

The Transition

Of and For Former N.C. State Park Employees

February, 2011

Issue No. 20

There are lots of photos in this issue—Alan Jeffreys’ retirement event and the Alumni Reunion occupy most of the issue. I hope that this winter did not cause anyone to move farther South, although warm temperatures somehow mean more to me as the years progress. Ah! Winter will end and Spring/Summer will arrive very quickly! Before much longer, we will all be longing for the blessed relief of cool weather (but maybe not as cool as January and February).

I would like to request some help from all of the alumni. Those of us who have attended the reunions, have discussed inviting the families of deceased state parks alumni. Of course, the families of those alumni who attend are always more than welcome. Anyway, if you know of the spouses or children or siblings of any former employee who is deceased; with telephone numbers or e-mail addresses or postal addresses; please contact me or Leon Carter. You will find the list of “Those Who Will Be Missed” now on the “I Recall” website.

Get in Touch and Stay in Touch!
John L. Sharpe

News Updates

From Leon Carter

(10-6-10)

John, In general I'm doing fine. Just getting older, and shift into a lower slower gear. Go down to Roy's store every morning (7-8:30) for coffee, & BS with the early group. We usually plan our day, whether we are going to do nothing or even less than that. We have three that don't have computers, so I pick up my assignments of things they want me to find on Google. Monday the coffee pot at the store gave up the ghost, Roy called me that night. so the last two mornings I have carried two thermos bottles of coffee. Roy is very good naturally complaining that he is having to furnish the cups, which we are not paying for. This is a group, that when you walk in, if they don't break one off in you, you know that they are MAD at you. The coffee pot is about the only thing that has happened since last weeks rain. Repair part for the coffee pot has been found in Atlanta.

What more can I say.

We were in SC for the weekend of Alan's bash. Would loved to have been there.

Take care Friend and give Ginger a hug for me. Leon.

(10-28-10)

Have received word from Paul's(Shipman) daughter Polly. Paul's wife Lois died a couple of weeks ago. Paul had a nervous breakdown at the funeral. Paul was in the hospital, but is now in Re Hab at a Rest Home in Pittsboro.

Paul and Lois have both been in failing health for the passed few years. I was hoping he could attend the reunion at Jones Lake next month.

I am sure Paul and his family would enjoy a card from all.

For those who did not know Paul, he was one of the Maint. Mech. on the old Division Maint. Staff.

His address: Paul Shipman
Laurels of Chatham, Room 806A
72 Chatham Business Park Drive
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Thanks, Leon.

(10-31-10)

I visited Paul on Friday afternoon at the Laurels in Pittsboro. He was in good enough spirits, emotional about Lois. A fine visit, and think at this time he may be OK.

He had already received one card resulting from my Email. He was wondering how they knew where he was, I did not tell him about my Email.

His daughter, Gloria was there, she filled me in on what happened. At first they thought it was a nervous breakdown, but after more testing think it may have been a mini stroke. There doesn't seem to be much physical effects except his walking, he had his first session with the therapist that morning., and as soon as he can get about again can leave the Laurels.

This daughter. Gloria has been the caregiver for Paul and Lois for the last 5 years. Although she and her husband Larry live in Greenville, SC, they have spent approx 90% of that time at Paul's home just outside Elizabethtown, NC. She said he is enjoying the few cards and visitors he's had.

All for now. Leon.

(11-2-10)

This was sent yesterday, but I did not open until this morning.

Leon Carter,

Wanted you to know that Julie's (Adamchik Lewis) mother passed away on October 31, 2010. She was 93. Services will be at Jerigan Warren Funeral Home in Fayetteville, NC on Tuesday, Nov. 2, from 1:00-2:00. Her name was Mertys Beverly of Fayetteville.

I had heard from Julie last Thursday, she said her Mother was terminally ill.

Julie's address:

Julie A. Lewis

2205 Kilborn Rd.

Raleigh, NC 27604

Email BluSky@nc.rr.com

Card will be appreciated. Leon

(12-3-10)

Paul Shipman got out of Therapy last week..

Talked to him earlier this week. His daughter Gloria Strickland took him to her home: 1830 HYW 418

Pelzer, SC 29669

Paul's Cell Phone is 910-876-1163.

Paul will be at Gloria's until further notice.

Take Care, Leon.

Jay Wild writes: (8-12-10)

Thanks for your hard work on the transition. I just finished reading it and remembered that I should have sent you photos of the newest visitor center dedication for NC State Parks - Raven Rock! Sent a copy of these photos to Tommy Wagoner for him to weep over. What an improvement from the old house and trailer that once served as the office. Hope all is well in the southern mountains. Has Rusty retired yet or is he due to go in September? Photos of Raven Rock v.c. attached.



