

The Transition

Of and For Former N.C. State Park Employees

March, 2012

Issue No. 21

Greetings to all! I hope that life is treating each of you well.

As for me, I retired a second time in November. I thoroughly enjoyed my 11 years at Wildacres Retreat but since I reached the age of 62 and began receiving a Social Security check it was time to relax a little more.

Ginger continues to teach elementary school at Tri-County Christian School. Not a lot of money but she finds the work very rewarding.

We look forward to visiting more with you at the 10th (can you believe it?) Annual Former Employee Reunion this Fall.

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

News Updates

Roy and Betty Jo Rogers write (9-16-11):

Alas, John, as much as we would like to make it, Roy and I will be in Weekend Course of Study at Duke Divinity school. As you know, we both pastor small United Methodist churches in the eastern part of the state and school is a requirement. Give our regards to everyone, and especially thank all of those who have supported disaster relief in North Carolina. Pamlico County was hit hard. We are the only county I know that still has a shelter open. Tell Scott the Baptist men have been in the area as well as many others volunteers, many from our own county.

In His Service,
Roy and Betty Jo Rodgers

Scott Daughtry sends greetings (9-18-11):

Hello Old Friend,
Janet and I have just gotten home from working in Williamston And Atlantic. We leave tomorrow morning to set up a NCBM recovery operation at a Bayboro, NC. Then we have two weeks at the State Fair. After the Fair we are going to do something that we have not

done sinse we both retired. We are going on a **vacation** trip to the Holy Lands and Egypt. We leave on my birthday Nov. 1 and will not be back in time for the Reunion.

I recently worked on a cooking team with Sid and his wife in Williamston and, while managing a site at Atlantic, James Sessoms came with a work crew and helped a great many people. Just goes to show what I have always said State Park People are some of the best people in the world.

Sorry, we will not see you but tell everyone we love and miss them.

Scott

Sue Phillips sends regrets (10-21-11):

We wish we could go this year [alumni reunion], but there are just too many things going on here. We hope to be able to make it next year. Please tell everyone hi for us, we are doing okay-Cliff's lymes disease seems to be under control right now. He has had some rough times, but he found a doctor in Wilmington who also has lymes, so he is aware of symptoms and how to treat them.

Hope to see pictures and hear all about the get together.

Betty Jo Rogers informs us (11-7-11):

Hi John,

Don't know if you can use any or all of these. Wish we could make it, but we will be at Weekend Course of Study at Duke Divinity school. The Lord blessed us in very little damage during hurricane Irene. We did get to stop by Bayboro Baptist Church and see Scott and Janet, and that was nice. We think of you all often.

In His Service,

Roy and Betty Jo Rodgers

Dan Smith writes (11-11-11):

Hi John,

Hope you get this before the Alumni Reunion tomorrow, but I will not be able to attend this year with additional responsibilities looking after elderly family members requiring much more of my time these days. L B (Brownie) Southerland wanted me to pass along that he regrets that he will not be able to be at the reunion either. He is doing well, but recent surgeries make it difficult for him to travel long distances for a while. We have heard from Mike Cavin as of last night (Thursday). He survived the recent major storm to hit Nome, Alaska earlier this week. He has built a small house on the ocean front in Nome, and we understand that the storm did not cause him any major damage. There was some minor damage in other parts of town.

I wish all of you a great reunion and hopefully will see everyone next year.

Dan Smith

Sandra Burns sends photos (11-17-11):

I saw the cute picture of Dugan on FB. These pictures are of Izzi who looks like a giant version of Dugan. We don't know what her past was like, but she's living the good life

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Joe Franklin updates us (11-17-11):

Thanks for the funny golf commercials although seeing a guy catch one in the goods always gives me a chill.

I just got back from 2 weeks in Fla. Pat had been after me for years to go somewhere and play some real baseball while I still could. She said that after she was gone I would need to get away from here for awhile and that I should go to Fla and play some baseball.

Through some divine intervention and maybe Pat's meddling from the other side I wound up playing with a team from Toledo Ohio in the annual Roy Hobbs League world series in Ft Myers. It had been 40 yrs since I'd played in a real baseball game and tried to pitch off a mound. Our team was in the over 65 division.

We played 6 games in 6 days and I was pretty whipped by the end but it was great fun.

We got to play at the Red Sox and Twins spring training sites with some games in the big stadiums. It was awesome. My teammates had all been playing regularly all season but I did pretty well. My pitching arm got weak after about 2 innings but I'm going to work on that. There were 209 teams there from all over the US and some outside. It was a really big deal. You may remember that Roy Hobbs was Robert Redford's role in "The Natural" Now I'm back in this big empty house wondering what I'm gonna do with all Pat's stuff.

