construction, special studies, and then as Subdistrict Chief in Yuma. Al moved to Headquarters and worked as Contracts Coordinator and then as Chief of the Operations Branch. He is a Registered Professional Engineer in Arizona and a recipient of the Department of the Interior Meritorious Service Award. Al and his wife, Mary, reside in Fairfax, VA.

**Secretary, Kate Flynn:** Kate began her career with USGS in 1974 as a hydro tech at the Gulf Coast Hydroscience Center in Bay St Louis, MS; working on the Flood Plain Simulation and Deterministic Modeling projects. In 1984, she transferred to the Office of Surface Water in Reston. In Reston she worked with watershed modeling software and flood and low flow frequency software, providing user support and training on the software to Water Science Center staff. Kate retired in 2016.

**Treasurer, Cathy Hill:** Cathy began her career with USGS in 1976 as a physical science aid in the Atlanta lab. From there she moved to the Georgia District as a Hydrologist, then Office Chief of the Statesville Sub-district Office. This was followed by Project Leader and Data Section Chief in the Raleigh Office. From there she went to the Director’s Office as Staff Assistant, then the Northeast Region as Area Hydrologist, followed by WRD Operations Chief, etc. The key position in terms of taking on the Treasurer responsibilities is the Operations Chief where she oversaw the WRD budget that was in the millions of dollars. She retired from the USGS in 2006.

**Archivist, Richard A. “Dick” Engberg:** Dick Engberg retired in 1999. He started with WRD in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1962 as a Physical Science Aid while attending the University of Nebraska. In 1965, he was rated as a chemist. He remained in the Nebraska until 1986 when he became District Chief, Iowa. In 1990, he was selected as Manager, National Irrigation Water Quality Program. Since retirement, he has worked part-time for the American Water Resources Association. He received the Distinguished Service Award and resides in Sterling, VA with his wife, Lynne, also a retired USGS employee.

**Northeastern Region, James “Jay” Kiesler:** I’m Jay Kiesler and I retired from the US Geological Survey in January 2015 after working in Kentucky, Florida, Reston, and Indiana. I look forward to working with the retirees located in the northeast to help retirees stay connect to the Retirees’ organization and the USGS. If you have any suggestions for me, please feel free to send me an email at [jaykiesler@gmail.com](mailto:jaykiesler@gmail.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

**Southeastern Region, Jeffrey “Jeff” T. Armbruster:** Jeff’s USGS-WRD career included assignments in Columbia, SC (1964-71); Miami, FL (’71-’73); Champaign, IL (’73-’74); Harrisburg, PA (’74-’79); Augusta, ME; Atlanta, GA; and Reston, VA. He was Subdistrict Chief in Maine from 1979-81; District Chief of the GA District from ’81-’90; and the SE Region’s Coordinator for the National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program from ’90-’99. His final assignment was on the Director’s Staff in Reston from 2000-2001. He received the Superior Service Award (1985) and the Meritorious Service Award (1989). Jeff and his wife, Laurel, live in Norcross, GA.

**Central Region, Ken Lindskov:** Here is a brief summary of Ken’s career as an introduction to becoming chosen as representative for the Central Region of WRD Retiree’s. Ken graduated with a BS in Civil Engineering, in 1965, with emphasis on hydraulics and water resources. A Chi Epsilon honors graduate, he took his first job with the Surface Water Branch in Topeka, KS. He completed the Division’s 18-month training program, operating streamflow stations and with short assignments to the Water-Quality and Ground-Water branches. While in Kansas, he worked in Topeka,

Wichita, and Lawrence, as the three branches were combined at the state level and titled WRD. In his fourth year he worked on a Master's program in water resources at the University of Kansas. The next assignment was 4 years in Raleigh, N.C. with programs in flood mapping, dye studies of streamflow, and multidiscipline areal studies. In 1974, he moved to St. Paul, MN where he did studies of low streamflow. He also worked on a dye study of Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers in the Metro Area. In 1977, he moved to Salt Lake City, UT to head a Large water resources study of the southeastern Uinta basin with emphasis on determining potential effects of oil-shale development on the water resources of the Upper Colorado River Basin. Also, while in Utah, he was involved in water-resources studies of the tar sands and coal areas, a statewide study of flood frequency, and served as the District Surface Water Specialist. In 1988, he moved to North Dakota and served as Chief of the Hydrologic Studies Section. In 1991, he moved to Rapid City, SD to serve as Sub-District Chief. When the District Office was moved from Huron to Rapid City, Ken served as District Chief until retirement in 1998.

**Western Region, E. James "Jim" Crompton:** Jim is a graduate of Michigan Technological University and the University of Arizona. He began his career with the USGS in Nashville, TN. He was then transferred to the Indiana District for 8 years and finished his career in Carson City, NV. Since retiring in 2013, Jim has been spending his time as an international mountain bike referee at races in North and South America. When Jim is not traveling, he volunteers at Tahoe Rim Trail Association as a crew leader, Carson-Tahoe Hospital and at the Carson School District. When not at bike races or volunteering, Jim is hiking and camping in the Sierra Nevada and elsewhere.

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**(DETACH BALLOT HERE FOR MAILING)**

**ELECTION OF USGS RETIREES OFFICERS: 2018 - 2019 BIENNIUM**

**BALLOT**

Vote for one person for each National office and a Regional Director in **your** Region. Vote for either the nominee shown or another Retiree whose name you must enter in the blank space to the right of the nominee. Complete the ballot by placing an "X" in the parentheses to the right of that candidate. Print your name and provide your signature. Mail your completed Election Ballot to:

**Secretary, USGS Retirees  
P.O. Box 280  
Herndon, VA 20172-0280**

Your ballot must be received by December 28, 2015. A brief biographical sketch for each nominee appears on pages 3-4 of this Newsletter.

**Write-in Candidate(s)**

President:	<b>James 'Jim' Stark</b>	( )	_____	( )
Vice President:	<b>Alberto "Al" Condes</b>	( )	_____	( )
Secretary:	<b>Kate Flynn</b>	( )	_____	( )
Treasurer:	<b>Cathy Hill</b>	( )	_____	( )
Archivist:	<b>Richard "Dick" Engberg</b>	( )	_____	( )

Regional Director: **Note** -- vote **only** for a candidate in **your** Region

Northeastern:	<b>James (Jay) Kiesler</b>	( )	_____	( )
Southeastern:	<b>Jeffrey "Jeff" Armbruster</b>	( )	_____	( )
Central:	<b>Ken Lindskov</b>	( )	_____	( )
Western:	<b>E. James "Jim" Crompton</b>	( )	_____	( )

Members Name: (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Members Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**NINETEENTH USGS RETIREES REUNION 2018**  
**September 13-15, 2018**

The Local Arrangements Committee has computed estimated total (gross) costs for aspects of the USGS Retirees Reunion 2018 to be held in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota. More work is needed to finalize actual costs, logistics, and best guesses for number of participants. We believe that the following estimates error on the high side of best-available information for 2018. The following per person rates include all service fees and taxes.

1. **Registration: \$65.** (Includes Thursday evening Reception, Friday Business meeting refreshments, and Hospitality room activities for the three days)
2. **Hotel rate per occupancy of one or two: \$159.** (Rate includes breakfast and will be offered for three days prior and three days after the reunion)
3. **Option: Friday afternoon St. Croix River Cruise with lunch buffet: \$63** (includes bus transportation)
4. **Option: Saturday morning St. Paul Gangster Hangout Tour: \$59** (includes bus transportation and refreshment)
5. **Option: Saturday evening Banquet: \$55 - \$64,** depending on meal type (includes drink ticket)



The Committee anticipates that some people will have interest in other self-directed activities, such as a golf outing Thursday morning, dinner/sports event in downtown Minneapolis, or tour of the north shore of Lake Superior prior to or after the reunion. We have started a list of resources people can consider on the USGS Retiree's Reunion 2018 Web site [www.wrdretirees.org/Reunion2018/index.html](http://www.wrdretirees.org/Reunion2018/index.html). This list will be updated as new information becomes available.

We hope that this information motivates retirees to attend and invite others to join in. Some laughter and good times are bound to occur! Watch for the official registration form in the February 2018 Newsletter. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Local Arrangements Committee Chair, Jeff Stoner ([J\\_stoner@comcast.net](mailto:J_stoner@comcast.net)) or any Committee member: Mark Have, Jim Stark, and Linda Stoner (Minnesota), Gregg Wiche (North Dakota), Ken and Judy Lindskov (South Dakota), Marv and Rosann Sherrill (Wisconsin), and Lee Case (Arizona).

**Crowne Plaza Aire Hotel Museum  
Museum of Northwest Airlines History**



**One of many entrances to  
the Mall of America**



## MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS

### USGS RETIREES – VIRGINIA

Reston, VA

September 11, 2017



Frank Mannheim spoke at the Reston luncheon. His address was on Making the USGS Great Again. The idea is that the USGS should address important natural science policy issues, and provide unbiased information to contending stakeholders; also, the USGS should ensure it is known for this vital mission.

### RESTON-HERNDON USGS RETIRES

October 2, 2017



Speaking about his long-term project on the Oil and Gas Reserves in Northern Alaska is Dave Houseknecht. On the right-hand side of the photo are some of the spouses who also attend the lectures.

**USGS RETIREES – GEORGIA**  
**Golden Coral, Duluth, GA**  
**August 17, 2017**



The Georgia retirees held their monthly luncheon. We had one of the best turnouts in recent history and a good time was had by all. Pictured are **L to R front kneeling**: Elliot Jones, Ed Martin; **standing first row**: Mary Dunn, Eve Kuniansky, Sandy Krause, Rick Krause, and Katie Hale; **back row**: John Clarke, Tim Stamey, Jim Bettandorff, Michael Peck, Tim Hale, and Keith McFadden.

The **former Local Activities Committee for the Retirees Biennial Reunion in Nashville** last year met for lunch in Mount Juliet, TN, on September 29, 2017. Below is a photograph of the attendees. Seated **from left to right** are: Pete Anttila, Joyce Anttila, Ruthie Baker, Jim Baker, Harry Hoover, Gwen Hoover, Rebel Gamble, Charles Gamble, Jerry Lowery, and Bob Burchett. All enjoyed getting together again.



