

# USGS RETIREES

NEWSLETTER No. 205

November 2024

*An organization of retirees of the U.S. Geological Survey, whose purpose is to keep its members in touch with each other and their former agency.*

## President's Message

Greetings USGS Retiree! Welcome to the Fall 2024 edition of the USGS Retirees newsletter. This edition contains interesting news about the Retirees' Organization, the opening of the new USGS Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility, the USGS retirees who are joining our ranks, member travel log and happenings, and, of course, memorials to those who have recently passed—sadly the list is long.

Regarding the Retirees' Organization, the Board continues to think through the needs and preferences of the members and what we can do to improve the Organization and better serve you. We have developed a member survey to learn your priorities for existing products and services (newsletter, directory, reunion, and scholarship program), gauge your interest in some potential new activities, and solicit your suggestions for additional improvements. In the back of this issue, you'll find a printed version of the survey with instructions for completing (online or paper). Your response will help prioritize our investments and Organization direction.

Of course, investing requires resources. Our monetary resources consist of your dues. On that score we have a problem: 571 members are 1 or more years behind on dues; 347 members are 5 or more years behind; 212 members are 10 or more years behind; 16 members are 15 years behind. Tardy dues payments are hampering execution of our programs, particularly the scholarship program.

The Retirees' constitution provides that dues are payable at the beginning of the year and that any member who has not paid their dues within 14 months of the end of that year will be presumed to no longer be interested in the Organization and will be removed from the rolls. The Board, not wishing to drive away otherwise interested members, has adopted a compromise position: we are offering an amnesty program that caps back dues at \$50 so long as they are paid by March 1, 2025. We have initiated phone calls and emails to alert members with overdue accounts of this grace period.

Please act today to catch up on your dues. In fact, it is even easier now to pay your dues! We have created a Zelle account ([DuesUSGSRetirees@gmail.com](mailto:DuesUSGSRetirees@gmail.com)) which you can access online through your bank or Zelle itself: <https://www.zellepay.com>. Of course, hardcopy checks can still be sent to our P.O. Box in Herndon (see top left of this page for the address), We are also delighted to receive contributions for the scholarship program via this Zelle account or paper check.

Your Board is busy in other ways. Phil Turnipseed (Vice President), Kate Flynn (Secretary), Cathy Hill (Treasurer), and I have nearly completed our series of meetings with the USGS Associate Directors (ADs) including the new (and former) AD for Water, Bill Werkheiser. Rick Treece and his team continue to plan the 2025 reunion. Rick will be attending the USGS Data Chief's meeting in November in Tuscaloosa. In 2025, we will start meeting with the USGS Regional Directors. All of this effort is intended to strengthen our relationships with the USGS, recruit new members, and broaden the Organization to involve more new and existing retirees from across the USGS.

As part of the Board's back dues outreach program, I have been calling some retirees with whom I have lost touch. In fact, I have had the pleasure of catching up with a few folks I haven't spoken to since they retired, some as many as 30 years ago. All of conversations were gratifying. You should do the same. Pick up the phone and call an old friend this week.

*Take Care, -Robert*

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## USGS Retirees' Reunion

**September 30 to October 2, 2025  
at the new USGS Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama**

The 2025 Retirees' Reunion is scheduled for September 30 through October 2, 2025, in Tuscaloosa, AL, the new home of the Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility (HIF) and the National Water Center (see dedication announcement below). Meeting Check-In will be from 3 PM to 7 PM, Tuesday, September 30, 2025, followed by an ice-breaker reception from 6 PM to 9 PM. The banquet will be Thursday evening, October 2.

The Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport (BHM) is the nearest and preferred major port of entry and is about 57 minutes (62 miles) from downtown Tuscaloosa. A block of rooms is being reserved at the Embassy Suites in downtown Tuscaloosa for attendees needing lodging accommodation. Group room rates are \$160 per night plus tax. If you are unfamiliar with the Embassy Suites brand, all group rates **include**:

- complimentary made-to-order breakfast (with omelet chef and station)
- complimentary evening reception (free beer, wine, cocktails, sodas, and light snacks)
- free parking & free Wi-Fi

The Embassy Suites Tuscaloosa is in the heart of Downtown Tuscaloosa within walking distance of multiple restaurants, theaters, museums, and The University of Alabama. You can explore Tuscaloosa and learn more about the area by visiting the following websites:

<https://alabama.travel/places-to-go/cities-and-towns/tuscaloosa> and <https://visittuscaloosa.com>

Also of interest are many other historical sites and entertaining attractions in the State and just a short drive away such as Birmingham's Vulcan Park and Museum, the Civil Rights museums and memorials in Montgomery, and Huntsville's U.S. Space and Rocket Center.



**Reserve your hotel room:** Please consider reserving your hotel room early. The free cancellation policy is **48 hours before** your reservation. Reserving early helps the planning committee track potential attendance and room count to satisfy the event contract with the hotel. After November 15, 2024, reservations may be made by phone at 205-561-2500.

Use the block code **USGS** to obtain the group special rate. This rate will be honored for up to two days before and after the reunion dates (September 30 – October 2) for those wishing to extend their stay.

Look for more reunion details, such as transportation options and agenda, in future newsletters.

## USGS Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility Dedication

***Excerpts from USGS National News Release: August 14, 2024***

Contact: Laura Castro Lindarte, USGS Senior Specialist for Media Operations



TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Today, the USGS officially opened the Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility (HIF), <https://www.usgs.gov/labs/hydrologic-instrumentation-facility>, on The University of Alabama campus near the NOAA National Water Center, providing a trifecta of opportunity for advancing water science and technology. The HIF will advance innovation, boost economic development, and launch the next generation of scientists.

“Water information is fundamental to national and local economic well-being, protection of life and property, the health and diversity of ecosystems, and effective management of the nation’s water resources,” said David Applegate, USGS Director. “The new facility will strengthen our partnership with the University of Alabama and is a major investment in the future that ensures USGS water science and data will serve the needs of all Americans for decades to come.”

The new 8.8-acre home starts a new chapter for the USGS facility, which originated in 1970 and was previously housed at Stennis Space Center in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. A team of about 50 USGS employees will work alongside university students and staff, strengthening existing partnerships and creating new ones as the HIF continues its tradition as the national hub for water monitoring technologies.

“UA and USGS share a mission – to conduct meaningful research to address society’s greatest needs. Thanks to Senator Shelby championing this critical initiative, this facility allows us to unite and collectively meet that mission now and into the future,” said Dr. Stuart R. Bell, UA President. “The tremendous support of The University of Alabama System leadership and Board of Trustees has allowed UA to cement its place at the forefront of water research that positively impacts society.”



Cory Angerth, hydrologic instrumentation research and operations chief, stands beside a flume where a floating doppler radar unit is in use to measure water flow.

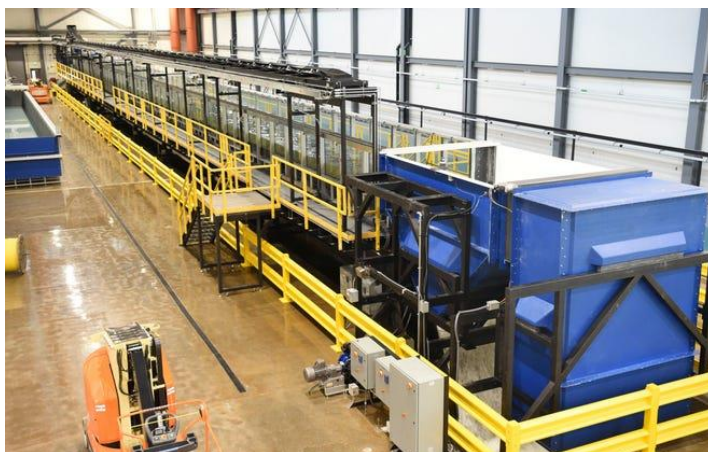
Tuesday, August 13, 2024.  
Gary Cosby Jr.-Tuscaloosa News



In addition to housing a world-class hydraulics lab, the space will also include a network operations center that will expand the capacity for the USGS to coordinate with federal partners in response to water hazards, such as floods and storm surge, around the U.S. and enable the facility to track the status of USGS water monitoring networks. The facility will play a key role in advancing the USGS Next Generation Water Observing System Program, known as NGWOS. HIF services will include sales, rental and servicing of equipment for USGS Water Science Centers and federal partners, the evaluation and creation of new technology, and the verification and certification of hydrologic equipment that is currently in service.