Hope you and Ginger are doing well.

Joe

News from Jim Halley (2-2-12):

Thanks, John. Good to hear from you. The Hallseys are loving life in Ashe county. We made it out west last year with our youngest daughter and her family spending time in the Tetons, Yellowstone, Montana and Utah. With completion of the South Ashe section of the Mountains to Sea Trail in 2010, my trail work last year was spent on trail maintenance and helping the Watauga County volunteers finish their section. We are blessed with a great group of volunteers, many of whom are retired. Who knew you could have so much fun digging in the ground for no pay! I am hoping to begin a cross state trek of the MST this spring...backwards (from Jockeys Ridge to Clingmans Dome, GSMNP). Planning the trip has been great fun and informative as I pour over old state maps for historic trails and transportation routes that might be fun to explore. By going east to west I hope to have a better sense of how the state was settled and what natural features still exist as they did several hundred years ago. I will visit many state and federal parks along the way and look forward to making many new friends. If any of our transition family are interested in part or all of the trek, let me know!

Jim Hallsey

Mike Seigh writes (2-2-12):

Greetings to you all. Please feel free to edit. I am not the best writer out there in the world. I hope this was what you meant.

My life seems to fly by. I will be 61 this summer and can't believe I made it past the 60 milestone.

My travels have taken me to Minnesott Beach more often as my mother gets up there in years. I enjoy spending time with her, my sister, brother-in-law, and others. That trip usually evolves around some kind of oyster roast , fish fry, or other cook out on the grill. My numerous jobs keep me busy. I am still teaching CPR/AED/ad First Aid classes with the Red Cross. I have also accepted to work a little more in the chapter office ordering class training equipment and materials, assigning instructors to teach, and answering email and phone questions from other Red Cross staff. My teaching efforts has also spread to the campue of UNCW where I work with their Health and Safety Department 2-3 days per month teaching similar courses there. Though I am in SeaHawk country, my heart bleeds NCSU red. Go Pack!

I am still active with my Masonic responsibilities for the Federal Point Lodge #753 in Carolina Beach. There I have served as secretary for the past three years after filling all the other officer positions. One of the activities that I have taken on is to schedule and organize two blood drives at the lodge each year.

My girl friend, Deb, of three years joins me in many of our volunteer activities. She and I have begun to be involved with Disaster Service training with the Red Cross, and we volunteer for most of the Step up for Soldiers fund raising events. A couple of years ago, I joined the Carolina Beach Chamber of Commerce who sponsors many of the seasonal events in the town and there are a number of them, all lot's of fun.

I have been blessed with good health and have had many opportunities to meet great people by doing the things that I do. I guess that's why I spend a lot of my time teaching and volunteering. But as many of the folks who contribute to the Transition write, no matter where I am or what I do, I still think back to my state park years, all 31 of them. I do appreciate and enjoy reading the Transition as well as the NC State Park publication that I receive. I miss that time and miss working with the folks at the different parks. Fort Fisher SRA and Carolina Beach State Park are close to my home and I visit them when I can. Gosh, all the rangers look so young, or I guess I am just older. Ha!

Well, this has become more lengthy that I had planned. I wish all of you the best and hope your new year is a year of good health and success. When in the Carolina Beach/Wilmington area, please give me a hollar. I am the only Seigh in the phone book. Take Care.

John, thanks for giving me the chance to share and I look forward to hearing from the other members of the NC State Park Family.

Mike Seigh

Leon Carter updates us (2-2-12):

John, Don't really have anything to report. I have slowed down to almost a stop. Only news: First part of January switched out my pace maker for a new one. It most be working pretty good, I've awakened every morning since it was installed. We are still able to get down to SC a couple times a year to see our oldest Daughter and my Sister (88).

Was awfully sorry to hear about Pat, Joe Franklin's wife. She was another one of the sweet ones.

On other hand was really glad to see Julie Adamchik Lewis at the last reunion. Her husband is trying hard to keep her happy and out of trouble.

About the only one I stay in touch with is Paul Shipman. He talked his daughters into letting him return home (Elizabethtown). Far as I know he's living by himself. His Daughters do stay in touch daily, and I think there are a couple of neighbors that keep an eye on him. I still worry about him.

Look forward to the next "Transition". Leon.

Larry Ouzts writes (2-3-12):

John,

Nothing exciting from me. I still enjoy family and Grandchildren sports. I do plan to travel more this year.

Regret I could not contribute more.

Larry Ouzts

Phil McCorkle lets us know (2-3-12):

We have had a good year - no change but older.