Dave Lattimore writes: (8-13-10)



Hey John,

The reunion info did not show up when I went to Issue 19. Sorry I was not in touch earlier, was not sure of your publication schedule. I have been somewhat busy doing ICS training for the Department of Interior at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia, a class at Yosemite and one in Albuquerque at the BIA training center.

If you ever travelling through West Virginia and get a chance to stop by the National Conservation Training Center, I believe you would enjoy the visit. Its out in the country beside the Potomac River near Shepardstown. Its managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service but any public agencies, federal, state or local - can train or have meetings there - its built very rustic - stone and timber frame buildings and all are connected by walking trails with hiking trails surrounding the campus. Its the "college" most rangers would like to have attended. They teach a wide range of courses including interpretation, resource management, supervision and leadership, natural resource law enforcement skill specific courses,.... Visitors can pick up passes and take a tour. Best training facility I have ever seen anywhere with lodging on campus thats cheaper than motels.

I did a duty rotation on the oil spill in June as planning section chief for the Wildlife Recovery and Sensitive Lands branches in the Mobile Sector. They had a massive "unified command" post - more like 1000 rats in a maze! Also went to the Smokies for a few days to reunite with some former rangers and see the synchronized fireflies - amazing, they were not there when I worked there. Tim and Doni Benton came up on the weekend and viewed the fireflies one night and we went on a hike in Greenbriar. Attached is a photo of Tim and Doni on our hike along with Harry Sibold, former NPS ranger and current ER doc in Charlotte.

Spent 9 days in July with ranger friends from Cuyahoga Valley NP - we went to Yoho and Banff National Parks for hiking and rafting. Hard to beat the Canadian Rockies. Fire season does not appear to be happening yet but am getting ready to do another ICS class in Denver in a couple of weeks so prep for that is keeping me out of trouble for the moment.

Let me know if you plan a trip out west anytime.

Cheers

Dave

Thomas Sutton has good news! (11-22-20)

Good news from Danbury...my daughter presented us with a healthy grandson last night at 7 pm . he weighed in at 6lbs 11ozs. His mom and dad are Martha Sutton Mitchell & Brad Mitchell of Germanton NC Grandpapa Thomas is bouncing off the walls with joy !!! I HAVE BEEN WAITING & PRAYING FOR THIS FOR SOME TIME baby for a while now. Sorry to miss the gathering but we have been on standby for some time .w, will try to stay in touch better .. Thomas .

Alan Jeffrey's Retirement Celebration

Alan's retirement celebration was truly an event. It was held at White Oak park at Jordan Lake on September 18. White Oak is an unusual area in that the entire park area can be rented. Under the biggest picnic shelter that I have ever encountered, Alan had a really BIG event!

Jeniffer Goff, with Alan's help, provided games such as table tennis and bean bag toss, as well as pontoon boat tours of the lake and interpretive programs. Alan worked all night long cooking the barbeque for his celebration which turned out to be pretty darn good!

Many current and former employees shared Alan's retirement jubilation. Some of the alumni in attendance, ones that I can remember, were Phil McKnelly, Tom Wells, Judy Warren, Martha Williamson, Jud Burns, Tim McCree, Walt Gravley, Dan Smith, Tommy Wagoner, Mike Seigh, Tommy Johnson, Kenny McGrady, Sid Shearin, Megan Lynch, Billy Totten, and Jim Hallsey.



A relaxed atmosphere!



Tours of the lake.



Sid enjoys a sports icon match game!



Old friends discuss important issues.



Mary and Tommy Wagoner, Sue Regier, and Kenny McGrady.



Megan having a great day!



Dan and Walt enjoying the barbeque.



Alan introduces his family.



Part of Alan's family.



Alan and the rest of his family.



Lew Ledford presents retirement certificates.



Buddy West roasts Alan with a song.



Lance White also roasts Alan with a song!



Tom Wells emcees with distinction.



Jennifer Goff tells everyone that Alan was a great boss.



Bruce Garner presents Alan with a photo of a real State Park icon.



Jim Hallsey turns up the heat on Alan.



Tommy Wagoner makes a very significant presentation.



Alan closes the program with an emotional goodbye.

Alan Jeffreys writes: (9-28-10)

Please find attached is my retirement speech that I had written for my retirement celebration on September 18 that I did not give due to the stress, fatigue and emotion at the time. I do want to thank everyone for the cards, emails, your contribution on the pig cooker and your attendance at the retirement celebration and Division golf tournament for making my send off a memorial one.

There is many things that I didn't get accomplish like additional funding from the NCDOT Secondary Road account but I sure this will happen in the near future. It's been a long ride and a very scenic one and now it's time get out of the saddle and turn the reins over to someone else. I still have a few more days of work to do and will be busy in addressing some last minute details. If you need to call me or email me, please do so. It still works, at least until

Thursday Sept 30 at 4:30 p.m. I hope they let me come back to clean out my office after I retire.

