

The Transition

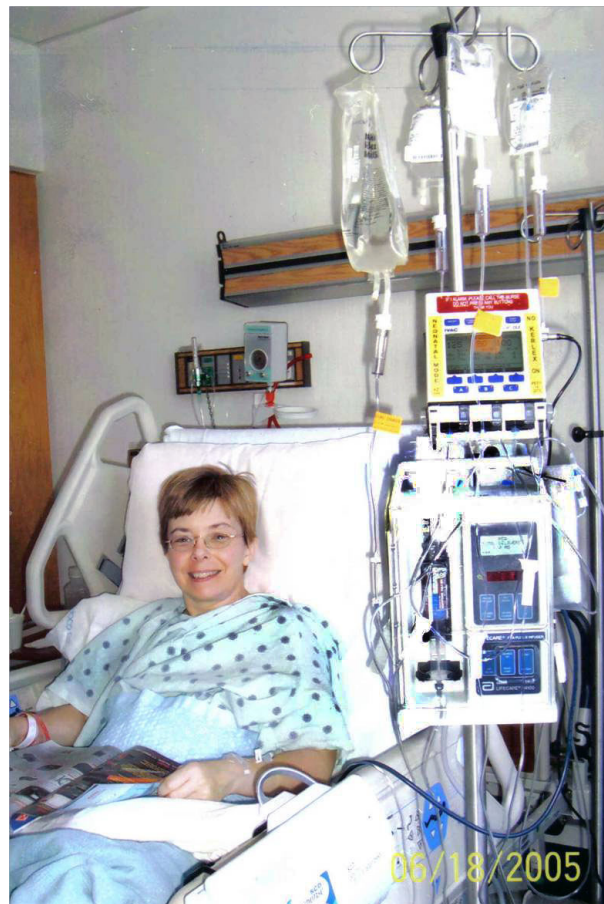
Of and For Former N.C. State Park Employees

July 2005

Issue No. 10

This issue of *The Transition* is a large one. The Spring and Summer of 2005 has been an eventful time; with news that brings cheer—and news that brings sadness.

As a personal note, my wife Ginger had to be hospitalized in June for, what was initially diagnosed as, endometriosis diverticulitis—an inflammation of the colon. However, after visits by several doctors it was determined that they didn't know what was causing the problem. Several days later an exploratory laproscopic procedure was performed. This showed that her problem was a severe infection surrounding her uterus, fallopian tubes, and a remaining ovary. After four hours of surgery, with a complete hysterectomy, the infection was cleared away. Three days later Ginger was discharged from the hospital and is now doing fine. The thoughts and prayers of many people helped with her safe surgery and quick recovery.



(T.N.C.S.P.F.E.R.) (T.N.C.S.P.F.E.R.) (T.N.C.S.P.F.E.R.) (T.N.C.S.P.F.E.R.)

The **Third North Carolina State Parks Former Employee Reunion** (T.N.C.S.P.F.E.R.) will be held at Morrow **Mountain State Park**, in the newly renovated Lodge on **October 15, 2005**. **Mark your calendars now!** I am not sure of the events, the event schedule has not been completely finalized, but I am positive that a contest for the correct pronunciation of T.N.C.S.P.F.E.R. will be held. The rules committee has adopted new guidelines for the contest.

We should all be thankful to my lead reporter, Leon Carter for all of his hard work in gathering much of the news for this issue, and every issue for that matter. Also, thanks go to Nelson Chadwick for his help with sprucing up the photographs. Many thanks also to Kevan Burnett for the use of his web site.

And remember, you may view The Transition—IN COLOR—at Kevan Burnett's web site <http://www.luggage-and-leather.com/transition.htm> .

Get in touch and stay in touch,

John L. Sharpe

News Updates

Cedric Squires writes (3-6-05): Thank you for The Transition issue no. 9. I'm darn near Transitioned out. I began my transition back in April, 1975 so I have been in transition from state employment about as long as I worked for the dear people of N.C.. My total time in retirement from Revenueing and State Parking it contained 44 months I has spent in retaliation of Germany & Japan in WWII. Following said State Retirement, I had a "career" as a wood caver for 26 of the almost 30 years. Supplementing my retirement pay by carving and selling nearly 2,000 carvings from which I saved nearly \$20,000 bucks. Almost a "grand" a year.