PS/ Married 55 ys this April

Phil and Barbara McCorkle

Dave Lattimore updates us (2/06/12)

Hey John,

The time has really flown by since the last Transition. Thanks for continuing to do this and feel free to edit out if this is too long. It was good seeing you last fall; you, Jud, Tommy Wagner all still look fit enough to go back to rangering!

I am still "semi-retired" though I stayed fairly busy in 2011; one of a number of retirees still dispatched by the park service for various assignments and interagency commitments which helps to supplement the pension. Taught week long ICS classes in West Virginia at the national conservation training center, the USFS training center in Sacramento and at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge near Denver. I spent a few days back at the Smokies in June to see the synchronized fireflies and spend

time with folks I worked with there; also Tim and Doni Benton came and another friend, Cathy Tyndall who worked seasonally at Hanging Rock years ago and her husband showed up (both current NC DENR employees). The fireflies are an incredible phenomenon. Also spent 5 weeks as the planning section chief assigned to the state of Texas incident management team during some of the peak fire season there – quite an experience, fire everywhere, temperatures over a 100 degrees the entire time; got done just in time to meet some friends at Yellowstone for a few days of hiking and kayaking and then went for 25 days on a fire burning in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness – fairly low key fire in an incredibly scenic area with the Salmon River 200 yards from the command post, and then went on to San Francisco on a request to help the chief ranger at Golden Gate National Recreation Area begin planning for their part of the America's Cup races which take place in the summers of 2012 and 13. I had no idea til I got there what a big deal the America's Cup is and that it attracts so many people from around the world. I thought it was just a bunch of rich guys with sailboats (which it is) but there's way more to it than that and the political situation between the National Park Service and the city of San Francisco is, ummm, interesting.... Lots of history there stemming back to Hetch Hetchy and John Muir in the early 1900s.

One of the highlights of the year for me was the 75th anniversary at Hanging Rock. Dave Cook and staff did a great job in hosting the event and I saw a lot of faces from the past. The Bentons and I rented one of the cabins and got some hikes in to the Devils Chimney area and from Tory's Den back across to the lake. What a treat to hear Dr. Jolly speak; I had first met him way back when I worked at Hanging Rock, I think at some event involving the state trails advocate Louise Chatfield and then again when I was a ranger on the Blue Ridge. Thomas Sutton really missed his calling – if 30 years ago he had started with the catering, he would probably be a multi- millionaire by now (or maybe he is!) – what a feast! I went from the Hanging Rock anniversary down to Raleigh for a couple of days – still have the rental properties down there, went hiking out at Reedy Creek and had a really nice visit and hike at Medoc Mountain, great place! And then went on to the national parks annual ranger rendezvous at Williamsburg. While I was there I spent a few days working at Yorktown National Historic Park where some other ICS instructors and I met to devise a new training scenario for the classes we have been putting on in efforts to prepare parks and other conservation agencies to manage incidents and special events.

My cousin and his wife who lives adjacent to my old homeplace property east of Chimney Rock visited for a week last fall and I got to take them to Atlanta – that's Atlanta, Idaho – a real outback town reached by traveling 60+ miles of narrow unpaved mountain roads and like some other equally remote Idaho towns such as Dixie and Secesh, has roots stemming from Civil War refugees from the South. They were amazed to find an actual town with school, store, hotel, saloons, etc. so far back in from a paved

road. 4 wheelers and horses are primary forms of transportation. Folks back in there don't have much use or need for shopping malls and i phones!

Spent Thanksgiving and Christmas here in the Idaho mountains, the Bentons visited for a few days at Christmas, driving up from their new home in the Colorado Rockies. I kicked off this year with another ICS instructor assignment in January at Boston National Historical Park for a number of rangers from New England national park sites and several Coast Guard folks. My first time ever in Boston – great place to visit and see lots of Revolutionary War sites but still a BIG city, way too many people for me – the population of Boston and the surrounding cities is as much as the entire population of Idaho! Heading to West Virginia next weekend for another ICS course and then back to Golden Gate in March for more pre-America's Cup work. I hope to get back to Hanging Rock and the Smokies again by early summer.

If you and Ginger do a western trip sometime, let me know and plan to come thru and stay here. Lots of great mountain and high desert scenery in Idaho. The Sawtooths (photo attached) are less than 2 hours away.

Cheers, Dave



Judy Warren updates us (2-7-12):

John, Thanks for all you do to keep us informed. Not much has changed with me. Still busy with my granddaughters, Savanna 10 and Whitney 5. Savanna is busy in clogging competition which keep me busy getting her to all the events. Whitney will be finishing up pre-school and starting kindergarten in the Fall. I still like to do gardening--flowers and vegetables. We are also busy with the youth group at church. Tell Ginger I said hello. Take care, Judy

Nelson Chadwick writes (3-12-12):

Hi John,

Had to return to Raleigh for a funeral this past week. Our van broke down and had to be repaired. So happens, the place with Saturday hours and with the parts required was right across from Wm. B. Umstead, so spent some time walking the trails and visiting the (new to me) visitors center.