Again let me say thank you for me giving me this opportunity to work with a bunch of good people and a great Park system.

Good Luck and Many Birdies to all! It was only fitting that I made a 20 foot birdie on the last hole of the Division Golf Tourney that helped win it for us.

(Alan's Retirement Speech)

Dear fellow employees, retiree's, friends, and family,

This good-bye is my most dreaded moment since I announced my retirement. Saying goodbye to all of the people that I have worked with so many years is not easy. However, it is time for me to step aside and allow someone with fresh ideas to have a say.

I want to thank everyone here today, the people that participated in pre-event activities-sporting clay shooting, fishing, and the all night fellowship we had cooking that pig we just enjoyed. I thank you for your presence here today, the kind words you have spoken, the memories we have shared and the new memories created by this celebration. I also

apologize for not getting around and speaking to everyone today. I obviously planned too much stuff to do.

I want to especially thank the one person here today who has put up with all of the long hours on the road, many days away from home, and my irritable ways when things don't go the way I think they should. My wife Connie does not like to be the center of attention, but I want you to know she stood by me and helped me out all through my career with State Parks.

Many thanks also to those who helped plan and prepare for this event and for allowing me to have it at this beautiful facility. I especially thank Jennifer Goss and Denise Williams. They both did a wonderful job in keeping this thing organized and flowing smoothly.

You can see that I am wearing a T-shirt from the Johnston County Senior games. I participate in the senior games at the local and state levels. The State Senior Games are held here in the Raleigh area beginning the last week in September through early October. I encourage all of you to find a way stay active and enjoy the daily living of life.

I'll share a few events I remember from my years of service with State Parks:

1. Carrying an old case of dynamite up the hillside of MOMI maintenance area with Leon Carter. It was so old nitroglycerin was flowing out the sides. I tripped and fell but I cushioned the dynamite.
2. Working and traveling more than 22 hours in one day on several occasions. There were many miles traveled and many hours spent on some of the projects such as the Gorges and Mount Mitchell.
3. I was standing on a manhole at MOMI and almost got stuck in a sink hole that washed out the sand around it. I held on to a tree to from falling in.
4. All of the Maintenance conferences that I attended and the good times that we shared and they were many!
5. My grouse hunt with Tim McCree at MOMI and the meal that Dave Horton served with it. One small grouse that fed 12 hungry men- Dumpling goes a long ways.
6. My many nights spent in the barracks of Fort Macon, Mount Mitchell, Jockey's Ridge and Hammock's Beach.
7. The good times at the Yorkshire in the horseshoe pits and the cooking we did. I sure haven't seen any of that at the Archdale and imagine there will be none at the soon to be Green Square building.
8. All of the pranks and con games that Tommy Johnson and Kenny McGrady played on me during the years.
9. One of my recent memories is my make believe journey to San Diego California with 4 other ladies with the Division. Although we haven't made it there yet (about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way), we are still walking until we get there. You can see that I have lost a few pounds getting there. We try to walk five miles a day.
10. All of the visits to each park in the system we currently operate. I have too many fond memories to mention them all.

And now it's time to say my final farewell.

I hope I have made a difference in your lives and in the state park system. I have been involved in some way in every park unit presently under our system whether by working on a capital improvement project in a park, or a park GMP, or giving advice on water and sewer needs. There are parks roads, parking areas and bridges I was responsible for under the NCDOT /Parks program. There were many battles with the on site waste water section, the local health departments, and public water supply and other permitting agencies. I have always spoken up for the State Parks cause throughout the years.

I hope I leave the State Parks system a better place than I found it and I wish everyone the best in their careers. I plan to continue enjoying our state parks as a hiker, a happy camper and a park visitor.

Best Wishes to all of you! I hope to see you again soon as a recent retiree!

The Eighth Annual N.C. State Parks Former Employee Reunion was held at Jones Lake State Park on November 13.

In attendance were myself and Ginger, Cliff Phillips, Floyd and Signa Williams, Tommy and Mary Wagoner, Scott and Janet Daughtry, Leon and Annie Laura Carter, Brownie and Suzanne Southerland, Claude Crews, Lauris Joyner, and Wade Lowry. During a gorgeous Fall day we enjoyed a fantastic meal, a covered dish lunch (always the finest food there is), and some good fellowship with old friends. We then read the list of "Those Who Will Be Missed", a list of deceased State Park Alumni. Of course, the most recent addition to the list was Cedric Squires. We then updated each other about our lives since the last time that we had seen each other. We completed the "formal" portion of the event playing a State Parks trivia game, developed by Tommy Wagoner. Tommy challenged us with some really hard questions!



Lauris, Mary & Tommy, Claude, Brownie & Suzanne



Same folks—different view!



Janet, Carter, Scott, Annie Laura, Signa & Floyd



Same folks-different view



Me & Cliff



Dan & Wade



The whole crowd !