Construction has been underway since March 2022. The 92,000-square-foot building includes:

- A 32,000 square foot hydraulics lab with a 350-foot-long tow tank, a 230-foot tilting flume capable of 50 cubic feet per second, 100 by 24-foot test basin and groundwater demonstration wells.
- Three training rooms, including wet chemistry and electronics configurations
- Laboratories and shops for testing, developing, and repairing hydrologic instrumentation
- An 11,000-square-foot warehouse
- A 150-person auditorium space
- Network Operations Center



The staff and operations for the USGS Lower Mississippi Gulf Tuscaloosa Field Office will also be housed within the space.

***Excerpts from the August 12 USGS Leader's Blog  
(Bill Werkheiser, USGS Associate Director for Water)***

Onsite facilities, like the fabrication shop, water quality lab, and hydraulics lab, allow the HIF to develop, evaluate, calibrate, and repair hydrologic equipment used at every water science center in the country. One of the most impressive features of the new HIF is the 350-foot-long tow tank, which serves as the national reference for water velocity. All the instruments produced and evaluated at the HIF are distributed to centers via the modernized 11,000-square-foot warehouse. Located across the street from the University of Alabama's Alabama Water Institute and one block east of NOAA's National Water Center, the HIF provides countless opportunities for collaboration and coordination with academic, federal, and private industry partners. Collaborations with local institutions like the University of Alabama, as well as universities outside the Tuscaloosa area, will enable the HIF to develop a talent pipeline of water resource professionals. The Network Operations Center at the HIF expands the capacity for the USGS to coordinate with federal partners in response to water hazards and enables the HIF to track the status of USGS water monitoring networks.

The HIF is a major investment in the future of USGS water science. The new capabilities at the HIF ensure that the USGS will have the tools and expertise to observe and predict emerging water issues and deliver fast and reliable water data to the people who need it most. With the help of our partners, the USGS is paving the way toward a more water secure future.

## RETIREMENTS



**Kathy Chase** retired April 30, 2024, from the Wyoming-Montana Water Science Center (WY-MT WSC) with 25 years of experience as a Hydrologist and Surface-Water Specialist and more than 35 years of experience in water resources leading local, regional, and international teams to answer many types of water-resources questions. Her research with the USGS has included precipitation-runoff modeling, 1-dimensional and 2-dimensional surface-water hydraulics, streamflow statistics, floodplain delineation, channel morphology, and bridge scour. Kathy's career began as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Nepal, where she helped construct small irrigation systems in the western mountains and worked

on urban planning in the east. She organized a community group to measure and record high flows long before she knew the term "citizen science." As a research assistant for the National Park Service at Colorado State University, she studied hydraulics and incipient motion in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. For a time, she held the record for the fastest climb out of [Warner Point](#). She then spent 10 years as a consultant for a small Denver hydrology and hydraulics firm before opening the Montana office for Western Water Consultants. Joining the USGS WY-MT Water Science Center in 2002 was a thrilling milestone. Kathy has a deep appreciation for the USGS, where she has been able to work on important and interesting issues with smart and hardworking people. We build on the legacy of brilliant scientists while pioneering technologies beyond their imagination. As an example, during the June 2022 floods in the Upper Yellowstone, USGS data and studies teams rapidly deployed surveys, measurements, and protocols developed over a century of research, utilizing equipment that barely existed a few decades ago. She has been a strong advocate for Diversity, Equality, Inclusivity, and Accessibility topics. Kathy also excelled in collaborations with the Indigenous communities throughout Montana and Wyoming and Tribal colleges in North Dakota and Montana in collaboration with the Dakota Water Science Center. Kathy will join the many USGS "retirees" who never seem to leave, leading modeling studies in the St. Mary and Milk River and Kootenai River Basins. She also hopes to return to work in Nepal. When not working, she will be playing music, bicycling, backpacking, and exploring new places. She will write about it all, crafting phrases that would make our SPN editors faint. (Just kidding, Kathy greatly appreciates our SPN.) Please join us in congratulating Kathy!

-- Korri Duncan, Helena, MT



**Carole Johnson** is retiring after almost 41 years! Carole started her journey in Augusta, ME, in 1983, fulfilling a college dream of becoming a hydrologist for the USGS.

While in Maine she worked on characterizing a stratified-drift aquifer and a groundwater modeling project and was able to apply geophysics as a tool – launching a career direction and professional passion. In 1987, she transferred to the NH/VT Water Science Center (WSC) to work on the statewide stratified-drift investigations in her home state of NH. She also had the great fortune to use her geology, physics, and hydrology background on the Toxics Substances fractured-rock hydrology investigation at Mirror Lake in NH. In 1999, she was invited by Pete Haeni, John Lane, and John Williams to work at the newly formed Office of Groundwater, Branch of Geophysics in Storrs, CT. There Carole applied the lessons learned at Mirror Lake to the University of Connecticut fractured-rock aquifer landfill site, demonstrating the significance of geophysical methods for improving the understanding of flow dynamics and contamination in fractured-rock. This investigation provided an opportunity to share new approaches in fractured-rock hydrology with state and federal regulators, USGS hydrologists, and the hydrologic community. In recent years Carole led the Hydrogeophysics group within Water Mission Area (WMA) providing guidance and technical support to WMA and WSCs across the nation. She has been essential to maintaining

cohesion and scientific contributions as the team made its organizational journey to the Hydrologic Remote Sensing Branch within the WMA Observing Systems Division. During her career, Carole has mentored numerous interns and scientists. Carole has frequently said that mentoring was immensely rewarding and was a form of “paying it forward” with gratitude to the many scientists and mentors that she benefited from at various points in her career. Throughout her career, Carole dedicated herself to technology support and information transfer through numerous publications, USGS courses, and participation at conferences and workshops. She has introduced and advanced several new geophysical methods (borehole imaging, borehole magnetic resonance imaging, flow in fractured-rock quantification and modeling discrete head and transmissivity, and applications of passive seismic). For these efforts, Carole’s commitment to share and serve has been acknowledged by the USGS Balsely Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer (2002), a Superior Service Award (2007) for Tech Support to WSCs, and by the AGU Edward A. Flinn award (2022) to the former USGS Hydrogeophysics Branch for their contributions to the near surface community. In retirement Carole plans to continue doing some collaboration with colleagues, writing, and possibly teaching. She looks forward to being home more and spending time with family and friends, traveling – for fun, building stone walls, hiking, kayaking, and working on her pickleball game. Please join me in celebrating Carole’s extremely valuable contributions to USGS and to hydrogeologic science. Colleagues, friends, and family will celebrate Carole’s career in early November at a gathering in Massachusetts. Thank you, Carole, for your many contributions to the USGS and to the public through your long and outstanding career!

-- Jack Eggleston, Chief, Hydrologic Remote Sensing Branch



**Brian Kelly**, Deputy Director and Hydrologic Investigations Chief, Kansas Water Science Center (WSC), retired on September 30, 2024. Brian began his career as a Hydrologist in the Independence, MO, Field Office on May 19, 1991. Over the course of Brian's career he worked on agricultural chemical transport for the Missouri Management Systems Evaluation Program, groundwater flow in the Missouri River alluvial aquifer in the Kansas City and Leavenworth areas, groundwater flow and transport in the Equus Beds aquifer near Wichita, KS, groundwater modeling, groundwater/ surface-water interactions, and wetland hydrology in the Missouri River floodplain, riverbank filtration,

well-field analysis, and water quality of groundwater and surface water, within the City of Independence, MO, wellfield, and flood inundation mapping for the Blue River in Kansas City, MO. Brian helped coordinate the move to, and construction of, the Lee’s Summit office in 2006, became the Lee’s Summit Office Chief in 2009. He transferred to the Kansas WSC in 2016 as the Deputy Director and section lead for the Hydrologic Investigations and in late 2018, the Organic Geochemistry Research Lab. Brian's groundwater modelling in the Missouri River alluvium and on the Equus Beds recharge projects have been essential to numerous management decisions in these aquifers. Since arriving in Kansas, Brian has overseen the growth of the Center and assisted with the design and move to a new office and construction of a state-of-the-art analytical lab. Congratulations to Brian on his retirement, we are glad he'll get more time to relax with his family and work on his new house but he will be missed.

-- Casey Lee, Director, Kansas WSC



Ian, third from right, enjoying the comradery of his talented colleagues while attending a science conference.

