

The Transition

Of and For Former N.C. State Park Employees

February, 2008

Issue No. 14

Folks,

Ginger and I hope that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holiday season! We were able to get together with my Mother and my brothers and their families for Christmas. We also got to visit with Ginger's brother and his family.

Ginger and I are well and continue to lead working lives. Oh well, someday I'll retire! I continue to work at Wildacres Retreat and Ginger continues to work as an assistant librarian at Micaville Elementary School. She is still trying to find a permanent teaching position.

As you read this issue you will note the New Additions to the former employee ranks. Be aware as well that this spring you will likely see at least two new names added to the list. I will not mention names but the initials are S.S. and P.H.. As Sid Shearin said to Paul Hart, "They're dropping like flies!"

Also, please make a note of the new Former Employee Reunion date for 2008.

Get in touch and stay in touch!
John L. Sharpe

Events

Fifth N.C.S.P.F.E.R.

The Fifth Annual North Carolina State Parks Former Employee Reunion was held on November 10 at The Summit on the Haw State Park. As promised, the food was wonderful. Getting together with old friends, discovering how lives have changed, and being a little nostalgic about old times and friends who have passed away always reminds us that our careers with State Parks will always be with us. It is also a good time to talk about those who didn't show up! We tried to make a few ears burn!



Nineteen people attended with 11 former employees and 8 former spousal volunteers all enjoying the event. As you can see from the photograph, the Fall color was very nice and meeting in the Youth Meeting Room (very appropriate) added to the quality of the event. Those who attended were: Mac Goodwin, Phil and Barbara McCorkle, Jim and Lois Billings, myself and Ginger, Dan Smith, Leon and Annie Laura Carter, Scott and Janet Daughtry, Tommy and Mary Wagoner, Judy Warren, Jud and Sandra Burns, and Thomas and Kim Sutton





For the 2008 reunion we will try something new; we will try having the event on the same weekend each year-the **first weekend in November**. This year, therefore, Saturday, November 8 will be the date for the Sixth N.C.S.P.F.E.R.. The location will be announced with the next issue of The Transition.

News Updates:

Notes from Leon Carter:

9-19-07 From **Durham Pait**. Rosella (Grandmother), Ryan, Anna Clair, Mathew, and Macy (Grandchildren) keep me scheduled pretty tight. Also play a little golf with my retired buddies.

I have retired from Dupont but still maintain some rental properties that I invested in over the years. So I'm not "sitting back under the shade tree" just yet. - - Durham you are not as old as me, when you get there, you will enjoy that shade tree, Leon.

9-23-07 Email from **Robert Skinner**. Said he had spent most of August in Utah. Said he hoped to get to Jud Burns and Martha Woods retirement parties, but would miss the reunion and he and Patsy would be at Myrtle Beach from Oct. 27 through Nov. 18. All Robert and Scott Daughtry have done since they hung it up is travel. More power to them.

9-23-07 Note from **Mike Seigh**. He's been on the road with trips to Saint Louis. Had a great time on the Big Piney River near the north end of the Ozarks in southern Missouri, getting lost with about 16 other canoes full of fun people. Then some Shriner work in Wilmington, also attended an annual South Atlantic Shriners Association weekend at Myrtle Beach. Just started teaching CPR and first aid classes at UNCW and continue to work with the local Cape Fear Chapter of the Red Cross teaching. In my spare time the chores with an old house he bought about 3 miles from Carolina Beach State Park. Says it feels like yesterday, being interviewed by Bill Webster for the job at Fort Macon.

My comment: Say what you want to about Bill Webster, but we knew where we stood, and had some good times in those days. Never forget the day I walked into the Division Office and our receptionist said she always liked to see me come in, so she could listen to the argument I would have with Bill that day, told her Bill and I never argued, just discussed what I was doing, sometimes rather loudly.

9-24-07 Several days ago I sent invitations to the families of our deceased fellow workers inviting them to the SP Former Employees reunion. Pointing out that Haw River State Park was one of our newest parks, along with directions of how to get there. I was received replies from Mina Hampton, wife of the late Tom Hampton, former Supt. of Singletary Lake and Board Member of the old Conservation Board, and Carolyn Hobgood, daughter of Jim Stevens our past Director of SP. Both said in almost the same words that they knew exactly where Haw River SP was. They had both attended meeting there when the Episcopal dioceses had operated The Summit. Mina and Carolyn you are one up on many of us, you knew The Summit before many of us even knew it existed.

10-26-07 Just received a phone call from Meyers saying he would not be able to get to the reunion. He had an operation to remove a malignant tumor from his colon, had complications, will be starting Radiation in the next few days.

Please send him a card. Address:

Meyers Braxton
PO Box 238
Godwin, NC 28344

For those who do not remember Meyers, he was Supt of Wm B Umstead for years before leaving us in the 1980s.