## NEWS OF RETIREES

**Scott K. Anderholm** writes: I am enjoying my retirement. I have been busy traveling, camping, hiking, rock hounding, cutting and grinding rocks, fishing, sailing, cyber loafing, and sleeping. I generated a huge sleep deficit while working. I have been able to significantly reduce the sleep deficit since my retirement. I have vacation homes in Wisconsin and Arizona, so I have lots of maintenance to do here in New Mexico as well as at my other places. I do some environmental consulting. I am currently working on a daily salinity model for the Rio Grande. I have been enjoying the consulting as I have the opportunity to stay in contact with other hydrologists.

**Zelda Bailey and Pat Tucci** write: After 25 years in Denver, Zelda Bailey and Pat Tucci are packing it up and moving to Sedona, AZ. No firm date on the move yet, but it will probably happen around the beginning of November. We've got mixed emotions on leaving Denver after so long, but we are looking forward to our new life (and warmer weather) in Arizona. We've been visiting Sedona a lot over the past 10 years, and we just love the area. For Pat, it's a return to living in Arizona after 35 years, when he was in Tucson working on the Southwest Alluvial Basins RASA.

**Merilee Bennett** writes: I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Andy Anderson for his patience and commitment to the Retirees' organization. 2013, I was volunteered (by Jim Blakey) and assumed the duties of the Layout Editor for our quarterly newsletter. If it had not been for Andy's historical knowledge of WRD and the retirees' organization, I'm am not sure I would have continued these last four years. He has stuck with me through several frustrating moments, provided guidance, and always has been supportive. These are great qualities. The retirees' organization and its continued operation owes a great deal to people like Andy who have put the time and effort into keeping it alive. Andy, thank you for all you have done before I came on board and all the support you have given me these last four years.

**Jim Blakey** writes: Many thanks to Andy Anderson for all the work for the Retirees, and to Jim Kircher for the past two years, and to Cathy Hill for taking on the job as treasurer. Also, a BIG THANKS to Merilee (and Jim) for all their work on the Newsletter! I was very disappointed to see that we have stopped the scholarship program. I think it was one of the greatest things ever done by the Retirees. I suggest we consider donations to the Red Cross (for Texas, Florida, and the US islands).



**Tony Buono** writes: Cathy Hill and I have been keeping up to date but I realized it's been years since my last note to the newsletter. So, here goes. Arlene and I have moved several times since retiring in Florida. We started in Satellite Beach, then to Little Torch Key, Cape Coral, Melbourne, Pahump Nevada, then back to Melbourne. We figured third time in the Melbourne area is a charm. Arlene is still running three or four days a week and training for her first marathon (part of the Dopey series at Disney World). It's aptly named as runners' progress from a 5k on day 1, to 26.2 mi on day four. Dopey indeed. I'm down to

an old Porsche, a '67 911S Targa, having sold my four other cars, with a couple shipped to Europe and a couple here in the States. I still get my fill of older cars by volunteering at the American Muscle Car Museum for charitable events. The museum is only open for these events and I help direct parking followed by wandering the showroom answering questions about the 270+ collector cars. I also spend a couple days a month "cowboying" at a conservancy called Forever Florida. It includes a working cattle ranch, the Crescent J, of about 500 head of grass-fed registered Cracker and Charolais cattle, plus a few dozen Cracker horses. The Crackers are historic breeds directly decedent from the original cattle and horses brought to Florida by the Conquistadors in the 1500s. The Charolais are decedents of the first herd brought to Mexico from France by the Broussard family (now from Louisiana, hence the name Crescent J). My time at the ranch is spent helping with the fun stuff; moving herds and cutting calves from the herd for tagging, branding, and changing bull calves into steers. It's great outdoor work and lots more fun than riding stable horses as a kid on Staten Island. Attached is a picture of me (standing) waiting for the branding irons at a public event last year. Gotta keep pushing.

**Tony Cannarsa** writes: Here's my check for overdue dues. You would think after all those years watching other people's money, I could get mine in on time. I've been practicing my procrastination and I'm getting better every day.

**Ron Coble** writes: Thank you all for keeping us retirees connected.

**Richard Coupe** writes: We have just returned from France and have a new address. We have been using only prepaid go phones, but will replace them with real phones once we get settled.

**Bob Hirsch** writes: Sorry to be so far behind on my dues. This check should bring me up to date, plus a little extra for the general fund. This month marks the end of my 41st year with the USGS. Back in October 2016 I started in the new "phased retirement" program. I'm working half time and doing lots of mentoring. It has been great. Since 2008 I've been working as a research hydrologist: developing new hydrologic statistical tools, writing and publishing software, and journal articles, almost all of which I've been doing with talented young USGS hydrologists. I've gone back to teaching in the statistics class at the training center--the same class that Dennis Helsel and I started in the mid 1980's. I'm also very pleased and honored to have been selected to be the AGU Walter Langbein lecturer at the Fall AGU meeting. This is particularly meaningful to me because I got to know Walter back in the 1970's when I started my career. I have two lovely granddaughters, ages 3 and 6, and do a fair amount of grand parenting. My wife, Gretchen, and I live in Washington and vacation frequently at our little house in Chincoteague, VA. All the best to my friends and colleagues from 41 years in USGS/WRD.

**Herb Freiberger** writes—I think I'm overdue in writing an article for this section of the newsletter, but just because I haven't written doesn't mean I'm not thinking of you all. For instance, several weeks ago, Pat and I went down to Leesburg, VA to visit with Joyce Biesecker. While there, I was trimming some lilac bushes, the tops of which were about a foot higher than my reach. My first thought was "where the hell is Bill Mann when you need him!" I am happy to report that Joyce is doing well. She stays busy mainly with the house, working in the yard, taking care of her dog, Stella, or vice versa, and her charity work on behalf of providing scholarships for future nurses hopefully for Loudoun County Hospital. Pat and I are doing generally well. We have some medical problems, but so far they haven't stopped us from being active. During the past half year, we have done a fair amount of travel. In March of 2017, we visited a small German village in Helen, Georgia, which is located near the GA, TN, NC border and about 90 miles north of Atlanta. It is a German arts and crafts village with good restaurants. It's a good spot for a two to three-day trip which we recommend. In May, we visited our time share in the Massanutten Mountains of Virginia just for a 3-day getaway. It's always good to go there. In May, Pat and I flew out to Camp Verde, AZ to visit with my sister, Dotty and her husband, Tom. Those of you who attended the last several WRD reunions have probably met Dotty and Tom as they were attendees at those functions. Instead of staying in Camp Verde, the four of us drove to Ruidoso, NM, which is an artsy and crafty town about two hours south of Albuquerque. We stayed for a week, once again in our time share. It was a great time with plenty to do and see. MY favorite part of the trip was the realization that Ruidoso is the home of "Smokey the Bear" the same bear that we all grew up with who said in a deep voice, "only you can prevent forest fires". For those of you who have not heard the story, in the late 1930's or early 1940's, there was a large forest fire in the Ruidoso area. After the firefighters felt that they had the fire under control, a fireman made a reconnaissance of the area to check for any lingering hot spots and found a small bear cub clinging to a charred tree. He saved the cub and it was reared back to good health and to maturity and you guessed it, it became Smokey the bear, the logo of the US Forest Service and/or the US National Park Service for many years. Smokey has since died and is buried in his hometown of Ruidoso. During my USGS career, I had heard many times of the White Sands of New Mexico. They are located about 30 miles south of Ruidoso and are spectacular. They can be seen for about ten miles before you get to them because of their brilliance. They are a lesson in geology and shouldn't be missed if you are in the area. In June, Pat and I took our whole family (20) to the Outer Banks of North Carolina, Corolla to be exact for a week. The main occasion for the trip was to have the whole family together to celebrate Pat and my 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, which was on June 24<sup>th</sup>. We also celebrated 2 family birthdays and a wedding at the beach (our niece). It was a week of heavy celebration, good food and drink and a diet the next week!! For three days in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September, Pat and I and Nancy and Jim Bley met for lunch in St Michaels, MD and then traveled on to Chincoteague, VA. We had made that same trip many times in earlier years and it was good to do it again. Going to Chincoteague is like turning back time as things are still a little old fashioned except for the

new Holiday Inn and Comfort Inn, which was a little disheartening. Nancy and Jim are doing fine and are doing lots of traveling. Pat and I wish all of you a great holiday season.

**Joel Kimrey** writes: Hi folks, thanks for your patience and continuing good work, for dues payment.

**Scott McEwen** writes: Thanks for keeping us in the loop, and adding my new cell phone, 303-895-5058.

**Linda (Britton) McMullen** writes: I have not contributed to the newsletter in a very long time and note that I am behind in my dues. I have sent a check to cover through 2018 and some extra for wherever it might be needed. I would like to have my name reflected as written for this update and I also have an address change (please reference 'Directory Changes). As with many others, I have been very busy over the past 12 years since retirement, but the most special event was my marriage to Patrick in 2010, and hence the name change. After more than 40 years in Colorado, we moved to the Puget Sound area in the Pacific Northwest early this year. It will be a new adventure, which fits into our love of exploring new places, enjoying new cultural activities, hiking and biking, traveling in our motorhome, and a new base for international travel that we never tire of. We have hosted a lot of visitors to our new home and would love to see any of my old friends if you are ever in the beautiful northwest. Life is good. Thanks for all you do with the newsletter and keeping track of our colleagues.

**Wanda Summerlin** writes: I enjoy receiving the letters and still recognize some USGS names who were a part of my husbands (Adolph) era.