**Ian Waite** retired on September 30, 2024, after an amazing 32.5 years, with the entirety of his career spent in the USGS Oregon Water Science Center. He started in 1992 straight out of his Ph.D. at U. of Idaho in Entomology, hired by Denny Wentz to be the stream ecologist for the Willamette NAWQA basin. Growing up in Michigan and attending U. of Michigan, he actually wanted to be a marine ecologist. However, upon starting his Master’s at Humboldt State U., there were no



good marine ecology projects available at the time but there was a good funded project studying steelhead trout ecology in streams. Since he had a background in fisheries, he took on this challenge and literally headed upstream into freshwater ecology and NAWQA was a perfect first project opportunity utilizing both his fisheries and invertebrate backgrounds. Along the way, other than his love of science and working in the field, the best thing was working with all the talented scientists from around the country. In addition, he especially loved having the opportunity to expand his statistical analysis and modeling experience by working with and learning from helpful, fun, and intelligent colleagues both within and outside USGS. As you all know, publishing is not easy, but again, learning and working with great colleagues has always made it easier and enjoyable. Ian has published in numerous international journal articles and relished doing presentations at large science conferences or for local groups. Those of you who know Ian, know he usually was not at a loss for words but loved discussing science and almost any other topic. Ian plans to continue to work as Emeritus for a short period and to enjoy retirement by spending more time traveling with his wife Laura, playing more tennis, getting back into golf, and scuba diving. He's never given up on his love of the oceans and feels at home diving with all the fishes, corals, and inverts. Oh - and there's dark chocolate and a love of wine! Thank you, Ian, for your contributions to the USGS and ORWSC! Best wishes to you in your retirement. --Joanna Thamke, Director, Oregon WSC



**Richard Winston** retired on September 30, 2024. Richard started his career with the USGS in 1998 tasked with rewriting a GUI for MODFLOW, that would eventually evolve into a dynamic interface called ModelMuse. ModelMuse has since become a popular graphical user interface with many subsequent releases adding support for other model codes like SUTRA, MODFLOW 6 and PEST. Richard has served as the first line of user support for many years on not just ModelMuse, but groundwater and groundwater modeling in general. We will miss Richard's expertise, although he does plan to return as emeritus. Thank you, Richard for your past and continued contributions and service.

*From Richard:* Because I'm retiring from the USGS I was asked to say a little about my career. *The newsletter editor captured some of Richard's comments hereinafter.* I graduated from West Virginia University in 1980 with a B.S. in Geology and a B.A. in Biology. My primary interest at the time was paleontology. It was there that I took my only class in computer programming. I enrolled in the University of Illinois where I studied paleobotany under Tommy Phillips. I graduated in 1986 with a M.S. in botany and a Ph.D. in Geology. After graduating, I spent one year at the USGS working with Ronald Stanton with a postdoctoral fellowship funded by the National Research Council. I was then hired by the Alabama Geological Survey where I worked for several years as a coal geologist. (Coal is, after all, just a lot of fossil plants.) I then followed my then wife to Maryland where I retrained in hydrogeology with Karen Prestegard at the University of Maryland and graduating with a second Ph.D. in Geology. After graduation, I was hired by the Department of Geology and Geophysics at Louisiana State University (LSU) and later at Argus Interware. When I started at the USGS in 1998, my work focused on rewriting and developing several pre and post processors, heavy on graphics, for several models including MODFLOW, HST3D, VS2DT, and ModelMuse to name a few. At past USGS GW Workshops, I heard from colleagues about their frustrations with some of the other graphical user interfaces for MODFLOW. A prime complaint was that when they encountered problems, they couldn't get those problems addressed even if the problem was because of a bug in the software. Because of that feedback, I chose to make responding to user problems a very high priority. I've been fortunate to work with many highly talented people at the USGS. In no particular order, these include but are by no means limited to Lenny Konikow, Cliff Voss, Alden Provost, Allen Shapiro, Arlen Harbaugh, Stan Leake, Ned Banta, Mary Hill, Scott Boyce, Chris Langevin, Dan Goode, Ken Kipp, Paul Hsieh, Scott Charlton, Eve Kuniansky, Rich Niswonger, Ward Sanford, Chris Neuzil, Martha Scholl, and Joe Hughes. I would like to thank all of them for the help they have given me over the years. I plan to return to the USGS as an emeritus scientist to continue working on my projects. I also plan to spend more time on several hobbies including learning to play the hammered dulcimer and woodcarving.

## NEWS FROM RETIREES

**News about Central Region Editor:** I take this opportunity to thank **Jim Bennett** for his 10 years of dedicated voluntary service as the newsletter editor for Central Region. Having worked with Jim these past 6 years, his sharp eyes, quality editing, and contacts with researchers made for great contributions for the newsletter. I wish Jim and Merilee well-deserved joy in “full” retirement. Central Region Director, Bob Swanson, recruited **Kathy Wilson** as our new Central Region editor. Kathy served much of her USGS time as Reports Specialist for the Nebraska Water Science Center. She now lives in Wyoming. Please join me in welcoming Kathy to the team. She will officially start January 2025. Jim has graciously agreed to help with her orientation over the next two months. -- **Jeff Stoner, Editor**

**Owen Baynham ('21) writes:** Thanks for your dedication and hard work!

**Jim Borchers ('07) writes:** I appreciate all that the officers and their helpers do to publish the newsletter. I retired in 2007, and spent six years on the board of the local homeless resource agency, Davis Community Meals and Housing, during which time we built a 90-unit apartment complex with supportive services for homeless and special needs individuals and families. Last year, we finished a homeless resources center where about 70 drop-in clients come daily for counseling, job search assistance, food, clothing, and to use laundry and shower facilities. The second floor of the center has 10 apartments for individuals committed to changing their situation by transitioning from homelessness to stable life styles. The third and fourth floors have 18 apartments for formerly homeless individuals that are fully employed. The idea is to do street outreach to offer assistance to folks on the street, bring them in to the center for their physical needs and eventually counsel them into transitioning away from the street life. All residents get supportive services. You can't solve the 'homeless problem' by just providing housing. Eighty to ninety percent of the homeless have substance abuse or mental health issues, or both. Social workers do wonderful things. Very rarely does someone go through the program and wind up back on the streets. The \$7 million cost of the resources center was paid by private donations generated during a five-year, fund-raising campaign. I live in a wonderful town. As a retiree, I'm realizing that it would be a lot cheaper to live under a bush somewhere, but not everyone agrees. So, I'm doing some consulting—developing water supplies in fractured-rock aquifers, state-wide assessments of land subsidence, and occasionally a court case on the side of public agencies. These have been interesting, but I think the best job is a large, complicated, broad-scope project with about half-time field work. Wonder where I could find one of those? Cheers!

**Eric Evenson ('16) writes:** Hello to all my USGS retiree friends! I hope everyone is doing well. Our clan is doing great.

**Richard Hawkinson ('00) writes:** Keep up the good work on the retirees' newsletters.

**JoAnn Huffman ('94) writes:** Curt and I enjoyed living in our beautiful mountain home and the Conifer community for 30 years but felt it was time to move. We have relocated to what we refer to as "the flats" down the hill. It will take a little getting used to but we are looking forward to the conveniences. Anyone who has moved and downsized will sympathize with how challenging it is. We have become well acquainted with Habit for Humanity Restore, ARC, Goodwill and Got Junk. We attended the memorial for our friend, Jim Blakey, and enjoyed catching up with retiree friends.

**Bob Jarrett writes ('12):** Jim [Blakey] was a great District Chief, Regional Hydrologist, mentor, and good friend during my time with the Colorado District during the 1970s and 1980s. He was a great supporter of education of employees and future employees.

**Terrie M. Lee ('16) writes:** Thank you for all that you do on behalf of the USGS Retirees.



**Barney Popkin writes:** As a now elderly 81-years-old USGS/WRD/Tex hydrologist '65-73, I continue research on anthropogenic and urban disaster soils, hurricane mitigation-preventive measures, seawater flooding of Gaza tunnels, and the Sinai Seawater River project. My most recent publications are: Geologic influences on the natural resources of the Levant (IJLS, 2023); Mineral and rock resources of the Levant (AIPG TOG, in press for Oct-Dec 2024); Role of climate, rocks, and soils on the wines of Napa Valley, California (AIPG TPG, Jan-Mar & Apr-Jun2023); Selected aspects of military geology applied to Ukraine (GJHSS, Feb2024); Some common misconceptions about groundwater (AIPG TPG, Jul-Sep2024); and Water resources of Gaza (AIPG TPG, Apr-Jun2024). My error: the hydraulic conductivity cited in the last article, should read "about 2,000-2,400 in./day." I wrote these articles from my post-hospital rehabilitation and assisted living. Do the best with what you have!