I have been one of God's blessed. At nearly age 81, I have never spent a night as a patient in any hospital or clinic. From age 16 I have worked out with weights three times a week (the vast majority of time) except during WWII and two or three weeks after I got married. I'm not sure which to credit for my very good health. All that exercise or all the funny jokes I have run across and laughed and laughed at.

A few examples follow:

The boy friend asked his lady friend—"Am I the only man you have made love to?" To which she answered by a question also, "Why does everybody ask me that?"

Two little dogs were walking down the street and stopped beside a parking meter. One of the dogs looked up and said, "Now look at just what they are doing to us now-pay toilets!"

What do you get when you drop a piano down a mine shaft? A Flat Minor!

A lady told her friend, "I was so depressed and discouraged, I decided to take 1,000 aspirin and end it all!" Her friend replied, "Oh! What happened?"

The lady answered, "After I had taken four of them I felt much better!"

A fellow thought that someone had stolen his bicycle. He thought, "That is a sin I believe." So he looked it up in the "Commandments" and sure enough stealing was a sin. Then he read just below it, "thou shalt not commit adultery" and – he remembered where he had left it!

Saint Peter asked God where he was going on his vacation this year. To which God replied, "Well, I'm sure not going back to earth. I went down there 2000 years ago and I got a little Jewish girl pregnant. You know, they are still talking about that today!"

Two little dogs were trotting down the street when one dog said, "Hey, wait here a minute—I'll be right back." Then he ran across the street to a fire hydrant where he sniffed all around. When he returned the other dog asked, "What was that all about"? The first dog replied, "Oh, I was just checking my messages"! (I love dogs and dog jokes!)

A chocolate Lab went into a bar where two horses were standing up to the bare with one hoof each resting on the brass rail. The Lab said, "Hey fellows, why the long faces"?

A lady was carrying a fresh meaty soup bone in a brown paper bag at her side. A large rotwieler

came up behind her and smelling the bone he bit down on it tearing it out of the bag and running off down the street. Where upon the lady yelled after him, "You are nothing but a thieving s.o.b."! And he really was!

A lawyer saw an old friend he had not seen in 20 years. Where upon he said, "I'll be an s.o.b. if that's not old Henry Jones"! And he really was!

A lady died of a heart attack. When she arrived at the Pearly Gates St. Peter asked her to please watch the gate for him and to make the applicants pass some simple test before letting them in. The first one to come up to the gate for entry was asked to touch the tip of her nose with eyes close. She did and was let in. The second applicant was asked to stand on one foot and repeat the Lord's Prayer with his eyes closed. He did, and was admitted. The lady watching the gate for St. Peter looked up to see her sorry old husband who had just stepped out of a bar and got hit by a bus. He saw his wife at the gate and said, "Hey honey, surely you are going to let me in"? She said, "O.K., if you can spell one simple word for me". What is the word, "he asked". She replied, "Spell Czechoslovakia, backward"!

Oh my! So, behave or be careful!

[Thanks Cedric, for the good humor!]

Jennie Hallsey writes (3-8-05): Thanks for the recent "Transition". It's fun for Jim and me to catch up! We're doing fine. He is too busy, so we need to schedule a vacation soon.

It's still wintry here today with snow and high winds. Jim keeps saying that Spring is on the way! He has the workshop up and running! He's done a few repairs for neighbors.

Eugene Jordan, and Margaret Jordan write (6-23-05): After four years at The Nature Conservancy, I (Margaret) have returned to state government as the public information officer for the Office of State Personnel. Eugene is the Superintendent of Parks for Alamance County. Look forward to being in touch with all and receiving the newsletter.

Roy Rogers, as of 6-20-05, is, according to his wife, Betty Jo, still trying to get their house built. Hopefully will be moving in shortly. Has a new dog, yellow lab that has just about got Roy trained. Roy is into bicycling & motorcycling and church work.