Went by my old "house/office". All that was left was the black walnut tree.





Hiked along several trails and found bridges, major trail improvements. Then I went over to Reedy Creek and hiked down the Company Mill Trail they have even put a pedestrian bridge across crabtree creek near the old Company Mill site.

My how things have changed. A lot of folks many with dogs and even joggers on the trails that day. In spite of the major trail improvement efforts, the amount of use the Reedy Creek area is getting from all the growth in the Cary area is obviously impacting the park. Trails are much wider and obviously heavily used and worn even with obvious efforts to maintain and improve them. I really miss Belvin Dillard's hand carved "Appalachian Park Signs." The public may not even notice the change to flat painted signs, but I sure did.

Bridges are opening up areas of the park not very accessible in the past. I don't know if I agree with that level of accessibility for some of the areas like the Piedmont Beech Natural Area. However, I didn't see a lot of visitor generated spur trails so maybe it will be OK. I hope the park won't be loved to death.

I hope you and the family are doing well.

--Nelson

Special Events

The Ninth Annual Former Employee Reunion

The 2011, 9th Annual Former Employee Reunion took place at Morrow Mountain State Park on the second weekend in November. We met in the old smaller shelter which was very nice and private. It was, as always great to visit with old friends.

As it turns out the Sierra Club was holding a conference the same weekend; therefore, the restored community room was unavailable. We were grateful though for the fantastic weather. I can think of only one previous reunion when we did not have the best

weather--at the first reunion at Hagan Stone city park near Greensboro the temperatures were a little cool.

A couple of “newbys” were there. Julie Adamchik Lewis with her husband Alex and Tim and Robin McCree. Julie shared a few photos of her life’s activities and photos of the parks former employees before they were “former”. Tim and Robin seemed suited to the new retired life.

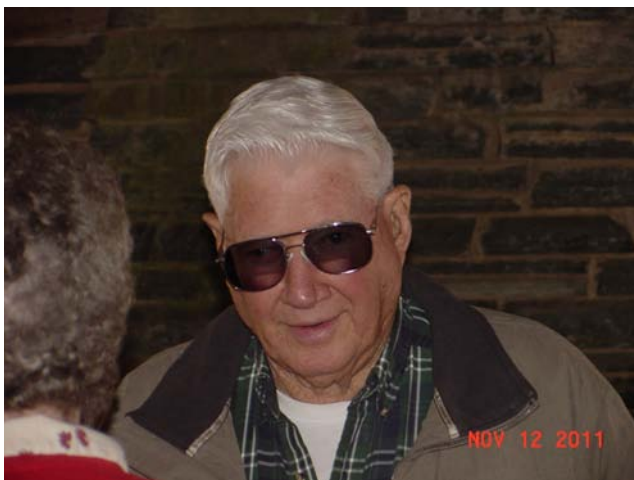
In attendance were: Robert Skinner and wife, Julie and Alex Lewis, Tommy and Mary Wagoner, Tim and Robin McCree, Jud and Sandra Burns, Ginger and I, Leon and Annie Laura Carter, and Phil and Barbara McCorkle.



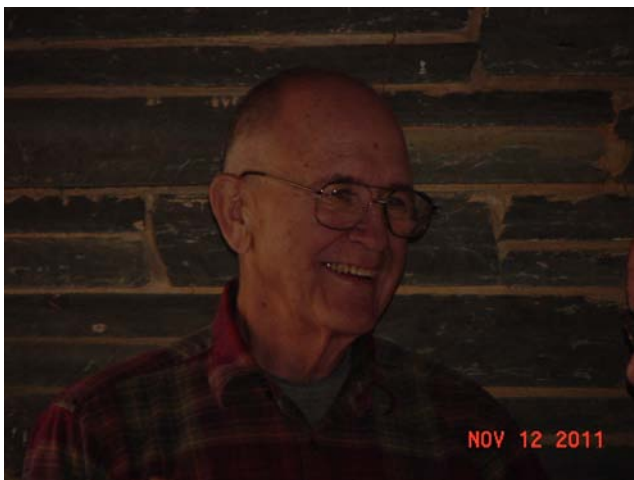
Barbara McCorkle with Alex and Leon in background



Tommy Wagoner, Tim McCree, Jud and Sandra Burns



Phil McCorkle



Alex Lewis



Julie Adamchik Lewis



Robert Skinner



Reading "Those Who Will Be Missed"