

The Transition

Of and For Former N. C. State Park Employees

**February
2004
Issue No. 7**

After seven issues I continue to be enthused about *The Transition*. Many former employees have told me that they really appreciate this newsletter. I have been able to attend most of the retirement celebrations over the past three years and it is very gratifying to see many of you there as well.

Ginger and I are doing well. My remodeling project, which I reported on in the previous issue, continues. After much frustration, we have our new floor! Yay! It is really beautiful! I now am working on replacing the original wood paneling in our living room with drywall, bead board wainscot, and chair rail. (I completed the walls of our dining area last year). I have discovered that using a wet sponge to smooth out the dry joint compound works very well and eliminates dust--which Ginger really appreciates! Ginger is taking courses at Mayland Community College in order to complete her degree. She hopes to become a teacher in about two years. Ginger continues to work for the Burnsville Veterinary Clinic and I continue to work at Wildacres Retreat and we both enjoy the work.

The First North Carolina State Parks Former Employee Reunion (F.N.C.S.P.F.E.R) was very successful! The October weather was terrific, the fellowship was enthusiastic, and the food was wonderful! Read more about it in the News Updates!

I was glad to be able to attend three of the four retirement celebrations since July. Scott Daughtry, Roy Rogers, William Berry, and Phil McKnelly have joined the ranks of State Park Alumni. I know that we all wish them the best of luck with their new lives! Read more about them in the News Updates.

John L. Sharpe

FLASH!

**The Second North Carolina State Parks Former Employee Reunion
(S.N.C.S.P.F.E.R.)**

is all set for

August 7, 2004

at the

Falls Lake State Recreation Area Rolling View Community Building!

Make your plans today!

A reminder with additional details will be published in the July issue of *The Transition*.

Don't forget that you can read all about it on the web at
<http://www.luggage-and-leather.com/transition.htm> .

[Names and addresses of former employees click here.](#)

Get in touch and stay in touch!

News Updates:

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

The **F**irst **N**orth **C**arolina **S**tate **P**arks **F**ormer **E**mployee **R**eunion was very much enjoyed by all who attended. Hagan Stone Park, a park operated by the City of Greensboro and located in Guilford County, provided a nice location for a Fall gathering. It was cool enough to enjoy a fire in the fireplace and a hot cup of coffee while folks got to update each other about important changes in their lives.



The food was excellent. We all enjoyed sampling favorite recipes-and ate too many samples! The only things missing were comfortable cots for napping! I'll have to ask Brian Dowdy at Falls Lake if he can provide them at the next reunion.

Those in attendance were myself, Ginger and Journey; Leon and Annie Laura Carter, Thomas and Kim Sutton, Robert Skinner, Judy Warren and Marty Wood, Tommy and Mary Wagoner, Scott Daughtry, Mac Goodwin, and Arnold Aiken.

No special door prize was awarded for the correct pronunciation of the acronym F.N.C.S.P.F.E.R.. I don't think anyone wanted to give it a try and I forgot to bring the door prize anyway!

We'll try it again with the second reunion.

Larry Milton informs us (8-27-03)

That ?after leaving state parks in July, 1993, a couple of part-time jobs, I went to work full time with Carolina Medical, Inc. in the town of King, NC. Finally retired for good in May, 2002. Stay fairly busy with yard work and house work. Linda is still working trying to make us a living. Still going to Kure Beach every chance we have. I?m doing a lot of wild life woodcarving which I thoroughly enjoy because of the enjoyment it gives. Linda and I have taken a number of tour bus trips and plan to take more. Both sons are married and live nearby. All in all, Linda and I are just plain ol? people trying to enjoy what we have.?

Thanks Larry!

Scott Daughtry became a former employee and had a great send off on August 23!

Everyone enjoyed many great ?Ranger Scott? tales. The air conditioning had to be increased because of the heat created by the ?roasting?. Over 150 friends and family attended. Jim Stevens, Tom Ellis, Tom Wells, and around fifteen other alumni congratulated Scott on his transition.



Good Luck Scott!!

Julie Adamchik reports (2-5-04) that she was unable to attend the reunion because of gall bladder surgery!

She and Alex are doing fine. She says that ?Our traveling has slowed down since the Sept. 11 tragedy. Not because of fear of traveling but from fear of being so far away from home and family in the event that something would go wrong. It?s much easier to return home on this side of that big ocean. We plan most of our trips now within the U.S..