Thanks for giving us parks

By RUTH SHEEHAN, Staff Writer (Raleigh, News and Observer, 11-26-04)

Sitting in his motorized wheelchair at Brighton Gardens of Raleigh, **Jim Stevens** lifts his right arm in greeting, but his left is curled against his chest. A stroke has left him unable to navigate and, much to his frustration, unable to speak clearly. But his eyes sparkle with intelligence. And on a recent Tuesday, they beamed with pride.

This is the man who helped rescue Jockey's Ridge, the immense Outer Banks sand dune, from the bulldozers. He kept Umstead Park from being sold to the city of Raleigh and helped line up the land for the Eno River, Fort Fisher and Pilot Mountain state parks. He tried to save Bald Head Island from its future of private development.

So on Nov. 16, Stevens was bestowed what I'm told was a first: a lifetime achievement award for his service to the state parks, first as a government employee, then, for a decade, as unpaid lobbyist for the nonprofit group Friends of State Parks.

Nov. 16 also happened to be Stevens' 82nd birthday.

With his wife and daughters, fellow residents and a handful of old colleagues gathered round, Stevens listened quietly as his friend John Graham recited a litany of his accomplishments.

From his service in the South Pacific during World War II to his years lobbying for free in his "retirement," it is quite a list.

In 1948, when Stevens moved to North Carolina to become assistant director of what was then the N.C. Recreation Commission, North Carolina had an eight-park system. But within a few years, the parks and recreation divisions were combined and Stevens became the director. The system exploded with growth. During Stevens' tenure, the number of parks more than tripled, including the addition of Kerr, Jordan and Falls Lake recreation areas, four natural areas and preserves.

"Essentially what he did was to obtain as much land as he possibly could for new parks," said Betsy Brooks, Stevens' daughter, who also lives in Raleigh. "He always said, 'If we can snatch the land now, we can develop the parks later.' "

He did pretty well. These days the parks boast more than 120,000 acres.

His daughter laughed when I asked which state park was her father's favorite. He loved Jockey's Ridge because of its history, she said.

"But it wasn't like Daddy was one of those parks guys who loved to camp," she said. As kids, she and her sister would pester him to take them camping in one of "his" parks. He refused.

He loved the parks. He loved to visit them. But when it came to camping, he'd say, "Why sleep in a tent when there's a Howard Johnson's nearby?"

A man after my own heart.

Brooks said her father proved his devotion to the park system from his desk, cajoling landowners and foundations, and in person at the legislature, charming lawmakers into providing enough money to support the parks.

"It was always his dream that every family in North Carolina would live less than a half-day's drive from one of the state parks," she said. "It was his dream they could all make a day trip to a state park."

Her father, the man with the sparkling eyes and sharp mind, helped make that dream a reality. On Thanksgiving Day, that is something to be thankful for.

And Jim Stevens is, too.

Tommy Wagoner writes (3-26-05): We are the proud grandparents of Claire Olivia Wagoner, 7 lbs, born Thursday morning, 3 a.m., to Tory, Julie and Grace. Everyone is doing fine and came home yesterday.

Scott Daughtry writes (3-26-05, after helping the Tidal Wave victims for several weeks as part of the Baptist Men's Disaster Team):

Hi Folks,

This is our final day in Sri Lanka. Many tears have fallen as I am so sad to leave these wonderful new friends! We distributed many hundreds of supplies on Monday and Tuesday to the tent camps around Galle and nearby villages. At one tent camp we were walking around visiting the people in their tents. There were two older ladies sitting outside their tents weaving handmade lace with bobbins of thread! One lady ran inside to get her photos to show me. They were waterlogged and ragged but showed her laces and awards she had won. Obviously, three of us bought several items from her!!!