## RETIREMENTS



**Geoff Delin**, Water Science Field Team Groundwater Specialist, retired on April 1, 2017 after 38 years with the USGS, preceded by two years with an engineering consulting firm. Geoff joined the USGS in 1979 as a hydrologic technician in the Minnesota District. As a technician, his duties included operating the District borehole geophysical logging unit, operating the District auger rig, collecting groundwater quality samples, and supervising contract drilling operations. After transitioning to a hydrologist position, Geoff was a project team member on the Upper Midwest RASA study. After completion of the RASA study, he served as a

project chief for numerous investigations evaluating the groundwater quantity and quality of glacial and bedrock aquifers throughout Minnesota. During these investigations Geoff was one of the first USGS hydrologists to use the then “new” MODFLOW code and was mentored by one of its authors, Mike McDonald. His investigations also included evaluation of aquifer thermal energy storage with model simulations of heat transport using the HST3D code. Geoff also was a project chief for a Ground-Water Resources Program funded recharge research project where the team members estimated groundwater recharge across the state of Minnesota using multiple methods, including development of a new regional regression recharge estimation method. In 1990 Geoff began working on Toxics Substances Hydrology Program research projects. From 1990-1996 he was a principal investigator for the Minnesota Management Systems Evaluation Area study. In addition to coordinating the research of other USGS personnel for this study, Geoff conducted research on the fate and transport of agricultural chemicals through unsaturated and saturated sand-plain deposits. From 1995-2008 he was site coordinator on the Bemidji crude-oil spill research project. In addition to his site coordination duties for this project, Geoff conducted collaborative research related to the effects of recharge on oil dissolution, multiphase flow processes, and vapor-phase transport of volatile hydrocarbons through the contaminated glacial deposits. He has continued to be involved in some research at this site to the present. He was also groundwater specialist from 1994-2008, serving as a leader for groundwater related issues in the Minnesota Water Science Center. In 2008 Geoff and his wife Ruth moved to Denver where he served the final 9 years of his career as a groundwater specialist on the Water Science Field Team (WSFT) (formerly known as Regional specialists) providing technical guidance and services to Water Science Center personnel in the Central part of the country. He was an instructor for the Groundwater Field Methods class as well as the Groundwater/Surface-Water Interaction Class. Geoff served on 48 technical groundwater/water-quality review teams during his service as a WSFT groundwater specialist, and greatly enjoyed interacting with and helping USGS personnel. Throughout his career Geoff authored or co-authored more than 70 peer-reviewed reports and gave presentations at more than 30 technical conferences. Geoff is serving in an Emeritus capacity in retirement to complete some research for the Bemidji project as well as to help with some USGS training. In addition to tackling many long-postponed projects around the house, Geoff and Ruth plan on doing some international travel (their first was a 5-week trip to New Zealand and Australia in April-May 2017), hiking, camping, and otherwise enjoying the Colorado Rocky Mountains, exercising (e.g., golfing, tennis, biking, going to the health club, etc.), as well as spending more time with their children and grandchildren.

**Carol Kendall** retired on September 30, 2017 from the U.S. Geological Survey’s (USGS) National Research Program (NRP), Water Mission Area, Menlo Park, CA after 37 years of service. She is a 4th generation Californian who got her BS and MS in geology at University of California-Riverside, and later her PhD in geology (with an emphasis in geochemistry) at the University of Maryland while working full-time at the USGS Headquarters in Reston, VA. Carol calls herself an “isotope hydrobiogeochemist”, and since 1990, has led the USGS Isotope Tracers research project in Menlo Park. The key purpose of this multifaceted project was to develop new isotope methods and applications to trace sources of nutrients, organics, and water in human-impacted aquatic ecosystems. She has worked in watersheds nationwide, ranging from field investigations of contributions of atmospheric nitrate to small forested catchments in the Rocky and Appalachian Mountains, to food-web dynamics and biogeochemical processes in the Everglades, and to nitrate and organic matter sources in the Mississippi Basin (that cause hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico) and in the San Joaquin River and the San Francisco Bay-Delta. She was co-editor of the 1998 influential book “Isotope Tracers in Catchment Hydrology”; has taught dozens of isotope hydrology short-courses over the past 30 years for various federal, state, academic, and international organizations; has published >150 papers and chapters; was elected an American Geophysical

Union (AGU) Fellow in 2010 for “outstanding contributions to isotope hydrology and biogeochemistry, and specifically for her pioneering work on the dual isotopes of nitrate”; and presented the AGU Langbein Lecture in 2014. Carol is looking forward to having more time to write papers using unpublished datasets from the Everglades, USGS National Stream Quality Accounting Network sites, and the San Francisco Estuary.

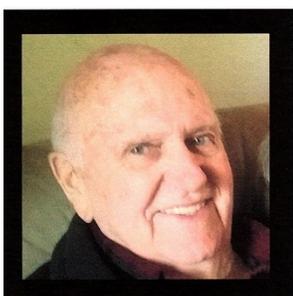
**Kernell Ries** graduated from the University of New Hampshire in 1977 and promptly joined the USGS as a hydrologic technician in the MA-RI District. In 1986, he moved to the Studies section, leading projects related to hydrologic modeling and statistical analysis. He served as the Unit Chief of the Basin Hydrology Unit in MA-RI (1993-1997) and also the district’s SW Specialist (1996-1999). During this time frame, just as a few households were beginning to use the world wide web through dial-up connections, Kernell conceived of the idea of building a web application for delivering streamflow statistics to water and infrastructure managers. This was the genesis of StreamStats, a groundbreaking web application that incorporated online GIS capabilities and on the fly computation of estimated statistics. The application was the first of its kind amongst now ubiquitous online water tools. During his tenure as Chief Hydrologist, Bob Hirsch once called StreamStats one of the decade’s 10 biggest accomplishments of the Water Resources Division. Today, water agencies across the U.S. use it every day to assist with management and regulatory decisions, and numerous improvements have added to its capabilities over the years. This was possible due to Kernell’s acceptance of a posting to the Office of Surface Water in Reston from 1999-2003, during which he was named the national program manager for StreamStats and charged with taking his initial work and turning it into a national application. After laying that groundwork, he spent several years back in the field, this time at the MD-DE-DC WSC, where he continued half-time as the StreamStats coordinator and also worked on projects local to the WSC. In 2009, OSW determined that it needed Kernell full time, and in addition to coordinating the StreamStats program, he has helped to teach training classes, set policy related to statistical hydrology, and mentored hydrologists across the Survey. Kernell has dedicated 40 years of service to the USGS, accumulating awards such as the Superior Service Award (2009) and Meritorious Service Award (2017) along the way for his extraordinary vision, leadership, and commitment to high quality work. Kernell officially retired in July 2017, but has been continuing to work as a rehired annuitant. That appointment will be ending next month.

## MEMORIALS



**Ernie Baker** passed away in Austin, TX on August 20, 2017. After graduating with a degree in geology from the University of Texas at Austin in 1956, he began his career with a 120-day job appointment with the Geologic Division of the USGS. His job was to map a newly discovered uranium deposit in South Texas. After that successful assignment, Ernie obtained a permanent position with the USGS in Texas. Ernie retired in 1992, and then was hired as a Retired Annuitant. When that position was abolished a few years later, he became a volunteer worker for the USGS. He loved his work and his many friends within the USGS. Although Ernie shunned the limelight, he was surprised on July 28, 2006, with an office celebration of his 50 years of service to the USGS. Along with supplying geologic information

and data to many co-workers, Ernie provided responses to the many data and information requests received by the Austin office. His work was always deliberate, thorough, and accurate. It is not an exaggeration to state that he knew more about Texas geology than anybody on the planet. He was a very kind and considerate to everyone and will be missed by all who knew him.



**Edward L. Bolke, 80**, of Vancouver, WA passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family after a difficult battle with cancer on August 7, 2017. Ed was born in Sidney, NE on August 10, 1936. Ed spent his early years in Sidney, NE, graduating high school in 1954. He entered the United States Air Force in 1956 and served six years. Ed and Kathleen were married in 1958 in Sidney, NE and lived in seven different states, finally settling in Vancouver, WA in 1990. He worked for the U.S. Geological Survey for approximately thirty years. During his working years, he was instrumental in developing a ground water studies section that was thought of by the Regional Ground Water Specialist as the best in the Western Region. During his retirement years, Ed

earned a Master Gardener's Certificate and became a 4th Degree Knight of Columbus. He frequently volunteered in various endeavors including St. Vincent de Paul, and was influential in landscaping the grounds for Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, of which he was an active participant. He enjoyed golfing, gardening, traveling, and spending time with family. Ed is survived by his beloved wife of 59 years, Kathleen, his five children, eleven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by one grandson. He was deeply loved and will be greatly missed by family and friends. Many lives were touched by his generosity and thoughtful nature.

**Harriet C. Bonham, 91, widow of WRD retiree Wilson G. Bonham**, passed away on May 23, 2017 in Virginia. She was born on January 14, 1925. Services and interment were held on May 27, 2017 at Evergreen Burial Park, Roanoke, VA.



**Edward 'Ted' Callender, 79**, passed away peacefully at home on October 7, 2017 after a short illness. Ted was born in Greenwich, CT in 1938. He was a geologist and oceanographer with a distinguished career at the University of Michigan and the U.S. Geological Survey. During his career, he conducted research on the Great Lakes, the oceans, Lake Baikal in Siberia and many lakes and reservoirs across the U.S. He made many significant contributions to understanding water quality and geologic processes. Ted loved sailing, woodworking and science. After retiring in Westerly, RI, Ted continued his love of science through volunteer work on water quality in Quonochontaug Pond and Rhode Island's other salt ponds. He served on the Board of Salt Ponds Coalition and prepared many scientific articles using data collected by volunteer pond watchers. Ted is survived by his wife, Gail Mallard, his son, Edward E.

Callender, his niece and a great-nephew and great-niece. He will be greatly missed by his family and many friends. A Celebration of Life was held on October 13, 2017 at Rushlow-Iacoi Funeral Home & Crematory, Westerly, RI. **(NOTE: An addendum memorial will appear in the February 2018.)**



**Betty Jane Cochran, 85**, passed away July 18, 2017 in Littleton, CO. She was born in Denver, CO on November 23, 1931. She retired in 1990 from the Geological Survey. Survivors include longtime friend Eugene Charbonneau, four sons, a sister, five grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren. With gratitude to a special angel, Tammy Dybdahl. Service were held on July 23, at Olinger Chapel Hill Mortuary, Littleton, CO.