Hope to see many of you at the reunion on Nov 18, Leon

1-4-08 Got an email from Will Siler the other day. He retired 3 years ago, but is working part time at Lowe's (to stay out of trouble.) He did send me a new address on Sandy Siler. sandyjean34@suddenlink.net will email Sandy to see if still at the same physical address.

1-28-08 Just received this update on Fran Stevens from **Carolyn Hopgood, daughter of Jim & Fran.**

"Thanks so much for keeping us in the loop. Mama has had 2 bad days this past week. I could not get her to eat at all then one of the CNA's (certified nursing assistants) was able to get her started and she ate most of her supper for me. Then Fri. she was not any better and the staff had to feed her. Some days are good when she seems to act rather normal and answer some questions correctly. Most days she babbles and does not seem to know me or anything going on around her.

I just continue to pray that God will give me the strength to continue to go on with her in this state and if she is going to get worse that God in His infinite wisdom will be gracious and full of mercy for us all."

1-28-08 Wife and I are doing as well as can be expected for my age. I turned 80 last month, she is on her 57 year of being 18 (am not permitted to tell her age.) As John said in the last issue, I can still change a light bulb by myself, but it takes all day. Laura Beth next to youngest grandchild graduated from ECU last month, English Lit. plans to teach. Her younger sister Sarah Ann started ECU in Sept. she is studying nursing. Youngest great grand is 13 months old, living in Omaha, NE. Enjoy his pictures, but don't know when he will get to meet me. **Leon Carter.**

Saw **Susan Tillotson Saturday 1- 26** and asked her what she had been up to since she retired. I knew she had been having a house built for her Mother in Bullock, NC, north of Oxford, before she retired. Her Mother has moved into the home, although it is not quite finished. She said before she retired building this home was her part time job, since retirement it has become a full time job. Haven't heard it said, but it sounds like Susan is doing a lot of the work herself, if so this is a side of Susan I didn't know. But it doesn't surprise me that she is having the house built. Proud of you Susan.

Jack Green writes: (10-24-07) Sorry not to have gotten back with you but I've taken a brief job. I am leading a group of 7 to France to go on mushroom forays and sightseeing. I may have told you that I am a nature tour guide. Mostly Africa, Central America and New Zealand. I should be back mid November. Email me and let me know what is happening with you.

Jack

New Additions:

Jud Burn's Retirement Party:

Jud had a really **great** retirement celebration on October 5 at The Summit on the Haw with the meeting hall almost full to capacity. A great many alumni attended; among them: Jim and Lois Billings, Tim and Donnie Benton, Leon and Annie Laura Carter, Jo Anne Clendening and husband, Scott Daughtry, Walt Gravley, Tom Howard, Kenny McGrady, Tommy Johnson, Phil McKnelly, Cliff and Sue Phillips, Roy and Betty Jo Rogers, Robert Skinner, Dan Smith, Thomas and Kim Sutton, Tommy and Mary Wagoner, Tom Wells, and Jay and Hollis Wild.

The real celebration began after we enjoyed a delicious Alan Jeffries pig-picking meal. Of course Jud was roasted; his face was quite a bit redder than normal. Many of the tales revolved around Jud's days at Mount Mitchell where he learned all of the important state park stuff from Cliff Phillips. Billy Totten, Lewis Ledford, Denise Williams, Sandra Burns, Adrian O'Neal, Sid Shearin, Cliff Phillips, J. Wild, Phil McKnelly, Tom Wells, Susan Tillotson, myself and, of course, Jud Burns were among those who spoke. We all wish you the best, Jud and Sandra!

(This ain't Jud and Sandra!)





An aside regarding Jud's celebration from Mike Seigh:

Date: Mon, 08 Oct 2007

Good morning, Denise. Boy, do I have a story to tell. Please feel free to share this with anyone. I am sure they will have a chuckle or two. I was looking forward to going to Jud's retirement luncheon. Jill and I planned our weekend to allow us to be free from weekend work and we headed to the Summit Conference center early Saturday morning from Wilmington. But when we arrived, we met Superintendent Sue McBean who regretfully informed us that the event was the day before. Talking about feeling foolish and downright embarrassed. Might I suggest that there be a kind of Backward's "bullet award" to be applied to retired division employees. Maybe the "Seigh it isn't so" award might be appropriate.

I am so sorry that I missed this great event. I really, really wanted to be there. You see, when you retire, the days lose their significance. Everyday is a Saturday. I would like to contact Jud to express my regret and apologies for not being there. Can you share his new contact mailing address or email address? It would mean a lot to me.

I hope all is well with everyone. I am always thinking about folks in the division that I have worked with in the past.

Hey, Greg!! you the man!!!! Congratulations on your promotion as SODI superintendent. You will do well, besides, you have Denise to keep you straight. I send my best to you for your continued success.

I have also heard that Susan Tillotson is retiring in December. Is that true? I will be working October 15 through the 19th at the state fair with the red cross. This will be my 26th year there. I will get out to be at WIUM for Martha's special luncheon. I think on that Thursday. Hey, if that is wrong, please correct me.