We arrived in Colombo on Wed. to bring a team to the airport and to pick up Larry (old coordinator) who has returned. Our heartwarming story for this week--- The team had personally donated about \$300 to purchase a delivery table for the Batapoula Hospital. We found the medical supply company here in Colombo. But of course the table cost much more. The kind man there told us that he knew of a local manufacturing company. Our driver found the address and turned down a very narrow alley and stopped at a big gate. No company name. We entered the building. There in the middle of the room stood our hospital exam table. On the wall behind it, hung a picture of Jesus! The man told us that he is a Christian. He sold us the bed at a reduced price and is delivering it free on Monday! God leads the way again.

Today we returned to the Buddhist orphanage here in Colombo to see the progress on the new building. We took the 325 children (ages 6 mon.-18 yr.) packages of cookies.(Today is the 3 month anniversary of the tsunami and the day before Easter.) They laughed and sang for us. What a great end to our trip! We leave here in the early morning as they say here. See you soon. With very full hearts, Janet and Scott

Larry Milton writes (4-25-05): Have a computer now that's worth a darn, so I thought I would send you my correct e-mail address which is wildlife@surry.net . Our new telephone number is 336-368-6039.

Mine and Linda's agenda is still about the same as it has been – I'm doing nothing and she is still working trying to make us a living. I'm thinking about finding her a second job so she can support my bad habits.

Donna (Young) Thompson writes (2-24-05): It seems that I always have a conflict with the Parks reunions, but I was able to get to Mr. Ellis' birthday party. It was really great to visit with former co-workers and catch up on the 30+ years of not having seen them. I was hired by Mr. Ellis and started working with State Parks Sept. 15, 1970 – the very next day after graduating from Business College. I transferred to the Div. of Commerce and Industry (just down the hall in the Administration Building) and went out on maternity leave Jan. 1975. I decided in May that being a stay at home mom and helping my husband on the farm was really wonderful, eventually went back to work and retired from State gov. with 20 years of service to become the secretary at my church (just 4 miles from home –I am loving it!!) We have a very distinguished member of our church – the one and only Mr. Thomas C. Ellis – I love seeing him on a weekly basis and occasionally he will drop by the church office during the week for a short visit. I get to see Leon Carter quite a bit also as he lives just down the road from me. In fact he stopped in at the office today to give me pictures of Mr. Ellis' party.

I have enjoyed reading the Transition and love the idea of it being online. Thanks for all the time and effort you put into it.

I do have some corrections to my address, etc.: my street is Louisburg rather than Lewisburg and my phone number is 919-556-2840 rather than 919-550-2840. Thanks for updating this info.

Hope to be at the next gathering.

Leon Carter reports:

3-19-05, Homecoming for the Leon Carter's children.

Our three children, four grandchildren, two great grandchildren and one boy friend of granddaughter gathered for a pig-picking, which ended in a cutthroat Uno game of cards. Most of them were around for at least 3 days.



4-30-05, **Mr. Tom Ellis** attended the annual reunion of the "CCC", Civil Conservation Corp, at Singletary Lake. This group disbanded in 1942, meaning the youngest member is at least 80 years old. At this meeting they presented Angela Allcox. Supt of Singletary, with the Governor's award for Volunteers, for her outstanding help to the "CCC" group.

5-6-05, Heard from **Mike Cavin**, who is with the Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game. Mike said he was taking some time off to buy or build a cabin on the mainland, as he is stationed on an island in the Bering Sea. He also said that, at a 4th of July party last year, they all were wearing Down Lined Jackets & he was wearing his fur lined hat issued by the NC Parks & Rec. Felt real good. He asked that I pass on a "Camam" to all. That's pronounced "Cha-my", Yupik Eskimo for Hello. Believe if he wasn't going native on us, we might be able to get him back, as he misses all of the Park Staff. Keep it warm Mike. In a later short email, Mike said he would not be back to work until Sept. Sounds like he is working when it's too cold to do anything, and playing in the summer. More power to him.

5-13-05, The State recognized **Mr. Tom C. Ellis** with the award "The Order of the Longleaf Pine" for his long and exemplary service and his contribution to the NC State Parks, naming him an Ambassador of Good Will.