**T. John Conomos, 78**, beloved husband, cherished father, loving grandfather, and devoted son passed away peacefully with loved ones by his side on August 9, 2017. Ever gracious, he showed the courage to bow out gracefully after a pancreatic cancer diagnosis. As Dad reflected in recent weeks, his cup was full. Tasso was born in New Kensington, PA, on September 11, 1938, to proud Greek immigrant parents, John and Penelope Conomos. Raised as a first-generation American with a great appreciation for higher education, Tasso was among the first in his family to attend college. Passionate about science and the great outdoors at a tender age, the onetime Sea Scout received a Bachelor of Science in Geology and earned a Masters in Marine Geology from San Jose State University, then accepted a Fellowship at the Smithsonian

Institution and received a Doctorate in Oceanography at the University of Washington (UW). He was later appointed to the University of Washington's Department of Oceanography research faculty before an exciting endeavor brought him and his new wife to the California's Bay Area in 1969. Tasso joined the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to conduct groundbreaking research on the San Francisco Bay estuarine systems and other West Coast estuaries. It was his team's body of work that ultimately shaped San Francisco Bay environmental policy for the next 40 years. Tasso was later assigned to the role of Regional Research Hydrologist and then Administrator for Hydrologic Research for the Western Region of the USGS -- a senior leadership position in which he thrived until his retirement in 2001. Cited for his outstanding contributions to and advocating for water-resource research, program monitoring, and identifying, recruiting, and mentoring hundreds of scientists -- Tasso was granted the highest honor of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Distinguished Service Award, and honored as a world leader in the definition of estuarine processes. And yet despite his professional success, nothing was more important to Tasso than his wife of 48 years and their three children. He enjoyed spending part of every year in the Sierras, where he indulged his seafaring soul on Lake Tahoe. And he often journeyed to his ancestral homeland of Greece to trace and to honor his family lineage on the island of Kythera. A jack of all trades, Tasso was a master woodworker, a gourmet cook, an incredible mentor, and an esteemed friend to ... everyone. Dad never knew a stranger. He is survived by his loving wife, Janice, son John W. Conomos (Amanda), daughters Penelope Benis (Christopher), and Alexa Anderson (Bradley), grandchildren Christopher, Alexander, and Nicholas Benis, Tasso and Basel Conomos, and Luka, Britton, and Annick Anderson. He also leaves behind his devoted mother Penelope Conomos and his loving sister Chrysanthy Conomos. Tasso is now united in eternal rest with his revered father, John A. Conomos, and his beloved sisters Damiani Conomos and Anastasia Condas. A Trisagion service was held on Sunday, August 13, 2017 at Church of the Holy Cross, Belmont, CA. A funeral service was also held at Church of the Holy Cross on Monday, August 14, 2017. Remembrances may be made in Tasso's name to Church of the Holy Cross ([www.goholycross.org](http://www.goholycross.org)) or the Kytherian Society of California ([www.ksoca.com](http://www.ksoca.com)).

**(NOTE: For those retirees' receiving the newsletter either electronically or as a hard copy a 'supplemental' is included with reflections both personal and professional from John's friends.)**



**Martha P. Curtis, 84, widow of WRD retiree G. Wayne Curtis**, passed away on October 12, 2016 after a brief illness in Urbana, IL. Daughter of Walter Monical and Ada Mary Applegate, Martha was born on September 3, 1932, in Rossville and grew up in Tolono, IL. Martha graduated from Unity High School in 1950, a member of Unity's first graduating class. An RN by profession, she graduated from the Julia F. Burnham School of Nursing in 1953 thanks to a scholarship provided by a family friend in Tolono, IL. She married George Wayne Curtis on June 15, 1958, and made their home in Champaign, IL, for nearly 48 years, raising their children. Martha retired from Christie Clinic in 1993 after working in the General Surgery Department for over 20 years. Martha was a member of the Daughters of the American

Revolution, the Julie F. Burnham Alumni Association, the Champaign County Genealogical Society, the Rossville

Historical and Genealogical Society, the Clay County Genealogical Society and the Tolono Historical Society. Martha was preceded in death by her parents, husband and sister. She is survived by her two children, her five grandchildren, her siblings, and numerous nieces, nephews and their children. A memorial service in her honor was held on November 5, 2017, at Clark-Lindsey Retirement Village, Urbana, IL, Martha's home these past 11 years.

**Lida Criner, widow of WRD retiree James H. Criner**, passed away in May 2017.

**Shirley Ann Hamamoto, 89**, passed away on August 29, 2017 at the Pikes Peak Hospice, Colorado Springs CO. For the last five years or so, she struggled with Parkinson's disease, and in the last several months she went downhill rapidly. For several years she used a walker to assist in getting around. Shirley was a long-time secretary of the National Research Program (NRP) Sediment Studies Group in Denver, CO in the 70s and 80s, retiring in 1990. She had great interest in the research that members of the Sediment Studies Group did, enjoyed typing and reading their reports, and on several occasions accompanying them in the field to assist in data collection. Shirley's name was reflected in the acknowledgements of several papers for her assistance, including 'Preserving geomorphic data records of flood disturbances'; 'EVOLUTION OF CUTOFFS ACROSS MEANDER NECKS IN POWDER RIVER, MONTANA, USA'; and, 'CHANNEL CHANGES AT CROSS SECTIONS OF THE POWDER RIVER BETWEEN MOORHEAD AND BROADUS, MONNTANA, 1975-88 Report 89-407'. A viewing of her was held at Swan-Law Funeral Home on September 8, 2017 Colorado Springs, CO. The memorial service was held at Village Christian Church, Colorado Springs, CO on September 16, 2017 at 3:00pm.

**James E. 'Jim' Heisel, 85**, passed away on August 9, 2017, exactly seven years to the day after losing his wife, Patricia. Jim was born on December 28, 1931, in Milwaukee, WI, where he grew up, and later met and married his wife, Pat. He received a degree in Engineering, studying at Ottawa University and the University of Wisconsin. Jim and Pat moved to Westminster, CO, in 1961, where his first two daughters were born. He worked for Martin Marietta at that time on their rocket engines. His family moved to Carmel, IN, where the next two daughters were born. While in Indiana, he began working for the United States Geological Survey, and in 1972 he took a position with them as a hydrologist in Puerto Rico. His family lived in Puerto Rico for eight years, and then transferred to Purcellville, VA. He contracted meningitis/encephalitis in 1990, which left him without his short-term memory and forced him into early retirement. In 2001, Jim and Pat moved across the country to live in Boise, ID, to help their daughter with her little ones, then he and Pat returned to Purcellville in 2009. On August 9, 2010, Pat passed away and their daughter Melinda saw to his care for the next seven years. He is survived by his four daughters, along with 17 grandkids, and 6 great-grandkids. Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Edward Heisel and Olga Roetzer Heisel, and his brother. He will be greatly missed, but he is finally free from the prison his brain has held him trapped in for the past twenty-seven years. We are so grateful for the example he has been for us throughout his life! The final resting place for his earthly body is beside that of his beloved wife in the Ebenezer Cemetery in Bluemont, VA.



**Juanita J. Jeffery, 87, wife of WRD retiree Horace Jeffery**, passed away after a short illness on January 17, 2015 in Rolla, MO. Juanita was born in Mt. Olive, AR on June 14, 1927 to Henry E. Jeffery and Ruby Long Jeffery. In 1946, she graduated from Calico Rock High School, Calico Rock, AR, and briefly attended Bethel College, Bethel, Tennessee. On March 22, 1947, she married Horace G. Jeffery. Juanita was employed as a licensed practical nurse for many years at St. Vincent's Hospital, Little Rock, AR, and later at the Phelps County Memorial Hospital/Phelps County Regional Medical Center in Rolla, MO. She retired in 1984. Juanita is survived by her husband, two sons, four grandchildren, her two sisters and her brothers, and her extended family and many friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, her sister and her three brothers. Funeral services were held on January 24, 2015 at the Mt. Olive Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Mt. Olive, AR. Interment will be in the Mt. Olive Cemetery.

**Connie McKenzie, 80, widow of WRD retiree Stuart W. McKenzie**, passed away on June 12, 2017 at her daughter's home in rural Arlington, KS. She was born September 9, 1936, in Dover, DE, to William Earle and Mildred Elizabeth (Palmer) Carter. Connie graduated from Smyrna High School in Smyrna, DE in 1954, nurse's school in 1957, and from Western Maryland College in Westminster, MD, in 1961, with a bachelor's degree in biology. Connie was a registered nurse, served for three and a half years in the Peace Corps, and volunteered

as an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher. On May 16, 1964, she married Stuart W. McKenzie in Tunis, Tunisia, North Africa. They shared almost 53 years of marriage before his death on September 15, 2016. She was of the Methodist faith. Survivors include their two daughters, eight grandchildren, and a sister and brother. She was preceded in death by: her parents, a sister and brother, two infant sons, and a granddaughter. An informal, come-and-go time of celebration of her life was held on June 18, 2017 at her daughter's home in rural Arlington, KS.



**Robert L. Morningstar, 87**, of James Creek, PA, passed away on September 19, 2017 at Colonial Courtyard, Tyrone, PA. He was born in Huntingdon PA on June 29, 1930 and was the son of the late Frank V. and Ethel (Cramer) Morningstar. Robert was retired from the Federal Government where he was a Hydraulic Engineering Technician for the US Geological Survey. He was a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Middletown and ultimately served as Grand Master of PA. He was also a member of Prince Edward-Spring Creek Masonic Lodge, of Middletown, PA. He was a member of the Woodcock Valley Bible Church, James Creek. In addition to his parents, Robert was preceded in death by his loving wife Bonita (Givens) Morningstar, a son, and two siblings. He is survived by his two

children (a son and a daughter), six grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren, a sister, and his special friend, Janet Feathers. A celebration of his life was held at Matinchek Funeral Home, Middletown PA on September 27 with the Odd Fellows Memorial Rites to follow the funeral service. A second service was held at the Woodcock Valley Bible Church, James Creek, PA on September 28 at 2:00 pm. Burial was at the Russellville Methodist Cemetery, James Creek, PA.