All is well here in southern New Hanover County. I have been nominated to be the republican Judge at our local polling booth. Next year should be interesting and even

more busy when you add my new job at UNCW teaching first aid and CPR classes to their employees. I am still involved with the local chapter of the Red Cross doing the same. Jill is fine and now working at the BB55 (Battleship USS North Carolina). When in the area, please feel free to contact us. 910-799-9954 or email us.

Take care and we will be thinking of you all.
Mike and Jill

Susan Tillotson's Retirement Celebration:



Susan and her Mom

Per Leon Carter: I called The Summit, Haw River SP yesterday. Sue McBean wasn't in, the young lady I was talking to said she thought there were about 75 at Sue's party, but I think there were more than that. The dinning room looked like it had as many as were at Jud's party. Good Party, Good Crowd, no idea how many retirees were there, but we were well represented. Sue was roasted by many. The one I really laughed at was by Phil McKnelly. He said when she applied for Supt. position at Eno, he wondered if she was ready for it; when she applied for the North Dist. Supt. position, he wondered if she was ready for it, When she applied for Chief of Operations he didn't care (he was gone by then) but he thought she was ready for all of them. Many good things, that she deserved, were said by many.

Before we ate, there was a presentation of a check for \$5,000 by the REI Recreational Equipment, Inc. to the Friends of State Parks, for the purchase of canoes and other recreational equipment for Haw River State Park. Then Sue's family was introduced. Her Mother, Sister, Brother, a Cousin and her Partner.

Andy Whitaker

Note from Sid Shearin: I guess you know that Pilot's **Andy Whitaker** has retired. I called him yesterday and got the normal information except he does not have any email.

Note from Bruce Garner, D&D Section Chief regarding Kim Huband:
DPR Family & Friends:

Although I'm sure his wife Jane and the rest of his family are most pleased with his decision, it is with great reluctance I announce that Kim Huband will be changing primary occupations effective March 1, 2008. Those who know Kim Huband understand that "retirement" as defined by the College Dictionary does not accurately describe his circumstances...his hands are in too many fires to label him as retired!

Kim has in excess of 30 years with DENR, most of which were with the Division of Parks and Recreation working early on as LWCF project administrator and later in various planning roles, the most recent being head of the General Management Program. He is very well known for asking thought provoking, sometimes hard, questions of us all during the GMP process. His analytical business mind, his interest in wise planning & expending of public funds, his knowledge of the state park system, and his ability to get a Bojangle's senior coffee at such an early age can not be matched! I could go much further with praising Kim's talents and accomplishments, but instead I'd like to include a portion of a personal email from Director Lew Ledford to Kim which I think is a most accurate representation of how we all feel:

Begin Quote: "It is not with ambivalence that I viewed your retirement decision, rather my first thoughts are of a selfish motive. This parks system would continue to benefit from your active engagement and direction. You have provided excellent insights, interpretations, understandings, and people management skills as you managed the GMP process. Those traits are not easily replaced. I wish you the best in retirement, and am particularly pleased of your willingness to assist in transitioning. You have provided excellent insights, interpretations, understandings, and people management skills as you managed the GMP process. Those traits are not easily replaced. I wish you the best in retirement, and am particularly pleased of your willingness to assist in transitioning. Again, all the best to you! (Unfortunately, I'm not sure that there will now be another DRP Carolina fan in the Archdale building!) " End Quote.

Final thought: Kim has requested an exemption from a standard sit down, speech making, retirement function...however, we do hope to have a gathering of well wishers sometime before the 1st of March. More details to come on that, but in the meantime please join me in wishing Kim Huband the very best!

Bruce Garner
D & D Section Chief

Martha Woods



John, Picture of Martha does not have correct date on it, it was taken on 10/18/07.

It was a very nice party, held at WIUM, Lapihio Group Camp, catered by Angus Barn (BBQ & fried chicken) There were at least 120 in attendance, good turn out by Archdale & Yorkshire offices and at least 12 former employees. Many good things were said by the Division Staff, Park Staff (including a song written and sang about her), Advisory Committee, Umstead Correlation and individuals. Of course a certain amount of roasting, of which Cliff Phillips layer it on the heaviest. Enjoyed by all, what more could one want at a party, a familiar setting in the middle of one of our parks, cool weather, good food, wonderful fellowship, and of course a Guest of Honor who was a very capable Supt. and loved by all.

John those I remember there were JoAnn Clendening, Claude Crews, Scott Daughtry, Fred Hagenberger, Tom Howard, Phil McKnelly, Cliff Phillips, Mike Seigh, Robert Skinner, Dan Smith, Jud Burns, and myself.

Those Who Will Be Missed

Note from Paul Hart: As you may recall, Howard was the first Supt. at Raven Rock. I did some checking and found out through the News and Observer website that **Howard G. Hodges**, Sr. 74, of Wrightsville Beach died Thursday, December 22, 2005 at Wake Medical Center in Raleigh.