Mr. Ellis was nominated by Lewis Ledford, present Director of NC Parks & Rec., who gave an introduction consisting of Mr. E's work history dating back to 1936 when he joined the CCC; his four years in the US Army during WWII; and through his tenure with State Parks until his retirement in 1977. The award was then presented by Mr. Jonathan Howes, former Secretary of The Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources, on behalf of Governor Mike Easley. Since his retirement Mr. Ellis has continued with his dedication to State Parks serving as past President of the Friends of State Parks and continuing to serve on the Board of Directors. He has fought for State Parks in many ways through out the years. In attendance were 11 members of the family; at least 14 of our former employees & 1 spouse; Jane Sutton, daughter of George Sutton, former Asst. Supt of State Parks; Mina Hampton, wife of the late Tom Hampton, Supt. of Pettigrew & member of the old C&D Board; 3 members of the Friends of State Parks; two from the Retired Govt. Employees Asso; and two from the Durham State Employee Credit Union; plus many friends I didn't know. The best part was he did not know anything about it until Mr. Howes started reading the award. After we got out of the meeting Mr. E. accused me of lying to him the day before. He had asked me what was going on and I told him I had no idea. I hadn't been invited, but I would drive him over. We kept family and alumni outside until Lewis started to introduce him. The pictures were taken by Bob Brown, Durham County Public Defender, who had served, with Mr. E on the Advisory Board of the Durham, State Employees Credit Union.

5-13-05 **LuAnn Bryan** former Park Ranger & Recreation Resources Consultant with the Division, has left State Govt.. She was at Mr. E's award ceremony and I cornered her long enough to find out she is now the Parks & Greenways Planner for the Town of Morrisville which is just outside Raleigh. So let's welcome LuAnn to the list of Formers and wish her the best in her new Job.

Latter part of May, **Leon & Annie Laura Carter**, spent 4 days in SC.. Daughter, Nan lives in Bluffton & sister Annie Mae in Beaufort, 30 miles apart. Also visited with cousins. Went fishing (salt water) one day. I caught 6, while Hank & Wes were skunked. Of course all 6 of mine measured between 3 3/4" & 4 1/4". Least I didn't get over excited or sweaty bringing them in.

5-31-05, Mr. Ellis and I visited **Allene Woods**, former secretary to Alan Eakes, former Div. Landscape Architect. Some six years ago Allene had a slight stroke, and she moved into a nursing home. Well I'm happy to say she seems to be doing better than expected for an 88 year young lady. She was having a little problem placing what job some of the people we were talking about had, although she remembered the names. But she remembered a lot of the shenanigans pulled in the Div office. She doesn't look a bit older than when she retired, and seemed satisfied in her new home. Her address has been corrected in our mailing list. And our hats off to Alan Eakes who has been her best buddy since her retirement.

Those who will be missed.



Mrs. Myrtle Ellis, 82 years old, passed away Monday, April 25. She was the wife of Mr. Tom C. Ellis, retired Supt. of State Parks. She has been in bad health for the last couple of years, but on April 21, she suffered a massive heart attack. She was a very loving and gracious lady, who will be missed by all, who knew her.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Mr. Ellis, their three daughters and all family members. State Parks was represented at the funeral, with uniformed active personnel, former employees, and Friends of State Parks.

Mr. Jim Stevens, 82 year old, passed away the morning of June 2. Jim was a former Director of NC Parks & Recreation. He had been director of the old State Recreation Comm. before they merged with State Parks, becoming the Div. of Parks & Recreation. He had also served in the US Navy during WW II as a Division Officer on a Landing Ship Transport "LST".

Jim had several mini strokes in the last several years leaving him wheelchair bound and affecting his speech. Several months ago he had to be placed in a nursing home. He was bed ridden and was having good and bad days. Reports from several people who visited him were that for the last couple of weeks he had been found to be very alert on several visits, understood what was being said to him and answered by shaking his head, yes and no. He was visited on May 31. He may have recognized his visitors but was not as alert as he had been on previous visits.