Besides travel, we are still trying to catch a fish in the Cape Lookout area. Our fishing report this past season has been slow and poor. However, Spring is on the way and we will give it another try.

Things are starting to look a little greener in our yard and I have scrubbed all the flower pots, ordered my seed packets, composted beds, patched garden tools, looked thru all my seed catalogues, and dreamed several dreams where I saw massive flower beds all in bloom, it can?t be long now!

Winter and her snow/ice storms have given us some beautiful birds to enjoy and we kept them supplied in seed and suet. As you know, you can entertain yourself for hours just watching.?

Julie also has to share her surprise (2-6-04) that ?the wood ducks are back and looking at their box! I was really happy since last year the storm blew down a lake tree that the box was on and we made a PVC pipe tree in the same spot. I?ll report progress later.?

Cedric Squires lets us know (1-24-04)

That ?because of bad hip and knee joints I can ride or drive for only about an hour-MAX! or I end up not walking for a day or so. It is not too likely that I can make it to the gathering next summer despite how much I would love to come??

?I?m back working out with (very light) weights-again-and if my mobility improves I may just try to make it if the drive is not too distant - we?ll see?!

Cedric also included the following anecdotes:

10 Dog Peeves About Humans

1. Blaming your Farts on me -not funny- not funny at all!
2. Yelling at me for barking - I?m a dog you idiot!
3. Taking me for a walk - then not letting me sniff stuff out - exactly whose walk is this anyway?
4. Any trick that involves balancing food on my nose -stop it!
5. Any Grooming that involves Bows and Ribbons - now you know why we chew up your stuff when you are not at home!
6. The - fake fetch, throw?now you fooled a dog - what a proud moment for the top of the food chain!
7. Taking me to the vet - for the ?Big Snip? then acting surprised when I freak out when we have to go back!
8. Getting all upset when I sniff out your guest?s crotch - sorry but I have just not mastered the hand shake thing yet!
9. How you get upset and disgusted when I lick myself. We both know the truth, you are just jealous!
10. Dog sweaters. Hey buster, haven?t you noticed all the fur!

Special note: You may be a darn cat lover - but remember dog is still man?s best friend, Okay?

Thanks Cedric!

William Berry:

Was inducted into the alumni ranks on February 7, 2004! Everyone who attended the celebration, including his family, found out things about William that had never been spoken out loud! Unfortunately for the folks with inquiring minds, all of the things that were said were good!



Good Luck William !

It was especially good to see James Johnson, former Supt. of Reedy Creek State Park. It had been many years since most of us had had a chance to visit with James.

About fifteen or so alumni attended William?s celebration.

Dave Lattimore writes (10-11-03):>

?Hope the reunion was well attended and successful. Had hoped to attend but got side tracked with Montana fire assignments from August 2 to Sept. 14, back here to run a backcountry search for an elderly person with Alzheimer?s on Sept. 15, then a callup from my incident command team to go to Charlotte to stage for Isabel on the 16th. We were deployed to Williamsburg, VA after the hurricane and just transitioned out and got back to Yosemite last Wednesday night. Would like to have stayed in the east for the reunion but I really needed to get back, rest up.?

?(The reunion) is a great idea-hope to attend a future one.?

Robert Skinner reports (10-28-03) :

?Thanks?for the hard work in planning (the reunion) for all of us. I really enjoyed seeing everyone. Mac (Goodwin) doesn?t look a day older since he retired.?

?Going down to Edenton next week to finish cleaning up and repairing damage to my mother?s place cause by the storm I was there yesterday and had to take her to the doctor. She is 86. Some days she is in perfect health and then the next week sick and weak. Comes with getting old and living on borrowed time. Patsy and I are heading to Philadelphia to visit her granddaughter on the 12th of November and then head on up to Newport, RI for a couple of days to check the area out for a future week long stay. Be back on November 22nd for a brief stay and then December 6th to Williamsburg for a few days for fun and enjoyment during the opening of the Christmas season at Colonial Williamsburg. Patsy worked for Colonial Williamsburg for about 17 years.?

Roy Rogers retirement celebration, (12-06-03):

Since I didn?t get to attend Roy Rogers retirement celebration, roving reporter Leon Carter volunteered to go in my stead. (I think that he was planning to go anyway!). <



Good Luck Roy !