**Rich Reynolds ('16) writes:** Retired in 2015 but still retain my status as Emeritus, mostly for doing colleague reviews. These days house and garden projects seem to take up most of my spare time! Kudos to the editorial team for putting out a great newsletter for all of us!

**Ron Rickman ('16) writes:** Nicole and I are enjoying Alaska and keeping busy with climbing, hiking, biking, and skiing. We still do it all, but a bit slower each year! Nicole also keeps busy with gardening and water color painting. I am still volunteering some of my time with the USGS Pacific Islands Water Science Center which I enjoy. The staff of the PIWSC continues to produce outstanding, timely, data and investigation products.

### Clarkes Travel to Morocco, May 2024

**John Clarke ('14) and wife Karen** recently returned from a 14-day trip to Morocco. The trip was a "Discovery" tour hosted by Gate1 travel, with only 10 participants and included the cities of Rabat, Fez, Erfoud, Ait Benhaddou, Marrakesh, Essaouira, and Casablanca. Morocco is a progressive Arab country that has avoided the religious extremism that plagues other countries in the region. We felt welcome and safe during our visit.

During the trip, we crossed the Anti-Atlas, High Atlas and Middle Atlas mountains, albeit at 60 mph (it's a challenge during a general trip to get special stops for geologic features.) We were able to see the High Atlas mountains at sunrise during a hot-air balloon ride near Marrakesh.



*Waiting for our balloon to fill at sunrise*

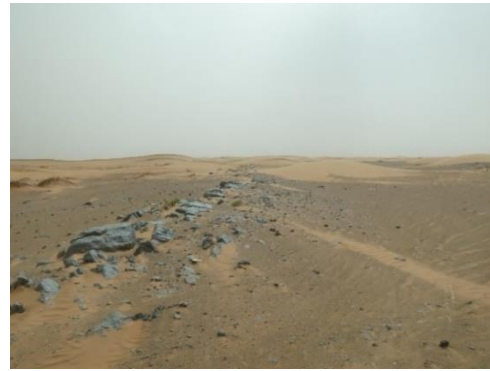


*Some of the fossils purchased during our trip.*

A geo-highlight of the trip was visiting fossil shops in and near the town of Erfoud in the Sahara Desert. We visited a large fossil store, that processed and sold more expensive fossils--packaged as coffee tables and larger polished items--mostly Ammonites, Orthoceras, and Trilobites. One of our fellow travelers purchased a large polished Ammonite for \$9,000 dirham (\$900). As we travelled deeper into the Sahara, we saw many mom-and-pop fossil stores and pits where fossils are excavated. I was able to purchase a few fossils at these stores.



*Riding the camel caravan in the Sahara*



*Mars-like landscape in the Sahara Desert*

In the desert, we stayed at a tent camp and rode in a camel caravan through the dunes to see the sunset. We were able to visit a Berber camp where we were hosted by women and their children and were treated to a cup of mint tea—their specialty. Later, we were caught in a sandstorm that suddenly appeared while we were viewing sights on top of a hill and had to quickly retreat to our cars. A note about the Sahara—it looks just like the surface of Mars—a bedrock surface covered by red silt.



In Marrakesh, we travelled to the central square and market, where we saw snake charmers and tamed monkeys. Here, we shopped at the souq where we bought several items and then rode back to our hotel in a horse-drawn carriage.

*Snake charmers and tamed monkeys at Marrakesh*

Moroccan food is delicious, with a large array of exotic spices. We were hosted for dinner one night at the home of a Moroccan family. On another night, we had Royal Couscous—a family meal typically served on the Friday day of prayer. The meal consists of a bed of couscous overlain by a variety of vegetables and a meat. We also participated in a cooking class where we prepared our lunch consisting of salads and chicken tagine. We look forward to preparing Moroccan meals at home with a variety of their spices that we brought home.

At Ait Benhaddou, we visited areas where classic films such as *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Gladiator* were filmed. Our final two cities were Essaouira, a fishing town, and Casablanca, a major city of 5 million, both located on the Atlantic Coast. In Essaouira, we visited the fish market and had some great seafood meals. In Casablanca, we visited the legendary Ricks Café from the *Casablanca* movie, and later bid farewell to our co-travelers at a nice dinner overlooking the city from the 27<sup>th</sup> floor of our hotel.

Morocco is a wonderful place to visit—we highly recommend it!

## MEETINGS & GATHERINGS

### Nevada Retirees September Coffee/Breakfast



Counter clockwise starting right front: Alan Preissler, Joe Joyner, Keith Halford, Margaret Bunch, Ralph Seiler, Terry Katzer, Kerry Goddard, Nyle Pennington, Barbie Foster Matsko, Robin Sweet, and Barb Lewis.

### North Carolina Retirees Spring Luncheon May 20, 2024

The North Carolina Retirees Spring Luncheon was held at City BBQ on Lake Boone Trail in Raleigh with 10 people in attendance. Everyone was doing well and the group enjoyed lunch and fellowship and welcomed recently retired member Doug Walters, former Raleigh Field Office Chief. We also want to give a shoutout to Harold Eddins, who recently celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and was unable to attend so he could take his 102-year-old sister to the Eye Dr!



Back Row L-R: Bernice Allen, Gloria Moore, Tom Cuffney, Doug Walters, Gary Garrett  
Front Row L-R: Tim Spruill, Jerry Ryan, Rose Pinnix, Geoff Cartano, Jeanne Robbins



## Ohio Science Center – September Picnic



Shown L-R: Janet Welday, Rick Jones, Mary Ann Thomas, Steve Frum, Chuck Shalk (who surprised us by moving from Maine back to Ohio!), Mike Eberle, Greg Koltun, Dave Reutter, Jim Mangus, Denise Dumouchelle, Donna Francy, Karen Dickson, Jim Morris, Allison Kunze, and Martha Jagucki.

## Oklahoma Retirees Luncheon July 19, 2024



L-R: Noel Osborn, Jon Scott, David Adams, LeeAnn Alf, and Marvin Abbot with wife Phyllis.

## Reston Retirees

**August 8, 2024:** The Reston Retirees met August 8 at Temporary Road Park for lunch and some tall conversation. A good time was had by all, but, somehow, we failed to document it with a photo.

**September 9, 2024:** We met September 9 at the USGS building for lunch, conversation, and a presentation. The presentation was billed as Academic Gods: The changing role of a journal Editor-in-Chief. Our speakers: Ken Lanfear (JAWRA) and Lenny Konikow (Groundwater) both have served as Editor-in-Chief of prestigious peer-reviewed journals. They spoke about the role of journals in today's environment, the peer-review process, and what modern journal editorial teams look for in manuscripts.



Front L-R: Lenny Konikow and Ken Lanfear.  
Back row, L-R to the front: Kathleen Gohn, Tony Meunier, Carolyn Olson, Susan Russell-Robinson, John Keith, Rama Kotra, and Bob Ryder.

**October 7, 2024:** The presentation this month was by Nancy Rybicki: *The Two-Horned Water Chestnut, an Invasive Threat to the Potomac River*. The two-horned 'trapa' or water chestnut (*Trapa bispinosa*) is a new species of aquatic plant that is spreading rapidly in the waters of Northern Virginia, Maryland, and the Potomac Watershed including many private and public ponds in the middle Potomac. This plant has strong stems and dense rooting in shallow-water sediments and produces thick beds of floating leaves. Thick beds of water chestnut cause declines in dissolved oxygen and negatively affect sensitive native faunal habitat. Plant growth is associated with nitrogen-rich waters. Seeds have been dispersed by hitchhiking on large animals including waterfowl and have been observed attached to resident Canada geese. The water chestnut makes it nearly impossible to put out into a river from the shoreline.



Above: Nancy Rybicki



Seated: MaryJo Baedecker, Barb Rogers, Kate Schindler, Nancy Rybicki  
Second Row: Carolyn Olson, Richard Winston, Clarence "Andy" Anderson, Stirling Pillete, David Morganwalp, and Bill Burton. Back Row: Tony Meunier, Steve Schindler



## MEMORIALS



**Dorothy Ann Freshour Barnett, 77**, was born in Miles City, MT, on December 24, 1947—an early Christmas present to Jesse and Hildegard Freshour. Dorothy grew up in Forsyth and Colstrip, MT, and graduated from Forsyth High School in June 1965. She then graduated from Carroll College in Helena, MT, in 1969. Dorothy had many jobs, including a position in the Governor's office of budget and program planning, the Montana Historical Society, the Montana Department of Labor & Industry and the State National Guard Adjutant General. In 1990, she began working for the USGS, Water Resources Division, in Helena, MT, as an Administrative Operations Assistant. She retired in 2010. She met her life partner of 54 years: Chic Barnett in 1969. They married and had two sons. Dorothy volunteered and coordinated dog health check examinations for the Race to the Sky for many years. She competed in karate tournaments, supported her son's music, baseball and softball efforts throughout his life. She enjoyed fishing and hunting with her husband and son taking a five-point bull elk on her own. Dorothy and Chic enjoyed cruising vacations often with family while visiting many countries. Dorothy suffered from repeated and various health issues over the years causing her to finally pass on July 14, 2024.