Our hearts grieve the passing of this good man, fine gentleman, and true friend, who had worked so hard to improve our Park System. Both while employed with Parks & Recreation and after retirement as President of Friends of State Parks he lobbied the Legislature on issues in favor of Parks & Recreation.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Fran, and two daughters and other members of the family. Our hearts go out to Fran, who is suffering from Alzheimer's. She is a very sweet lady who catered to Jim and provided his every wish as long as she was able.



CHARLES C. STOTT, [from his obituary] 93, died Saturday, June 11, 2004, at Springmoor Retirement Community. Born March 17, 1912, in Wendell, NC, Charlie was the son of Charles R. and Jennie Whitley Stott.

After graduating from Wendell High School, Charlie earned his undergraduate degree from North Carolina State University and his Masters degree in Recreation and Park Administration from Indiana University.

During his high school years, Charlie became the first Eagle Scout from Wendell and one of the first in Wake County. He has always credited his Boy Scouting experiences as major ingredients for the launching of his career on his "life's trail", as he called it.

Upon graduation from college, Charlie became a teacher in Raleigh Public Schools. Later he served six years as Assistant Superintendent of the NC State Parks System. In 1942, Charlie married Alice Johnson LaRoque of Kinston, NC. He then served as an Army officer during World War II. He continued his service in the NC National Guard, retiring as a Lt. Colonel.

In 1950, Charlie joined the faculty of NC State University in the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management, retiring as Associate Professor in 1973. While teaching at NCSU, Charlie was a pioneer in developing courses on maintenance/operation, and facility/site planning of recreation facilities. His pioneering efforts culminated in the creation of the National Parks and Recreation Association's Maintenance Management School, attracting practitioners from all over the country. In 2000, Charlie received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Department.

Upon retirement from NCSU in 1973, Charlie continued to develop his business as a camp, parks, and conference center planner. He prepared several hundred plans in 26 states and Canada. During this period, Charlie developed a professional and very personal relationship with the Salvation Army, helping the Army develop many camps and conference centers. Charlie was a member of many professional associations serving as a Board member and President of the NC Parks and Recreation Society, where he awarded a Fellow in 1967. He served for 40 years as a volunteer with the American Red Cross, teaching water safety and contributing to the writing of the Red Cross Canoeing Manual. He was a member of the Raleigh Recreation Commission and the NCSU Faculty Club Boards. He was a member of the Raleigh Kiwanis Club for 40 years and received the Kiwanis International Hixson Award. He served on the camp committees of the Pines of Carolina Girl Scout Council and the NC Conference of the United Methodist Church. Charlie was a member of his cherished Hayes Barton United Methodist Church for over 50 years. In 1982, Charlie and Alice moved to Emerald Isle, NC, where they spent 13 golden years of their "trail", enjoying life "at the shore." They had many wonderful friends at the Chapel By the Sea. Charlie continued sharing his stained glass artistry, honey from his beehives, and many treasures gleaned from his gill nets.

Charlie cherished his family above all. He was predeceased by his wife of 57 years, Alice Johnson LaRoque.

Memorial contributions may be made to: Hayes Barton United Methodist Church, 2209 Fairview Rd. Raleigh, NC 27608, The Salvation Army of Raleigh, 215.S. Person St. Raleigh, NC 27601, Boy Scouts of America, Occonecchi Council-Baden Powell District 3231 Atlantic Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27604.

I (Leon) had known Charlie for over thirty years. Every time I talked with him, I gained more respect for him. Upon reading his obituary and hearing the testimonies at his funeral, I know why I was feeling that respect. The organizations he worked with and boards he served on are endless. Commissioner W. Todd Bassett, the Salvation Army National Commander, gave his reflections of Charlie at his Funeral.

Charlie was a canoe buff, enjoyed his gill nets for fish, and was an avid beekeeper. From the pictures of Charlie, he was very attached to his family and the outdoors in general.

Charlie had a long (what he called) "Life Trail". But as he told one of his children just a week or so ago. My "Life Trail" is going by too fast.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his son, two daughters, eight grandchildren, and four great grandchildren, and all other members of the family.