Carter reports that it was an excellent celebration! Roy had a lot of family there. About 60 folks attended with several alumni helping with the good fellowship. Carter also reports that the Bar-B-Q and Fried Chicken were very good!

Ray Johnston lets us know (10-28-03) that:

?In the last year and a half I have built entrance gates, camp-pads for nonprofit groups and individuals, began a plant and animal census, constructed fire lines, organized fire control programs and purchased wildfire fighting equipment; design, then tried to locate the funds for replacing an antiquated water system, did well repairs, raptor rehabilitation, and maintain budgets and accounts. Even clean public toilets and keep visitor numbers!

Sound like a NC State Park Ranger? Nope. This is my life as manager of a 200 acre semi-wilderness area in the mountains of southern California serving as a nonprofit spiritual retreat center.

When I left in 1996 I thought my life would drastically change. I intended to focus on my international tour company business, and other than occasional return visits to NC parks, the lifestyle as a NC State Park employee was over.

Located in the Ojai Valley about 45 minutes south of Santa Barbara, we have a beautiful view of the Pacific from one side of the house and the Ojai Valley from the other. Bear, bobcat, deer, and coyote are regular visitors, with a female mountain lion with cubs also seen on the property. Several bobcats have become comfortable to the point of sleeping under our lawn furniture. That's the good part.

The work is incessant and reminiscent of my days at the Reedy Creek section of Umstead in '82 trying to figure out the crazy, old water system and wells with Leon Carter to the point of forgetting what the original problem was!.

I have just returned recently from 2 months in Africa and India, but just like my days in parks, I am back and trying to catch up on all the critical issues that arose while I was gone and the journey seems years ago.

The devastating California fires this week are now only about 10 miles west of us and smoke and ash is filling the air. I have spent the last few days refreshing fire lines, checking chainsaws and filling fire fighting equipment. The "Piru" fire is due east and threatens us since we are adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest. Since we have the only open water on this mountain in the small fish pond, many animals from the forest are hanging out in our yard. My old Nomex fire suit and park boots are by the door.

I know life tends to repeat itself but I do not want to do this anymore! I

dream frequently of showing up at park meetings with a mismatched uniform on, control burns gone wrong, defensive equipment lost, late to meetings, etc.. Does the state provide psychological counseling for ex-employees that seem to be caught in the Twilight Zone?

Ray Johnston, ex park employee?

Thanks Ray!

Phil McKnelly enjoyed a terrific send off at his retirement celebration on February 21, 2004.

The roasting fires were indeed burning high and hot and Phil felt the heat! Tom Wells, as emcee, kept adding humorous fuel to the fire throughout the evening. A fine Power Point presentation entitled "The Pine Cone Kid", kept everyone laughing and provided a wonderful close to the roasting portion of the program.



Good Luck Phil!
The roasters, or speakers if you prefer, included:

- *Bill Ross, DENR Secretary;*
- *Lew Ledford;*
- *Jane Smith, Budget Planning & Analysis - DENR;*
- *Johnathan Howes, Chair, NC Parks & Recreation Trust Fund Authority and former Department Secretary;*
- *Susan Tillotson;*
- *Boyd Lee, Director, Greenville Parks & Recreation;*
- *Maj. David Munday, Professional Standards Office, State Highway Patrol;*
- *Lori Olsen, Exec. Director, Eno River Association;*
- *Eric Nygard, and*
- *Phil's Daughter, Leslie gave the invocation.*

Former employee Myers Braxton's daughter, Mrs. Jeannine B. Lindsay, is the hostess for the McKimmon Center where Phil's retirement celebration was held.

132 folks, including 16 alumni, attended.

News Updates from Leon Carter

I contacted Lloyd Ness who worked in our Engineering Sect in the late 60's and early 70's. When he left State Parks he returned to his home state of Washington. Upon retiring in 1989, he moved back to Raleigh.

Betty Jo Rogers, Roy's wife, let me know that Roy's brother Edwin died on Christmas Eve.

Items of Interest:

Please make special note of the Friends of State Parks insert included with this issue. F.S.P. has helped State Parks in many ways for many years; for more years than many of us have worked for the System. Please consider joining; it's a good way to keep up with developments in State Parks and a good way to express your support of important issues.