**Carla Bartholoma (née Willden), 70** (wife of Scott Bartholoma, USGS), passed away on September 11, 2024, in West Valley, UT. Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, she graduated from West High School and was a cherished member of her community. Carla is survived by her loving husband, Scott D. Bartholoma; 3 sons, 1 daughter, and a sister. She was preceded in death by her mother, June Willden, and sister, Leverne Matthews. A devout member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Carla found joy in her faith and community. Her hobbies included square dancing, where she met her husband, and she was an active member of the Society for Creative Anachronism. Carla also cherished sewing, crocheting, and making pearl necklaces, which brought beauty and joy to her family and friends. Services were held at Pleasant Green Cemetery in Magna, UT, on September 20, 2024. Carla's life was marked by her devotion to her family, her faith, and her community, leaving behind a legacy of love and cherished memories.



**David E. Click (Dave), 92**, of Camp Hill, PA, passed away on August 14, 2024, at his home with his family by his side. David was born on June 14, 1932, in Usk, WA, and was a son of the late Owen L. and Catherine I. (Helms) Click. Dave grew up on Five Mile Prairie in Spokane, WA. He graduated from Mead High School and Washington State University at Pullman with a B.S. in Agricultural Engineering. While at Washington State, he was the class President and was active in the ROTC. Upon graduation, he served his country in active duty as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, finishing his career in the Reserves as a Captain. He met and married the love of his life Laurel (Mower) Click in Sacramento, CA, where he began his career with the USGS. Upon becoming a Professional Civil Engineer, his career took him to Tucson and Yuma, AZ, where they began their family. He was promoted to headquarters in Reston, VA; then Columbus, OH, finally settling in the Harrisburg area. His career culminated as the Pennsylvania District Chief of the USGS Water Resources Division (WRD). He retired after nearly 40 years of service with the Federal Government. As church life was always a priority, upon moving to Pennsylvania, Dave and his family became



active members of Christ Presbyterian Church in Camp Hill. During his 45 years as a member, Dave sang in the choir, served as a Ruling Elder and Trustee, Financial Secretary, served on multiple committees and volunteered with church outreach. Dave loved all aspects of music. Despite having no formal music education, he sang in many church choirs over the years, played the saxophone and taught himself to play the banjo. He loved bluegrass music and would often play it Saturday mornings while doing woodworking in his shop. In addition to music, Dave was also passionate about genealogy. He spent years researching his family's ancestry, and took pride in sharing his early American heritage. Travel was always an integral part of Dave's life. Through annual camping vacations with his wife and family, Dave explored the United States, Canada and Mexico. Upon retirement, Dave and Laurel extensively traveled the world. He also enjoyed photography, gardening, bridge and golf. He was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the WRD Retirees' Organization. Survivors are his wife of 63 years, Laurel Click, his three daughters, and their families, including 4 granddaughters. In addition to his parents, David was preceded in death by his brother Oliver L. Click and sister, Ida B. Rile. Dave was a wonderful, kind man with a generous and compassionate spirit. He was an adoring husband, dedicated father, and loving grandfather. He will be greatly missed. A memorial service was held at on August 21, 2024.



**Kerie Hitt, 70**, Reston, VA, passed away on September 27, 2024. Kerie was born on July 22, 1954, to Ray and Billie Hitt. She grew up in Montgomery County, MD, and graduated from Robert E. Peary High School in 1972. She enrolled in Washington College in Chestertown, MD, for 2 years and then North Carolina State University (NCSU) in Raleigh, NC, where she earned a B.S. in 1976. She was elected to Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, the highest academic award one can receive at NCSU. She also was elected to Pi Alpha Xi, which recognizes academic excellence in floriculture. She moved to Reston in 1978 and resided there the rest of her life. Kerie pursued a career studying natural resources, most of which (29 years) was spent at the USGS, where she met her husband Bruce Wright. Kerie was one of the first to adopt geographic information systems (GIS) technology to analyze water-resources and land-use data on a national level and to produce publication-quality computer maps and graphics that met the strict USGS standards. She retired in 2010 after almost 33 years of Federal service. She joked that she retired to focus on her second career - staying ahead of ovarian cancer. Kerie was an avid bicyclist, riding to everyday activities and taking multi-day trips. Several of her favorite bike tours were to Icefields Parkway in Canada and Crater Lake, OR. Even after her ovarian cancer diagnosis in 2009, two surgeries, multiple recurrences, two clinical trials, and many subsequent grueling chemotherapy treatments, she and Bruce enjoyed many bicycling trips including the Great Allegheny Passage, Erie Canal Historic Corridor, Natchez Trace, Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail, Galloping Goose Trail in British Columbia, Le Petit Train du Nord and Veloroute des Bleuets in Quebec, and local rides back home on the Washington & Old Dominion Trail and in Rock Creek Park. Recently, she and Bruce had been exploring Tucson by bike. She helped found Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling, a group of volunteers working to integrate bicycling into the transportation network of Fairfax County. For about 10 years she helped organize the annual Bike to Work Day event in Reston. She rode her bike to group exercise classes at the Reston Y after retiring. When cancer made her too weak to ride on her own, Bruce pedaled her around on the back of a cargo bike. Kerie also enjoyed country-western and Zumba dancing, particularly line dancing and two-stepping with her husband. She performed with their dance team at community fairs and retirement homes. Growing up a "tomboy," she loved horses, and her heroes as a youngster were Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. She was defensive MVP in field hockey in high school, which earned her the nickname "Fearless." She also jogged and played recreational coed volleyball. Kerie loved animals, especially her beloved Abyssinian cats. She liked backyard birdwatching and gardening. Kerie volunteered to spread awareness of ovarian cancer by talking to medical students about her compelling experience through the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance's "Survivors Teaching Students" program. Hearing the personal

stories of ovarian cancer survivors has made a major impact on the medical training of many students. She also raised awareness by helping at local outreach events. Kerie is survived by her devoted husband Bruce Wright, who helped her through the difficult days facing the challenges of her illness. They were together for 33 years, including 20 years of marriage. She also is survived by her sister and her cat Lizzo. Her parents predeceased her. The Family thanks her end-of-life doula and her hospice team. A celebration of her life is planned for a later date.

**Gloria Stiltner writes ('00):** Kerie Hitt and I were WRD Headquarters office mates when I joined the Office of Water Data Coordination moving up from WRD in Bay St Louis Mississippi in 1979. We worked on a Hydrologic Unit Codes project together. We became good friends. The picture of Kerie is in front of the 1869 house Roy and I renovated in Vienna, VA. Kerie is on a bicycle path (2022) that she helped get established for the Beulah Road project. When we first moved to this house Kerie's sister worked for a veterinarian and she begged me to adopt two kittens from there. We named them Dusty and Rusty after our old house. Kerie also helped me when my daughter got married on the front porch in 1985. I have contributed to the USGS Retirees' Scholarship Program in her honor and memory.



**Jeff Stoner writes ('14):** I was fortunate to work with Kerie for the NAWQA Nutrients Synthesis project. Kerie's smarts, efficient work habits, and all-around good nature made it fun to produce great GIS analysis of national data. I will miss her stories of bicycling adventures and trail advocacy. Her toughness impressed me through her long battle with cancer—peace.

**Ken Lanfear ('06) writes:** Kerie Hitt was the unknown heroine of GIS in Water Resources. Any GIS'er or modeler who worked on NAWQA probably appreciated Kerie's work, even if they weren't lucky enough to know Kerie personally. Kerie's earlier work on the National Water Summary followed the same track. She was a solid force for doing things right, but usually stayed in the background, a steadying influence. An ardent cyclist, I often saw Kerie and her husband, Bruce, on the bike trail. I am sorry they could not have more turns of the pedals together.