**Linda K. Osterkamp, 74, wife of WRD retiree Waite Osterkamp**, passed away on March 22, 2017 in Arizona. Linda was born June 26, 1942, in Schenectady, NY, daughter of the late Richard C. Kautz and Mary Elda Stein. In 1959, Linda was an American Field Service exchange student to Oamaru, New Zealand. During that time, she attended Waitaki Girls High School while living with the William Laney family. Friendships she made then lasted a lifetime. Linda graduated from Muscatine High School, the University of Iowa, and the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics Dietetic Internship. In 1980, Linda earned an M.S., and in 1988, a PhD in Nutritional Sciences from the University of Arizona in Tucson, AZ. On

March 21, 1987, Linda married Waite R. Osterkamp at her parents' home in Muscatine, IA. She practiced, taught, and published in many venues as a Registered Dietitian throughout her adult life. Linda was also active in several professional organizations, and in 1995 became a Charter Fellow of the American Dietetic Association. Survivors include her husband, Waite, a son and a daughter, stepson and a stepdaughter, seven grandchildren, five sisters, two brothers as well as many nieces and nephews. Linda was preceded in death by her parents, a niece, and a nephew. A private service commemorating her life was held at a later date (arrangements by NEPTUNE SOCIETY).

**Arthur G. Scott, 79**, also known as Pete and Art, died on July 11, 2017 at home in Bradenton, FL due to many complications from a lifetime of Type I Diabetes. Pete was born on January 27, 1938 to Doris Seligman (nee: Gardiner) and Otis Seligman in Santa Fe, NM. He was given his stepfather's last name of Scott in 1943 after his father passed away when Pete was just starting public school in Santa Fe. While obtaining his BS in Civil Engineering from New Mexico State University, he married his first wife Marilyn Bicksler. After participating in ROTC and graduating from NM State University, he provided service to the U.S. Army as a Lieutenant, giving education to many younger recruits during the late 1950's Cold War. After providing his service to the United States, he grew his hair long and never cut it short again; he added a beard and mustache for good measure. He acquired Type I Diabetes just out of the US Army, while beginning a lifetime career in the U.S Geological Survey (USGS). Lucky to survive the diabetic coma that announced a new path in his life, Pete moved forward and never gave up. He loved his career and work friends at USGS in Santa Fe, NM, surveying rivers and dealing with Diamondback Rattle Snakes in the desert. At USGS in Reston, VA, he travelled and wrote hydrologic journal papers on rivers and lakes from the Clinch River Valley to Canada/US Great Lakes, and traveled to Brazil educating on water resources and retiring in 1993. He called it "The best job in the world". Part of that "best job" involved a lot of travel, which he relished and he learned from the people in every society, city, or country

he visited. Pete inspired his creativity, scientific knowledge and self-sufficiency to his children, Terri and Janice. They remember his paintings, remodeling of the house, and collecting NM historical artifacts. Terri and Janice closely followed in his footsteps of science and creativity. In 1980, while living in Reston, VA he met and married his current, devoted, and loving wife, Bonnie (Sharpless) Scott. Their marriage was 37 years strong. They spent many exciting and tumultuous times, helping to raise two teenagers, travelling, working, playing, and loving. Their travels were magical from the Galapagos Islands seeing Darwin's creatures, to Africa viewing Mount Kenya and Mount Kilimanjaro, and hanging in Jamaica getting dreadlocks, and onto Thailand appreciating the majesty of nature, then sailing in the Caribbean, as well as a Brazilian cruise up the Amazon River. Pete is survived by his wife Bonnie, his two daughters; and 4 grandchildren. And very importantly, he leaves behind a legacy and brilliant history with many extended family and friends.



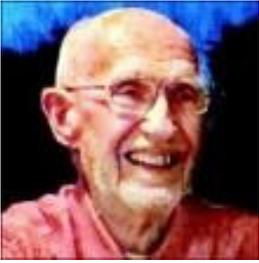
**Evelyn V. (nee: Galbreath) Smith, 102, (widow of WRD retiree Robert 'Bob' Smith)** a long-time resident of Mountain View, CA, passed away peacefully in her sleep on May 8, 2017 in her home, with her loving son Barry by her side. Evelyn was born in 1915 to Waller E. and Evelyn Galbreath in Pittsburgh, PA. She often talked about how fortunate she was growing up in a loving and happy family with her parents, her older brother Eddie and her younger sister Lois. They all had musical talents and Evelyn loved playing the piano and singing to the music well into her 90's. Evelyn graduated from the University of Pittsburgh, then received a teaching credential from Indiana State Teacher's College. She taught second and third grades in Pittsburgh for several years. Evelyn met Robert Smith on

a blind date with mutual friends and it was truly love at first sight. They were married in 1941. While Bob was serving with the U.S. Army in Europe during World War II, Evelyn worked as an office manager in Pittsburgh. When Bob returned from Europe, he and Evelyn moved to North Carolina where he had accepted a job with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). It was in North Carolina where their two children were born. The family moved to San Francisco in 1953 when Bob accepted a transfer to the USGS Menlo Park office, and settled in Mountain View, CA. Bob and Evelyn were the original owners of their home in a former prune orchard, and where Evelyn lived for 61 years until her passing. Evelyn was a full time housewife and mother and was involved in many of her children's activities. Once Bob retired and her children had started their careers, Evelyn became very active with activities such as volunteer work at El Camino Hospital, membership in the local chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), playing bridge and going with Bob to many of the music and theatre events at Foothill and De Anza Colleges and in San Francisco. Evelyn also loved to travel, and she and Bob had many enjoyable journeys throughout U.S. and the world. When Bob passed away in 1999, Evelyn continued the family tradition of at least one getaway vacation a year with her children. Evelyn was blessed with good health throughout her life. She showed her toughness by overcoming a heart attack at the age of 95 and a stroke at the age of 99. One of her fondest memories was when Springer Elementary held a rally for her 100th birthday and the children sang "Happy Birthday" and presented her with flowers, balloons and hand-made greeting cards. Evelyn desired not to have a memorial service and was cremated. Half of her ashes will be scattered outside Monterey Bay and the other half will be interred in the Galbreath Family plot in Pittsburgh, PA.



**Edward M. 'Ed' Solomon, 64, husband of WRD retiree Joyce Solomon,** passed away at his home on July 15, 2017 in Ashburn, VA surrounded by his wife and children. His infectious smile and personality made him a friend to so many. He was an extremely talented professional photographer for over 40 years. Ed was a loving and devoted son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, cousin, and friend to many. Ed is survived by his devoted wife, Joyce, two sons, one daughter, his mother Nancy, a sister, three grandchildren, nieces and a nephew. A memorial service was held on July 20, 2017 at the Crossroads United Methodist Church, Ashburn, VA 20147, with a reception that

followed. Interment will be held privately at a later date.



**Newell J. Trask, Jr., 87**, passed away on September 25, 2017 at Inova Fairfax Hospital, surrounded by his loving family. Newell retired in 1995 after 31 years as a geologist and hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Dr. Trask was born in Boston, MA and educated in the public schools of Newton, MA. He earned degrees in geology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, the University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, and PHD from [Harvard University](#), Cambridge, MA. He served in the U.S. [Army](#) Corps of Engineers during the [Korean conflict](#). During much of his career with the USGS, Dr. Trask studied the geology of the Moon and planets and was the author or

co-author of over 30 maps and reports. He was a consultant to CBS television during the Apollo 11 first manned landing on the Moon in 1969 and a member of the Television Science Team on the 1974 flyby of the planets Venus and Mercury. Later in his career, Dr. Trask worked on the problems of high-level and low-level nuclear waste disposal and served on several interagency panels dealing with these issues. In 1983, he was awarded the Meritorious Service Award of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Dr. Trask was active in the Unitarian Universalist Church. He was a founding member and first president of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Loudoun, VA. He was also active in the Preservation Society of Loudoun County, Keep Loudoun Beautiful, and the Catoctin Creek Watershed Committee. Dr. Trask later joined the Congregational Christian Church in Winchester, VA. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Esther H. Trask of Purcellville, VA; his two sons and daughter; his five grandchildren; and his two great-grandchildren. Services were private.

**Dave Usher, 72**, long-time Survey photographer, died of pancreatic cancer on September 5. Dave retired in 2005 and moved to southern Vermont. He joined the Survey in 1967. He was a true artist, and his outstanding photographs of Survey project activities appeared in many of our publications. He also took a large number of photos of Survey people, including those of Dallas Peck and Chip Groat on the 7th floor. Dave was assigned on many occasions to assist the Secretary's office with photographs for special events. He had fascinating--and humorous-- memories of working with different "executives" over his long career. He was an omnivorous reader and widely knowledgeable in history, politics, and the natural world. He and I had stayed in close touch with weekly phone conversations, and occasional visits, since he retired. I will greatly miss his terrific sense of humor, his political insights, and his dedication to the Survey. As far as I know, no memorial service is planned. Please pass this message on to your respective branches or teams, or to others who might have known Dave.