When you review the list of former employees you will notice several additional names. Keep sending names of alumni - I know that many have been left out. Let me know of corrections as well!

Those who will be missed:

Julius ?Elwood? Barnes, former Seasonal & Labor payroll at Pettigrew State Park in the 1960's and 70's, passed away on 10-24-03, Elwood was a fine worker and a pleasure to be around. He served under Superintendents Tom Hampton and Leo Dillard and Ranger Robert Spears and was the uncle of Bonnie Ambrose, who is the present Admin. Assist. At Pettigrew. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

The following list was read aloud at the reunion. It is right that those who went before us and who are no longer with us are not forgotten. They laid the foundation upon which our State Parks system has been built.

Division Staff:

Thomas W. Morse	First Supt. of State Parks
Evelyn Sanders	Mr. Morse's Secretary
Mr. Pearse	Supt. of State Parks while Mr. Morse was in the Navy-WWII

Bing Miller	Asst. Supt. of State Parks
Bill McIntre	Asst. Supt. of State Parks
George Sutton	Asst. Supt. of State Parks, Supt. of Hanging Rock
Ed Wiles	Div. Accountant
Bob Wooten	Div. Engineer
Bill Webster	Chief of Operations
Gage Smith	Div. Statistician
Wes Davis	Div. Director
Jim Strickland	Div. Warehouse Mgr.
Walter K. DeBerry	Div. Maintenance Supv.
O. J. Carroll	Div. Maintenance, Singletary Lake Ranger

Carolina Beach State Park

Carl Parker	First Ranger in Charge
Pete Jackson	First Supt.
Leo Dillard	Supt.

Cliffs of Neuse State Park

Russell Kornegy	Supt.
Bruce Price	Supt.

Fort Macon State Park

Jessie Long	Supt.
Doug Long	Supt.
Ray Pardue	Supt.

Hammocks Beach State Park

Jessie Hines	Ranger
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Hanging Rock State Park

John Barnett	Supt., Also Supt. of Singletary Lake
Joe Speer	Ranger

Jones Lake State Park

Sam Parker	Park Attendant, First Permanent Employee on Park
Dewitt Powell	Supt
Henry J. Lewis	Ranger
Bill Ross	Supt.

Kerr Lake State Recreation Area

Nathan Burwell	Ranger
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Medoc Mountain State Park

Clyde Miller	Supt., Supt. of Raven Rock and Singletary Lake
Arthur Johnson	Maintenance, Div. Maintenance

Morrow Mountain State Park

Marshall Dwyer	First Supt.
Bob Wilder	Supt.
Grady Mills	Ranger
Bob Mills	Ranger

Mount Mitchell State Park

John R. Wilson	Ranger, First permanent employee. This was Bob's father.
John R. ?Bob? Wilson, Jr	First Supt.

Smith Ray	Supt. For about one year, followed by Bob Wilson. Smith had also been Supt. of Fort Macon
Clyde ?Hoppy? Hopson	Ranger
Dave Horton	Maintenance, also Div. Maint.

New River State Park

Bill Hubbard	Ranger, was also Div. Chief Ranger
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Pettigrew State Park

Tom Hampton	Supt., Later member of old Board of Conservation and Development
Robert Spears	Ranger
Julius ?Elwood? Barnes	Seasonal & Labor payroll at Pettigrew State Park in the 60?s & 70?s, the uncle of Bonnie Ambrose, who is the present Admin. Assist. At Pettigrew.

Pilot Mountain State Park

Bert Coleman	Labor Payroll, caretaker until permanent staff then stayed on labor payroll until his death.
Carl Ray Flincham	First Supt.

Singletary Lake State Park

Eddie Rich	Maintenance
Homer ?Red? Woodell	Supt.

Stone Mountain State Park

Jim Hutchinson	First Ranger in Charge
Vaughn McGrady	Ranger

William B. Umstead State Park

John Kesler	First employee in charge of Crabtree Creek State Park, before the William B. Umstead name change.
Frank Ellis	Supt., Brother of Mr. Thomas C. Ellis
Catherine Winters	Admin. Asst.
Howard Sorrell	Ranger
Beverly Dillard	Labor Payroll for 25+ years, Father of Leo Dillard
Ed Littrell	Supt.