**William Howard (Bill) Kirby, 84**, longtime USGS hydrologist, passed away on September 13, 2024 in Fairfax, VA. He died of glioblastoma while in the shared embrace of his wife of 63 years, Susan, and his daughter and son. Bill also is survived by two grandsons. A celebration of Bill's life will be announced. Bill attended Cornell University, where he earned his bachelor, master, and doctorate degrees in civil engineering. He joined the USGS in 1967 where his career spanned 38 years. He studied, developed, and applied statistical techniques for characterizing flood hazards; trained, guided, and mentored numerous USGS hydrologists; and contributed to the development of water- and climate-science policy, and national and international standards for the collection and presentation of water data. Bill was a first-class analyst who produced remarkable insights. In 1974 Bill was asked to review a paper by Jim Wallis (of IBM Research), and Nick Matalas and Jim Slack of the USGS. The title of their paper was "Just A Moment!" (a play on the three statistics (moments) of a flood-frequency distribution). The paper was destined to be widely discussed and cited. It was a massive Monte Carlo analysis which used the computer power available at IBM's Yorktown Heights New York research center to see what happens when you generate hundreds of thousands of realizations of random data from known probability distributions (like the Gaussian, or the Log Pearson III (LP-III) distribution used in flood frequency analyses in the United States). The results showed that the sample values of skewness (the third moment of the LP-III) often came out well below the true skewness; even after thousands of realizations, all sample values were less than the true value. Bill, as a reviewer, thought this was a very interesting outcome. It motivated him to pick up a pencil and paper and calculate if there might be an "algebraic upper bound" to the skewness coefficient that was just a result of the sample size. Indeed, he showed that this upper bound existed and he showed what it was. His work was then published alongside the Wallis, Matalas, and Slack paper. Bill succeeded in using his smarts and a pencil and paper to come up with a truly important new insight that the thousands of hours of computer time at IBM hinted at but didn't resolve. Of course, Bill also knew his way around a computer. He wrote the USGS "J407"

computer program for flood-frequency analysis that implemented Bulletin 17, "Guidelines for determining flood flow frequency," that was published, with Bill's help, in March 1976. This code established the USGS as a "go-to" agency for flood science. J407 was later implemented in the program PeakFQ. Bill was a sought-after science advisor at the national and international levels. He was a co-author of the 1995 National Academy of Sciences report on the flooding and flood trends on the American River. He developed two major International Standards Organization (ISO) standards for assessing uncertainty in flow measurements: ISO 1088 – "Collection and processing of data for determination of uncertainties in flow measurement" and ISO 7066 – "Assessment of uncertainty in the calibration and use of flow measurement devices." He also drafted the uncertainty section of many standards for measuring flow by velocity-area methods, weirs, and special structures. Bill's USGS and academic colleagues have many fond recollections,

**Bob Hirsch writes ('18):** Bill had a quiet and always understated expertise that I appreciated throughout my career. I will miss him.

**Marshal Jennings ('97) writes:** As I rose up from District streamgaging programs and knew Hydrology from a field viewpoint, Bill often appeared quirky. One time we were standing together at a bus stop on a cold day and a sudden rain shower hit us while under umbrellas... I noticed Bill was deep in thought watching the varying rainfall intensity, so I asked him what he was thinking. With no pause he said..."Poisson Process"! That was Bill Kirby.

**Jery Stedinger (Professor Emeritus, Cornell University) writes:** Engaging with USGS hydrologist is a constant reminder of the tremendous strength in statistical analysis and professionalism of the USGS; Bill Kirby was always a core participant to whom others turned for help and advice.

**Kate Flynn writes ('16):** Bill had a great, though sometimes subtle, sense of humor. I remember a meeting in a hotel in Florida where the name of the bar was Worst Bar. Bill's comment - it really was. The last work trip I took with Bill was to the Denver Training Center after he had retired. I asked what he was doing with his time. He said Susan had been in a book group for some time; as the women's husbands retired, they were being recruited to join. He said it was the first time since he got out of school that he had read a work of fiction and that he was enjoying it. Wish I could remember what he recommended, but I do remember that I liked it.

**Bob Holmes writes ('21):** Bill was a gentle person with a humble spirit and a huge intellect.

**Harry Lins writes ('12):** I have so many fond memories of Bill. He was truly a gentleman scholar and a fine example of what a hydrologist, particularly in government, should be. He and Susan are in my daily prayers.

**John Gray writes ('14):** I recall Bill's retirement party, in which he offered parting words...brief as I remember. This simple statement, to best of my memory, struck a chord with me and perfectly characterized Bill's career: "It was all SO interesting."

**Robert Mason writes ('22):** I was Bill's last USGS supervisor (as Chief, OSW). I thought we would see less of him after his retirement. But no, the very next Monday, and every workday thereafter for over a year, Bill reported to his office at 8:00 AM and continued to crank out papers and support his USGS colleagues. He was committed to the USGS. He was a quiet, unassuming, but brilliant class act.

**Kevin Oberg ('18) writes:** I first interacted with Bill as a young project hydrologist in Illinois working on a peak flow skew project and later while working on the Lake Michigan Diversion. For me, Bill was the epitome of what OSW was about: persons with outstanding expertise assisting those of us working in the field. I was so impressed that someone of his caliber was ready to step in and help me by providing sound and practical advice and insights.





**Charles (Chuck) E. Lamb Jr., 81**, passed away unexpectedly December 21, 2023. Chuck was born on March 18, 1942, in Iowa City, IA, to Charles and Miriam Altmaier Lamb. Chuck spent the first 5 years of his life in Iowa City before moving to Long Beach, CA, with his mother in 1948. He would come back to Iowa City during the summers to spend time on the Altmaier farm with his Uncle Cedric and Aunt Pat and their children (his double cousins). The times on the farm he never forgot and truly enjoyed. He attributed his strong work ethic later in life to the times he spent on the farm. After graduating from High School in Long Beach in 1960, he returned to Iowa City to attend The University

of Iowa. It was during this time that he accepted a position working for the USGS. After a few years working for the USGS in Iowa, and after a very cold day (20 below zero wind chill) chopping ice on the Mississippi, he wisely requested a transfer to California! From there he spent the rest of his career, which spanned 39+ years, working for the Ground Water Data Unit group in various places in California and finally in Sacramento. A highlight of Chuck's life was finding his brother Lance and Lance's family in 2005. Not surprising they became close instantly. It was a huge blessing for both! Chuck is survived by his sister, his brother, his double cousins, his nieces, and many cousins. He had many special friends, including Laureen Fong-Frydendal and Sue Brockner who together enjoyed so many great times! They helped in so many ways! We will miss his infectious laugh, his voice, his text messages, his commenting on all social media posts, and phone calls. Fortunately for all of us, we have his wonderful memories. Chuck was preceded in death by his father, his mother Miriam, his step dad Joe Calderon, his grandparents Philip and Florence Altmaier and Guy and Lillian Lamb. A graveside service was held in Iowa City in spring 2024.

**Lari Lopp, 77**, passed away September 16, 2024, after a brief time in palliative care. There will be a Celebration of Life Service at the Westminster-Canterbury of the Blue Ridge (WCBR) in Charlottesville, VA, at a later date to be determined, but probably not for a couple of months. Lari joined the USGS/WRD in Menlo Park, CA, in 1977 as a hydrologist(biology) and transferred to Reston, VA, in 1981 where most of her assignments were in the WRD/NWIS offices until she retired in 2002.

**Isabelle Halley des Fontaines writes:** I met Lari in the spring of 1981 when she drove across country from Menlo Park, CA, to Reston, VA, in her green Mustang and with her Siamese cat Hopi. We shared an office. I was, at the time, a programmer for NWIS dealing with water quality information system retrieval and reporting. Lari had been hired by my boss, Dave Maddy, as a hydrologist to help me incorporate biology data into the water quality system. We did not have much in common in terms of cultural and educational background. She was very competitive and I am not. She loved biking and even did a century; I was more a weekend casual biker. She loved baroque and country music; my preferences were more toward classical, romantic, and 60' French folk singers. Yet we got along immediately. The one thing we had in common--we both loved dancing. Lari was a Biologist, with a passion for Entomology. One day, not long after her arrival, as we were walking from the parking lot to our office, she screamed at me "Stop, stop!" I stopped in my tracks wondering what was wrong; she went on to tell me that I was about to step on a bug. To this day, I cannot even remember what type of bug. All I remember is that it was small and I thought that my new office mate was crazy. It happened many more times during our 43-year friendship. Lari's last 5 years were difficult as she fought courageously with Sjogren lymphoma (she was in remission twice) and Cholangiocarcinoma.