***-John Keith for The Geologic Division Retirees***

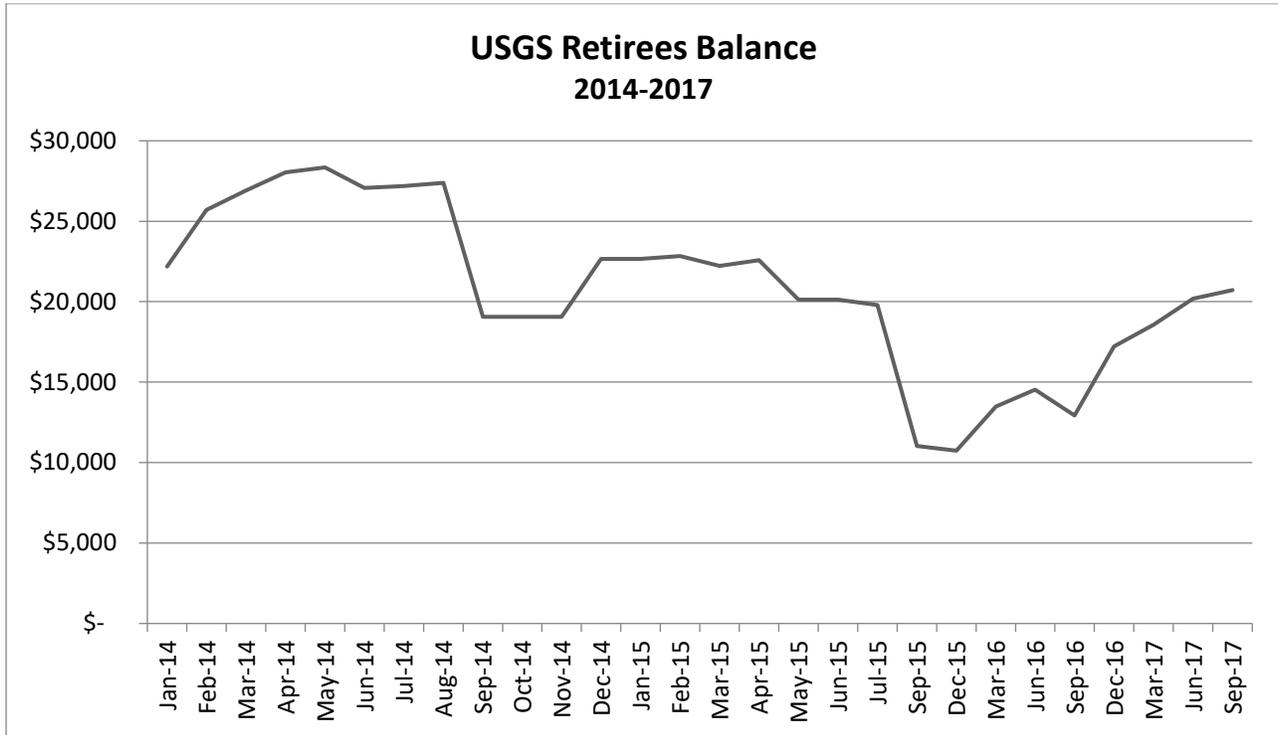
## TREASURER'S REPORT, THIRD QUARTER 2017

Treasurer Cathy Hill reports that our organization had \$20,721 in its coffers at the end of the third quarter, September 30, 2017. Costs for printing the Directory and last newsletter were \$1,396.

### Special thanks for contributions above dues go to several retirees, including:

Nelson Gordon and Linda McMullen.

The Bank thanks you!



### Equifax -- Protect Your Information

You may have heard about the massive data breach at Equifax, one of the three national credit monitoring organizations. In case you wonder what to do, here is a web site from the Federal Trade Commission.

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2017/09/equifax-data-breach-what-do>

More than 100 million citizens may be affected by this data breach, so some action to protect your identity and credit information may be advisable. Caution is a good idea, because not all of the things you may have heard or read can be substantiated.

## NEW MEMBER

**Balthrop, Barbara H. (17)** 7024 Poplar Creek Trace, Nashville, TN 37221-3923, [bhbalt10@yahoo.com](mailto:bhbalt10@yahoo.com)  
**Brown, Greg K. (17) (Victoria)** P.O. Box 13, Grand Lake, CO 80447, (c) 303-324-8584, [gregkbrown@gmail.com](mailto:gregkbrown@gmail.com)  
**Marincovich, Lou (17)** 1139 University Ave, Palo Alto, CA 94301, 650-855-9532, [palcal943@gmail.com](mailto:palcal943@gmail.com)  
**Stark, James (17) (Carol)** 1863 Alta Vista, Roseville, MN 55113, (h) 651-488-6867, (c) 612-718-2749, [stark@usgs.gov](mailto:stark@usgs.gov)

## DIRECTORY CHANGES

**Agajanian, Jeff (09) (Emma)** 23923 Corte Cajan, Murrieta, CA 92562, [jeffagajanian@twc.com](mailto:jeffagajanian@twc.com)  
**Bailey, Zeldia (03) (Pat Tucci)** 80 Calle del Norte, Sedona, AZ 86336, [ptucci@sprintmail.com](mailto:ptucci@sprintmail.com), (c) 303-513-3844 -- add, cell, ph  
**Bencala, Kenneth E. (11)** [kenbnc@hotmail.com](mailto:kenbnc@hotmail.com) – remove phone no., add email  
**Bonham, Mrs. Wilson G. (Harriet) (W)** – Remove name from directory (passed away 05/23/2017)  
**Buono, Tony (03) (Arlene)** (c) 321-507-5631, [tonybuono0@gmail.com](mailto:tonybuono0@gmail.com) – delete (h) phone, add (c) phone, new email  
**Bush, Peter (10)** [pgmay16@gmail.com](mailto:pgmay16@gmail.com), 512-565-5012 – email, phone  
**Coll, Martin B. (Marty) (99) (May)** 2670 Thoroughbred Ct., Apt. 827, Allison Park, PA 15104-4202 – addr  
**Conomos, T. John (01) (Janice)** passed August 9, 2017- died (**amend directory to reflect Conomos, Mrs. T. John 'Janice' (W)**)  
**Coupe, Richard (14) (Anne)** 121 Sunhaven Dr., Ocean Springs, MS 39564 – addr  
**Criner, Mrs. James H. (Lida) (W)** – Remove name from directory (passed away 06/2017)  
**Curtis, Mrs. G. Wayne (Mary) (W)** – Remove name from directory (passed away 10/12/2016)  
**DiLandro, Alice C. (05) (Warren)** 311 Ensanada Dr., Elizabeth City, NC 27909, 540-533-5047 - addr, ph  
**Favor, Barbara (01)** [redchas42@cox.net](mailto:redchas42@cox.net) – email  
**Fretwell, Marvin (99) (Ardith)** (c) 360-607-7174 – phone  
**Gurtz, Martin 'Marty' (14) (Sharon)** [mgurtz@comcast.net](mailto:mgurtz@comcast.net) – email  
**Herreid, Vincent D. (86)** 5968 Clark Lake Rd., Apt. 312, E. Lansing, MI 48823 – addr  
**Keezer, Gordon (94)** 207-415-4120 – phone  
**Leifeste, Donald (88) (JoAnn)** 1308 Summitt Dr, Gonzales, TX 78629 – addr  
**Martin, Jeffery D. (Affil) (Kathy)** [jdmartin@usgs.gov](mailto:jdmartin@usgs.gov), 317-730-4907 – email, phone  
**McEwen, Scott (13) (Patrice)** (c) 303-895-5058 – phone  
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**McMullen, Linda (Britton) (05) (Patrick)** 1513 56th Avenue Ct., NW Gig Harbor, WA 98335 – name, addr  
**Morris III, Fred (06)** corrects date of retirement  
**Oberst, Craig E. (08)** delete from database  
**Osterkamp, Waite R. (08) (Linda)** – Remove spouse's name from directory (passed away 03/22/2017)  
**Osterkamp, Waite R. (08)** 2340 E. Calle Lustre, Tucson, AZ 85718-4900 -- addr  
**Rice, Donald E. (11) (Lois)** 1909 Camelia Circle, Midlothian, VA 23112, 804-525-4459, [ricechuck@comcast.net](mailto:ricechuck@comcast.net) – addr, phone, email  
**Slack, Mrs. Keith (Lida) (W)** – Remove name from directory (date of passing unknown)  
**Summerlin, Mrs. Aldolph (Wanda) (W)** 13364 Beach Blvd., Unit 808, Jacksonville, FL 32224 – addr  
**Trapanese, Susan (13)** [trapanese.sm@gmail.com](mailto:trapanese.sm@gmail.com) - email  
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## **Adventures in the Director's Office**

By Tim Smith

After the demise of the Resource and Land Investigations (RALI) Program in the early 1980's, I was in exile for a time in the now vanished E2 building, a few miles from the National Center. They probably had a hard time deciding what to do with me. But after a while I was transferred to the Programs Office, one unit in the Director's Office of the USGS. My comments from this point on only apply to what existed then. So much has changed that I really don't know what exists nowadays along these lines. And as usual, the names are omitted to protect the guilty (well, except for me). To show you how far back this goes, at that time we shared the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the National Center with the old Conservation Division.

I finally ended up as Chief of Plans and Programs. You should understand that the office was organized in two parts, both under the Associate Director for Programs. Ultimately, I worked for two guys who held that job over the years. In all, this spanned the period of about 1982 to 1986. The office had two major products, the USGS Budget Estimates and the USGS Budget Justifications. Each year these were the documents that determined the funds available to run the whole USGS, so this was important stuff. The Estimates was the document signed off at the Interior Department level and transmitted to the Administration. The Justifications was the document signed off by the Administration and transmitted to Congress.

Then Congress held appropriations hearings, and finally a public law was signed that determined the funding for the USGS. In general, we started about 18 months before the fiscal year that we worked on. As now, the appropriations hearings were supposed to be held in the Spring of the year, and the law signed by September 30, for application to the following fiscal year.

Each year the process began on my side of the office with planning for the future budget, and the product would be the Budget Estimates. There was a team to do this job, with a lead person assigned to work with each division, like the Water Resources Division. In practice each line division like Mapping, Geology, and Water submitted a wish list of program increases, and we tried to organize this material into a coherent document. There was an incredible amount of competition, especially between Geology and Water. I watched their budget officers snarl and growl over every nickel. Meetings were endless.

As you might imagine, the documents for each year featured desired increases in each line program. Sometimes a new idea came along, like the National Water Quality Assessment Program. Mostly, however, these were wish lists for increased budgets for division programs, driven by the wishes of the divisions. As the Estimates morphed into the Justifications, the next characteristic of the Programs Office surfaced. The "other side" of the office was the group dominated by budget personnel.

More meetings, with more snarling and growling between the two sides of the office. Out of all this, each year we came up with a Budget Justifications report, which went to Congress. We had many meetings in the Director's Large Conference Room, which with all the staff and division people was filled. So, what really went on here, and how did the process work? I watched the final selection process in those meetings, where the Director and the Deputy Director looked at all we had done, and came up with a one-page list of what we would send forward.

Thinking back, I now believe that the whole process was intended to provide a mechanism for all possible arguments, pro and con, to come to the surface and be hashed out. USGS people are quite smart, and I think the idea was that we would think of all the ideas that could come up inside the Interior Department, the Office of Management and Budget, and the like. If we could not think of it, they could not either, and the Director would be able to proceed with good assurance that he would not be caught off base.

If I continue with this series, perhaps next I will tell you about how I got (finally) to Water Resources Division.

**HUMOR**  
**RETIRED HUSBAND**

After I retired, my wife insisted that I accompany her on her trips to Target. Unfortunately, like most men; I found shopping boring and preferred to get in and get out. Equally unfortunate, my wife is like most women - she loves to browse.

Yesterday my dear wife received the following letter, from the local Target:

Dear Mrs. Harris,

Over the past six months, your husband has caused quite a commotion, in our store. We cannot tolerate this behavior and have been forced to, ban both of you from the store. Our complaints against your husband, Mr. Harris, are listed below and are documented by our video surveillance cameras:

1. June 15: He took 24 boxes of condoms and randomly put them in other people's carts when they weren't looking.
2. July 2: Set all the alarm clocks in Housewares to go off at 5-minute intervals.
3. July 7: He made a trail of tomato juice on the floor leading to the women's restroom.
4. July 19: Walked up to an employee and told her in an official voice, 'Code 3 in Housewares Get on it right away'. This caused the employee to leave her assigned station and receive a reprimand from her Supervisor that in turn resulted with a union grievance, causing management to lose time and costing the company money. We don't have a Code 3.
5. August 4: Went to the Service Desk and tried to put a bag of M&Ms on layaway.
6. August 14: Moved a, 'CAUTION - WET FLOOR' sign to a carpeted area.
7. August 15: Set up a tent in the camping department and told the children shoppers he'd invite them in if they would bring pillows and blankets from the bedding department to which twenty children obliged.
8. August 23: When a clerk asked if they could help him he began crying and screamed, 'Why can't you people just leave me alone?' EMTs were called.
9. September 4: Looked right into the security camera and used it, as a mirror while he picked his nose.
10. September 10: While handling guns in the hunting department, he asked the clerk where the antidepressants were.
11. October 3: Darted around the store suspiciously while, loudly humming the, 'Mission Impossible' theme.
12. October 6: In the auto department, he practiced his, 'Madonna Look' using different sizes of funnels.
13. October 18: Hid in a clothing rack and when people browsed through, yelled 'PICK ME! PICK ME!'
14. October 22: When an announcement came over the loud speaker, he assumed a fetal position and screamed; 'OH NO! IT'S THOSE VOICES AGAIN!'
15. Took a box of condoms to the checkout clerk and asked where is the fitting room?

And last, but not least:

16. October 23: Went into a fitting room, shut the door, waited awhile; then yelled very loudly, 'Hey! There's no toilet paper in here. 'One of the clerks passed out.

## SUPPLEMENTAL

### Tribute to John Conomos (first delivered at John's memorial service)

By Fred Nichols,  
August 14, 2017

I am deeply saddened but, at the same time, greatly honored to have been asked by his family to talk about John Conomos, my colleague and friend for more than 50 years. Because I have so much I want to share with you about this special person, and because I want to be brief, I hope that you will understand why I will read what I have written about him.

John and I met as graduate students at the University of Washington in 1964. He was pursuing his PhD in Oceanography and I, recently discharged from the US Navy, was just beginning in the same field. I had moved into a lovely house on Queen Anne Hill in Seattle with three other graduate students -- career naval officers working toward master's degrees, and a couple of other friends. Within a year, one of navy fellows left to get married and we invited John to move into the empty bedroom.

I believe it was at one of our usual Sunday afternoon sit-down dinners in that house when John introduced us to his mother, Penelope Conomos, who is here with us today. Later, at another one of those dinners, he introduced us to a lovely woman named Janice. As I recall, John and Janice prepared and served a full Greek dinner for all of us.

I won't go on about our long history together; rather, I want to focus on two fundamental aspects of John's character: his irrepressible concern for others, and his instincts for leadership.

The University of Washington Oceanography graduate students were housed in a long wooden trailer-like structure comprising tiny offices separated by paper thin walls. That was where we studied, discussed issues of science, and otherwise congregated for relaxation. A clear memory from those days was the role that John played in that small building -- generously taking time, usually in the evenings, to sit down with the newer students in their tiny offices, addressing their questions and concerns, and providing guidance on any issue, personal and professional.

John was especially considerate of the two young women graduate students, sharing ideas about how they could survive and thrive in the otherwise male-dominated Oceanography Department. Those of us in the nearby offices could not help overhearing those supportive conversations. Not surprisingly, as our colleagues here today can testify, his caring attitude toward everyone around him was a hallmark of his career and his life. He was a genuine people person and, as such, a very effective listener and counselor!

John completed his Doctoral research in 1968 and began his career in Menlo Park with the US Geological Survey (known to most people as simply the "USGS" or the "Survey"), one of the agencies within the US Department of the Interior. He joined our former graduate school colleague Dave Peterson and other scientists in a study of the geology and chemistry of San Francisco Bay. Not long afterward, John played the key role in my being hired at the Survey -- as a team biologist. He served as my mentor during the early years, with the two of us occupying adjacent offices then, and throughout our careers. His influence on my career was huge.

As a research oceanographer, John quickly made significant contributions to our understanding of the natural history of San Francisco Bay, for example his landmark "drifter study" -- resulting in a series of maps characterizing for the first time the seasonal and inter-annual patterns of water flow within San Francisco Bay and between the Bay and the adjacent Pacific Ocean. In the process, he became a key figure in the creation and management of what came to be widely recognized as the USGS San Francisco Bay Program that, in 1974, was the focus of a Public Broadcasting NOVA television show, entitled "Inside the Golden Gate".

John assumed responsibility for managing the small fleet of boats and the 96-foot Research Vessel *Polaris* that we used in our research, a role that he continued to play behind the scenes through the decades that followed. He skillfully contributed to keeping the San Francisco Bay research program "afloat" and thriving for all of us during many wonderfully productive years. That legacy continues today.

John took upon himself the role of coordinating Editor of two important books published by the Pacific Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS, a premier scientific society in the US), each book containing chapters by individual scientists on a broad array of topics regarding natural and human influences on the San Francisco Bay estuary. He also helped organize and lead a survey of all of the estuaries along the Pacific coast between San Francisco Bay and the Frazer River in British Columbia, and a joint year-long study of the Potomac River Estuary in cooperation with several east coast Survey colleagues.

John thrived in his role as scientist, leader and mentor, taking time with individual employees, from the lowest level office assistants to senior scientists, chatting about how they were doing, asking about their families, and offering to help resolve any challenges they might be facing. He was really interested in each individual, and freely shared his time.

Not surprisingly, his leadership instincts did not go unnoticed. Soon he was named Regional Research Hydrologist, overseeing the Survey's Water Resources Division research program in the western region, supervising more than 40 PhD project leaders and their staffs in Menlo Park alone, and advising the Division's many research scientists in the Survey's District offices in each of the western states. He was really good at this because of his strong research background, his people skills, and his vigorous support of the work in which the scientists under him, new and experienced alike, were engaged.

It was no surprise, therefore, when in the mid-1980s John was asked to take on a much larger responsibility - the role of Western Regional Hydrologist, the senior manager overseeing all of the Survey's Water Resources Division employees and activities in the District Offices in the western states. He saw as his job finding the right people to take the key positions in each state, helping them find the necessary resources do their jobs, and letting them work. He was a master at this. He held this important Survey leadership position until his retirement.

John also found time during the late 1980s to serve for a term as President of the Pacific Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

As you have no doubt read in the wonderful obituary prepared by his family, in 1994 John was awarded the highest honor given to a civilian federal employee by the US Department of the Interior: *Distinguished Service Award*, in recognition of all that he had accomplished in his career. This was an award richly deserved. The Conomos family proudly displays the Gold Medal that goes with the award.

To summarize, it is obvious to all who knew him that John was both a superb leader and a wonderful human being. He retired from the Survey in 2001, leaving a legacy of accomplishment that will be long remembered by all who knew him.

If I could say a few final words to my old friend, I would say, "John, I was so glad that I was able to sit down with you two weeks ago today to talk about the times that we had together and the memories we shared and, most important, to thank you for all you did for me and for all of the others at the Survey who had the good fortune of knowing and working with you. We will all miss you. You were the best."

### **Reflections on the life of John Conomos by a few of his friends and colleagues from the USGS,**

**Pete Anttila** writes: I had the pleasure to work with John Conomos for 10 years (7 years as Assistant Regional Hydrologist for Programs and 3 years as Associate Regional Hydrologist). John's leadership as the Western Region (WR) Regional Hydrologist truly was exceptional. He provided effective program vision addressing the current and impending hydrologic issues in the west, emphasized advancing the science of hydrology and related technologies, hired qualified staff and District Chiefs, and gave empowerment to his staff and WR Districts. When an ineffective function occurred in the Region, John quickly would assemble appropriate staff and expertise to resolve the issues and make remedial recommendations. John thoughtfully would analyze and discuss the recommendations with the staff and implement agreed upon recommendations, regardless of their difficulty. By the late 1990s the quality of programs, the science, and the efficiency of operations in the WR were exceptional.

With pride, we had the feeling of “Camelot” within WRD. I was fortunate to have a telephone conversation with John the day before he died, He was jovial, philosophic, and at peace with the wonderful life he lived. After that conversation I was no longer depressed about his condition and his fate. I will forever cherish my years working with John and the friendship we developed together. He was a remarkable man, scientific leader, mentor to many, and a provider of love and caring to a wonderful family.

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I want to add my name to the list of people who were greatly influenced by John Conomos. He was a mentor to me when I went into Water Resources Division management and he helped me understand what is important and what is not. He had such a love of science and he knew how to support scientists, make them more productive, and feel appreciated. We lost one of the best.