**Carmen Baxter writes:** I know little about Lari's background except that she was from out west. I have found various articles where Lari won Hostess of the 1965 California Rodeo. She was 17. There appeared to be some controversy over her win since she was a newcomer to the area but she met the qualifications of the rules, which is what counted. She also was a first-grade teacher. I think this is neat.



**Robert H (Bob) Meade, 93**, died surrounded by family and friends on July 11, 2024, at his home in Bend, OR. He was born in Brooklyn, NY, and grew up in many places as a military kid. He was pre-deceased in 2013 by his wife of 56 years, Mereth, and is survived by his daughter and two sons. His formal (not final) education was completed with a Ph.D., from Stanford. Bob shown here sampling the Amazon flood plain. Bob loved rivers and he collaborated with scientists from the United States, Europe, Russia, China, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, and Venezuela. His career spanned more than 50 years and produced three major contributions to understanding the earth's sciences. The first contribution was to understand land subsidence. After working as a field assistant in the Alaskan Brooks Range, Bob joined George Davis and George Poland in Menlo Park in the late 1950s and focused on the role of soil properties in land subsidence. Specifically, he found that the compaction of aquifer systems in California was frequently controlled by clay properties, which were non-elastic, and therefore land subsidence was an irreversible process. His second research contribution was to promulgate and

substantiate the concept that estuaries are ephemeral features and are being filled with sediment from land and marine sources. Bob was encouraged to move to Woods Hole by Luna Leopold, and he spent 11 years there collaborating with research scientist from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory, and other oceanographic institutions throughout the world. He published seminal papers on the suspended matter, sea level changes, and salinity variation along the east coast of the United States. The third contribution was to develop special sampling methods to measure big rivers and to understand the movement and storage of sediment through these river systems. This effort was often known as Bob's Moving and Storage as he moved from Cape Cod to Denver "because there was not enough suspended sediment in the ocean—rivers had more." He joined Carl Nordin and John Moody to work on river sediment projects and they investigated the Amazon River in the 1970s and the Orinoco River in the 1980s as well as smaller rivers like the Missouri River, the East Fork River in Wyoming, and Powder River in Montana. These efforts resulted in a multidiscipline study of sediment-transported pollutants in the Mississippi River system from 1986-1993 that left a legacy of methods and quality data that can be readily compared with data collected by a future generation of scientists to determine the changes in river systems from anthropogenic and climatic causes. The big river work culminated in a multi-national collaborative study of sediment-transported radioactive material in the Ob River system in Siberia in 1995 spearheaded by Ed Landa. Probably disappointingly, he discovered that very little suspended sediment was transported by the Ob River to the Arctic Ocean. Bob always had a wide range of interests from art, music, and theater to the earth sciences. He mentored many young scientists and once remarked "I was lucky with the people I worked with, and the greatest joy was watching their interaction." He was a visual person, who could paint pictures of many important scientific concepts with words or diagrams, and who could communicate these images, ideas, and concepts to the public on a level with the best theatrical performers. Bob had a passion for observing the natural world, which included studies of the distribution of fresh-water dolphins in the Amazon and Orinoco River Basins, the interaction between fish and large floodplain lakes along the Amazon River, and the intricate reproduction of Amazon water lilies.



Jon Nowlin discusses a pile of tufa laid in an east to west orientation along the Emigrant Trail. Amy Alonzo

**Jon O. Nowlin**, retired District Chief for USGS Nevada, passed away on August 13, 2024. Jon is survived by his wife Janet, two sons and their families including several grandchildren. Jon started his USGS career in Michigan, and then transferred to Nevada. He worked on numerous projects in both states, and if interested, the reports can be found on the USGS Publications Warehouse. Jon was an active outdoors person and truly enjoyed the west. He became a strong advocate for Nevada history and tried to help preserve numerous artifacts. Jon, along with his wife Janet, was also an integral part of the Oregon-California Trails Association organization.

**Glen Hess ('15) writes:** Jon was a very forward thinker and scientist for the USGS. When I lived in Carson City from 1993-2001, he was ahead of his time. Jon was telling us about this new medium called the World Wide Web and a search engine called Mozilla. We'd not heard of Google yet. He was amazed by how much information was out there in the world. He had been a part of bringing the climate change project to Nevada with several notable researchers. Today in some of the literature of climate change, you see these 1990s studies and researchers mentioned as seminal studies. Jon supported the Truckee-Carson project which was a forward-thinking all-encompassing project to look at both the science and the human operations of water limited basins. At the time we didn't really have the computing power to put such a complex model together, but over time this has become commonplace in studies of this nature. Jon also was a supporter of the groundwater-surface water truly linked models. With Dave Prudic and his studies and Jon's support that was groundbreaking ideas. Now in the 2020s that has become the standard. I should have said something about these things about Jon before his passing, but he was very much a Renaissance man and guided the USGS towards a future that he saw and now we are living.

**Larry Bohman ('18) writes:** I knew little about that type of study but Jon took the time to guide me through the process...he knew his stuff! He gave our project free reign to do what we thought as best and seldom interfered. He brought in several good managers to NV that ultimately went on to positions of importance in the USGS. Glad you took the time to point out his forward-thinking talents.

**Steve Berris ('19) writes:** I always had a soft spot in my heart for Jon. He played a big role in my career and was very encouraging during challenging times. He always had that wink that made you feel a little special. Great person who will be missed.

**Kerry Garcia ('10) writes:** Jon was a mentor to so many. He along with Steve V. guided me in my career in water quality. Jon went along with me on a visit to a NASQAN site to observe sampling techniques. Jon also selected me as the Data Chief in Carson City which I served for 9 years until my retirement. Jon would attend our monthly USGS retirees' coffee group and would always have some memories to share with our group. I would periodically ask Jon about his sons. Scott attended the Air Force Academy and Mark went on to a career in newspaper graphics. Jon and Janet were very proud of their sons and their success. God Speed to you Jon.

**Norman E. "Skip" Schmidt, Jr., 77**, passed away on August 5, 2024, in Hospice care after a brief bout with pancreatic cancer. Skip joined the WRD in 1974 as a Manpower Management Specialist in Reston, VA. He served as the Assistant Chief of the WRD Manpower Section from 1979-1986 and as the Chief of the WRD Branch of Human Resources Management Support (BHRMS) from 1987-2000. In late 2000, the employees and services of the WRD/BHRMS were realigned to the servicing personnel office of the Bureau. Skip retired from the USGS in 2003.

**Larry Togans ('01) writes:** Skip was more than just a supervisor in our Branch; he was a mentor and a friend. Together with Charlene, Barbara, Michelle, Beverly, and I, we formed a dedicated professional team that made significant strides for the WRD. Working alongside Skip was a pleasure, and our friendship continued well beyond our retirement. He had many friends at the USGS, including another close friend, Dennis Sulam. Just days before his passing, Skip reached out to me from the hospital and we talked about our lasting friendship over the years. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.



**Charlene Simpson ('06) writes:** I thought Larry did an excellent job describing our Branch under Skip's leadership. As Larry said, "our friendships continued beyond our retirements." This was due to Skip remembering our birthdays with a card and a personal message. I hadn't heard from Skip in several months but thought he was busy with his and Sue's move to Gainesville, FL, to be near their son and family. In August, my phone rang and instead of Skip, it was Sue letting me know that our Skip had passed away.

**Dennis Sulam ('06) writes:** My friendship with Skip began when I transferred, in 1980, to Reston as the Northeastern Region "Manpower Officer" and my contact with the old "Manpower Section" at WRD Headquarters. Skip was, at that time, the Assistant Chief of that section. My role had me dealing daily with the manpower group. Skip was my main contact. Later, when Skip became that group's chief, my admiration of his skills and abilities grew. From 1980 until he retired I had almost daily contact with his group and especially with him. Skip was one of the most insightful and intelligent people I knew at WRD. As an administrative person, he was able to combine his knowledge with the requirements of a science agency--nobody did it better. After he retired, we continued to communicate on birthdays and a few other occasions. Skip will be missed. He was an outstanding WRD leader and a great friend.

**Cathy Hill ('06) writes:** I first met Skip in the NC District in the late 1980s when he did a training session on workplace ethics, or something similar. He picked me out of the audience and asked me to sit down at the table, he then proceeded to sit ON the table and intimidate/talk to me. That's how he demonstrated how a boss should not act!! 😊 Skip was always the consummate professional and gentleman. I had the pleasure of working with him for several years. He was always the "go to" person for anything personnel related (of course they call it "Human Capital" now, but I hate that term). He was a pleasure to work with and will be missed.