***-Mary Jo Baedecker – Former Chief Scientist for Water***

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When I was a graduate student and during my first few years as an NRP Project Chief and then when I served as Assistant Research Advisor and Research Advisor, I absolutely loved John's company. As Regional Hydrologist, he actually helped mentor and nurture those of us lucky enough to be in Western Region. What a fantastic and charismatic human being ... his cup was indeed full. Thinking about John this afternoon brought many fond memories.

***-Julio Betancourt – National Research Program Scientist, most of his career in Tucson***

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John was a scholar, a valued member of Survey leadership, a friend, an all-around good guy and a gentleman, in the finest sense of that word.

***-Jack Fischer – Former Associate Chief Hydrologist***

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**Marvin and Ardie Fretwell write:**

I wrote an email to John Conomos' son, also named John, the day I learned of John Sr's passing. It was right from my heart, because I was still in shock at the suddenness of John's passing. I'd like to share it with the larger USGS Retirees audience. Also, I would remind the Retirees that John's mother, Penelope Conomos, is still alive at age 107; she has outlasted three of her four children.

"John,

It was truly a sad day when I heard about your Father's passing. John Sr. was a very special person; and a man of great integrity, wit, cheer, and intelligence. We sometimes disagreed, at times strongly, because your Father allowed that on his management team, but we agreed much more than we disagreed, and I always deeply respected John and knew he was the better man. I was proud to work for him, and very proud to be regarded as his friend. He ran the best Regional operation in the Water Resources Division, and was one of the very best Regional Research Hydrologists before that. It is greatly saddening to know that John is gone now; but we are also thankful that his suffering was short. He will be very fondly remembered for the rest of our days.

Please share this email with your Mother; John's Mother, Penelope; and your two sisters, Penelope [Penny], and Alexa. We have sent a sympathy card, but I had more to say than can be put in a card, and it won't arrive for several days due to our remote location. Also, please accept deepest sympathies and condolences from Ardie and me.

I so well remember back in the late 70s when I was the new [Western Region] Regional Water Quality Specialist, and your Father would come into my office and chat with me. He had little reason to take an interest in me, because I was in the operational side of WRD, and he was in the research side, as the Regional Research Hydrologist. He was aware that as soon as I arrived in Menlo Park, I had visited every one of his researchers and discussed with them what they were researching, so I could better know whom to refer our operational folks

to if they had questions in that area of expertise. For that, your Father decided I was "one of the good guys," and took it upon himself to mentor me and to take a strong personal interest in me. He was like that -- always seeking out those he could help. And, as Paul Harvey would say, "the rest is history." We were closely connected thereafter in one way or another. It was a long and good association.

I am so thankful that we had a "Last Hurrah" reunion in April of this year -- although we didn't know it was that at the time. Your Father enjoyed it greatly, and the rest of his so-called "M-Team" (Pete Anttila, John Klein, Janet Thomas, and I) enjoyed it just as much. We had no idea about John's pancreatic cancer at that time, and if he did, he never let on. [He didn't.] It was a joyful occasion for all of us.

We are at Hebgen Lake in Montana, near West Yellowstone, on a two-month fly-fishing trip, so we will not be able to attend John's memorial services, but our hearts and thoughts will be there with you all."

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I feel fortunate to have been in Menlo from 90-95 experiencing John's commanding presence. He presided in a gentle and supportive (but at its roots hardcore) manner over an incredible gathering of scientists, many of whom he recruited. Come what may his legacy endures!

***-Judson Harvey – National Research Program Scientist, started in Menlo Park***

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John was one of my mentors for many years. I gained a lot from him and learned about what it takes to make a great scientific organization. I think that there are many in the National Research Program and in Water Science Centers who greatly valued what John did for them and felt the kind of love he conveyed to the people he worked with. I recall a number of great conversations I had with him around the time of my father's death from pancreatic cancer. John provided me with a lot of support and comfort. It is ironic that he should die of the same disease and with a similar short time from diagnosis to death. I looked at the web site where Alexa wrote about her grandmother. There are some great pictures and stories of both the young John Conomos and the old (but very happy) John Conomos. It really brought back memories to me. What a wonderful guy.

***-Bob Hirsch – Former Chief Hydrologist***

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**John Klein writes:**

### **TRAVELS WITH TASSO**

Tasso John Conomos was my friend. At one time he was my supervisor, and the manner in which I was supervised and mentored led he and I to have a very strong bond. We spent a great deal of time together and his wisdom and wit never ceased to amaze me. I know many reading this will say the same thing and understand exactly what I am saying. Never have I known a person loved and respected by so many. I traveled a lot with John, and I would like to share some memories of one of these trips.

Early in the Area Hydrologist experiment, John and I realized we had no idea concerning the WRD programs that were in place in the Western Pacific Trust Territories and Federated States of Micronesia. John and I were aware but confused about our visibility in this part of the world, and so we flew to Hawaii for a briefing from Bill Meyer, the Hawaii District Chief on the evolution and history of the of the Trust Territories. In advance of our trip, Bill had set up a number of meetings for John with cooperators, senators, mayors, and governors in Guam, Saipan Rota, Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Tinian. It was an event filled 2 weeks, every day we met with island officials regarding our programs to assist in developing sustainable water supplies. John posed for many pictures with these officials who were all very honored by his visit and interest in their islands. Never had a person with John's Regional Hydrologist status visited these islands. On all the islands, big evening banquets were held in our honor, tables were loaded with local food, folks busy standing by with large palm fronds swinging them over the food to keep the flies away, and many local custom dances and ceremonies. John was visibly both surprised and impressed by the show of attention, but he was obviously uncomfortable by the effort these poor folks had designed for our presence and his honor.

The last event of this trip was a trip of Moakil, a small island about 8 hrs. from Phonpei via a used Coast Guard vessel. We spent the day prior to the trip buying all the spam, Oreos, eggs, and gasoline we could find and had it loaded on the boat. We departed early in the morning. John's hips were obviously a source of incredible pain...our activity over the last several weeks had been intense but he was insistent that we continue on. Upon arrival, the island inhabitants greeted us on the ocean side of the reef with their small boats and we climbed into them for the short trip to the beach. John suffered down the ladder, into the boat and we quickly arrived on shore where he had to climb out and wade ashore. We were immediately hosted to a feast in the church/ town hall which was decorated in our honor and all the island inhabitants stood outside while we ate a variety of local foods including Lobster that had been prepared just a few hours before our arrival. Again, this outpouring of attention resulted in a conspicuous situation we were not comfortable with during this meal. But Bill Meyer explained that the WRD program on this tiny island had saved the lives of the inhabitants during a typhoon several years prior to our visit by providing a source of fresh water from a series of test wells drilled by WRD. Thus, it was their way of expressing gratitude to an organization that saved their lives. While having Bill Meyer coming to the island as a District "Chief" had a major impact, having John there was close to God settling on their island for a few hours. They wanted to show respect to honor John.

That evening Steve Anthony, the WRD project chief of the study on Moakil, spoke to the island residence on the results of his investigation. This was done so well by Steve and yes, the generator was running for the power point presentation. The thing that impacted John was the children were the ones in the audience; all the adults were outside the church, listening and looking thru the windows. They wanted their children to understand the island. Then the Oreos were passed out, the kids were very gracious and they all thanked us with smiles we knew we would remember for a long time.

The next morning, we had fried eggs brought to our room and yes a big plate of fried Spam. The same food we had brought them the day before, cooked on stoves using the fuel we had brought for their generator.

This visit was a major event for John; he did not expect the honors, the attention, nor the ceremonies on behalf of his presence. Nevertheless, he had learned WRD's presence on these islands was critical to the existing populations.

John was humbled, he sat alone on the boat deck all the way back to Pohnpei and was silent. Later that night, prior to our next day departure, I saw him sitting on the end of a pier, deep in reflection, watching the sunset...which in this part of the world during mid-summer takes a long time. His sitting on that chair as a silhouette with the fading red sun as a background comes back to me now; I stood away from him until he faded in the darkness of the evening not wanting to interrupt his thoughts.

John will always be my friend, and because of my many memories of travels and moments with him are what is helping me to deal now with his fading into the sunset.

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Sorry to lose John. He was indeed a special person and the kind of leader & mentor that we need more of.  
**-Matthew Larsen – Former Chief Scientist of the Water Resources Division, and then Chief Hydrologist**  
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John was also personally supportive of younger scientists. The very day that John learned that my Office of Surface Water detail in Reston was coming to an end that I was interested in trying my hand out in the west, he called to encourage me to pick the place and let him know. John liked the give and take of science and program discussion. He sat very noticeably on the front row of any science presentation and would often ask the first question and lots of follow-up. I remember one particular exchange during a district science program review when he turned and addressed us (then) young folks saying that science and program leadership almost always came from the front lines.

**-Robert Mason – Chief Office of Surface Water, formerly with California District**

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**Janet Thomas** writes: John was a very thoughtful and sensitive individual. He had a good sense of humor, and was always concerned about the well-being of his employees. I didn't have a lot of interaction with John prior to my move to Menlo Park, but before I moved there, John went out of his way to drive me around the area, filling me in on various neighborhoods, so I might be better informed about where to buy a house. In actuality, it was his way of setting aside some time for us to get to know each other a little better.

When I first came to Menlo Park, I went into John's office to talk with him about my role on his Team, and asked him what his priorities were and what he wanted me to do. He told me he didn't know what I should do; I should figure it out and do whatever needed to be done, as long as I kept him out of jail. (I did.)

John was true to his word. He demonstrated confidence in me, as he did with the other members of his staff. He listened to me and was interested in my ideas, and treated me as an equal on his Team.

John was a consummate family man. Family was a high priority for him, and the two of us had many conversations regarding the joys of raising our daughters, who were in college at about the same time.

The last time I saw John was just a few months before he passed away. Our management team had a reunion at our home. Our daughter took time off of work to drop by in the morning and meet John, the individual whom I had talked about frequently, and who was a large part of my life for 10 years. John was as warm and friendly as you would expect, genuinely interested in her and her well-being.

In the evening, we all went to dinner together, resolving to meet again in a few years. I sat next to John, and we had a very companionable visit. Little did I know how soon he would leave us.

John was excellent to work with, and had an underlying moral foundation that was to be admired. I considered John a more than a friend and will remember him fondly.