**Dianne Willbanks Sanders, 81** (wife of Lamar Sanders, USGS) was born on March 31, 1943, in Atlanta, GA, to the late Aubrey Allen and Mary Lee Buford Willbanks. She passed away suddenly on August 16, 2024, at her home near Lexington, SC. Throughout her life, Dianne was freely and constantly generous, kind, devoted, and loving to her friends, her pets, and most of all to her family. She loved, and was dearly loved by everyone who knew her, including strangers in waiting rooms, babies, children, all animals, waitresses at her Waffle House, her neighbors, and all friends of her husband, daughters and grandchildren. Everyone who knew her loved her, because she exuded love, understanding, and kindness. Dianne's legacy is love. She was a blessing to her whole family, and she will be loved and missed forever. She enjoyed picking up rocks, shopping, and creating drawings and paintings on rocks and walking sticks. She was happily married to Lamar Sanders for 50 years. Their marriage was one of good times, miles of wonderful road trips, picnics, and peaceful, happy family togetherness. Dianne is survived by her husband of 50 years, Lamar Sanders; her two daughters, beloved stepson and their families, including 4 grandchildren; and her 2 sisters; and her 2 cats. She was predeceased by her brother, Charles Willbanks. Services in South Carolina were held at Barr-Price Funeral Home in Lexington, SC, on August 24, 2024.



**Harold Roy Seitz, 83**, of Bee Branch, AR, passed away peacefully on August 2, 2024, after complications from a brief illness. Harold was born on August 15, 1940, to Eugene and Belva Seitz in Buhl, ID. Harold spent his formative years in Southwest Idaho in the Treasure Valley, graduating from Middleton High School in 1958. After high school, Harold worked for the Bureau of Public Roads where he learned surveying techniques and worked on paving crews in remote parts of Idaho. Some of his fondest memories were of working on the paving crew for Highway 12 from Lowell, ID, to Lolo Summit. He then went to work for the USGS in Boise, ID. His work in surveying and engineering technician support for the USGS led him to enroll in a study program to become a licensed Civil Engineer, which he achieved at the University of Idaho. He eventually obtained a master's degree in that field in 1970. He continued to work at

the USGS after college and in 1981 relocated to Juneau, AK, with the department to become the District Chief for Southeast Alaska. His sons Ben and Nate relocated with him on his Alaska adventure and benefited from having Alaska as the backdrop for part of their youth. Harold enjoyed the wilderness of Alaska, spending time fishing and hunting in the secluded and unpopulated waters surrounding the Juneau area. He always had a boat ready for an adventure, as testified by the name of his first Juneau vessel the "Say When." Harold would retire from the USGS to relocate to warmer climates in Arkansas. Never an idle body, he quickly integrated with the Bee Branch area community. He decided to take on a second career as the Director of Public Works for a resort community at Fairfield Bay, AR. He continued to enjoy the outdoors in Arkansas, raising cattle and hunting whitetail deer with local friends, many of whom would accompany him on return fishing and hunting adventure trips to Alaska in the summers. He was fond of classic cars and would acquire many project cars and trucks that he would have restored over his years in Arkansas. He would attend classic car shows in his area and won many awards and trophies for his autos including some "Best In Shows." He was a lifelong reader with a broad interest in different topics. His accumulated library of books was impressive. *Son Ben mentioned that Harold kept every copy of the Retirees' newsletter.* Harold is survived by 2 sons and their families, including 5 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren and their families. He was preceded in death by his lifelong friend Mike Jones. Harold's wishes were to be cremated with his ashes spread over the waters surrounding Juneau, AK. The family intends to hold a final boat excursion and onboard celebration of life for him during the summer of 2025 to perform this final wish.



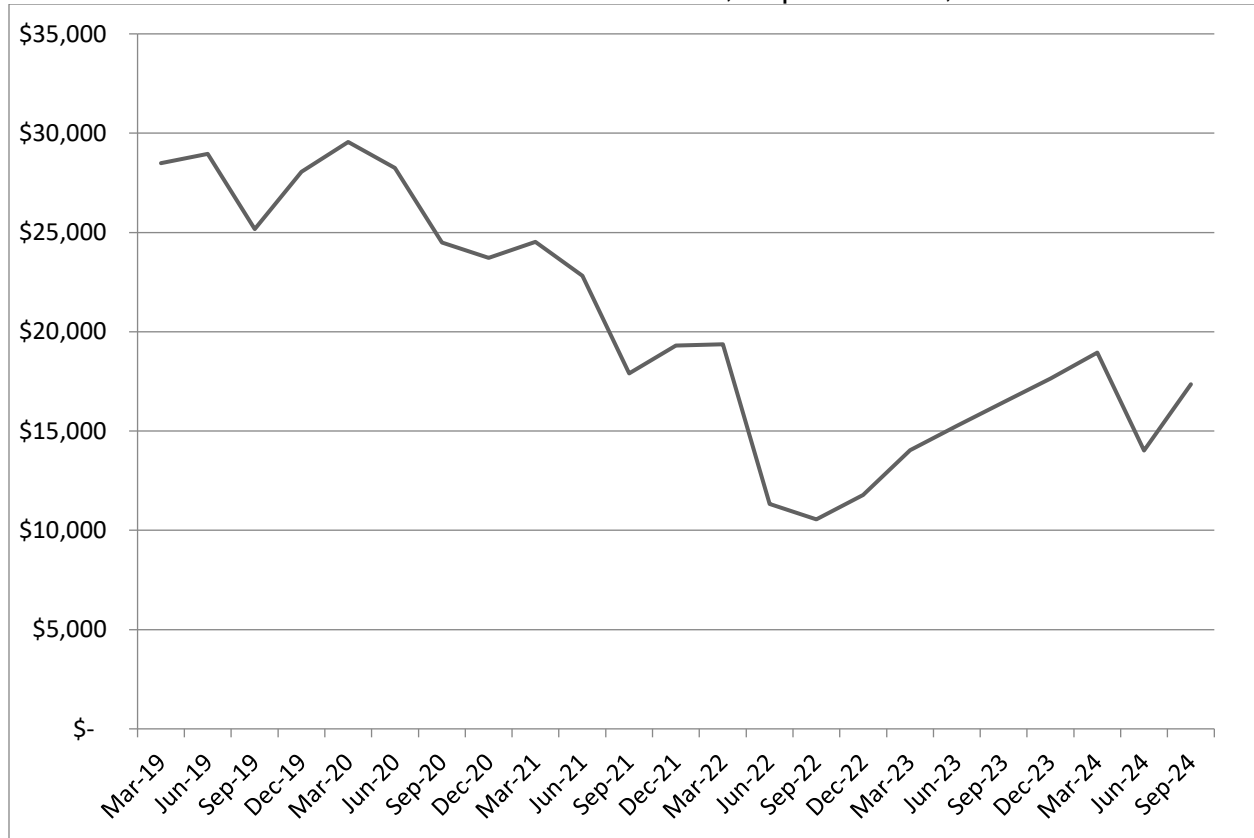
**Wayne A. Tice, 73**, passed away July 10, 2024, after a courageous 11-month battle with brain cancer surrounded by his loving family. Born March 14, 1951, in Akron, OH, to Delores M. Tice (Thompson) and William E. Tice. Wayne served in the U.S. Navy during Vietnam on the USS Duluth. He met his loving wife, Cindi when he was 15 years old and started dating her in 1969, later marrying her on December 29, 1974. He was an amazing father to 3 beautiful children. Wayne was a hero to many and would give the shirt off his back to help others. He served as an Akron Firefighter and Paramedic for 11 years where he was known

as a legend for his heroism. He was one of the first classes to graduate from the Akron General Paramedic Program in 1980. He later retired after a job-related injury in 1991, and attended Kent State University and became a Geologist. He joined the WRD in Helena, MT, as a Hydrologic Technician. He worked primarily in the International Section, but also helped the Helena Field Office. He retired in 2015, and moved back to Ohio to be close to family. Wayne was an avid lover of the outdoors. He was the definition of "Jack of All Trades." He did it all and if he didn't know how to do it, he would study it and teach himself and give it a go. He was a 12th degree Mason and served as Worshipful Master of the Boulder, MT, lodge from 2006-2007. He loved giving back to the community and helping others. He is survived by the love of his life Cynthia (Croft) and his 2 sons and daughter and their families, including 6 grandchildren, and let's not forget fur babies and grand r babies whom he spoiled immensely, 4 brothers and 2 sisters and many loving friends and family.

## TREASURER'S REPORT, THIRD QUARTER 2024

Treasurer Cathy Hill reports the organization had \$17,350 at the end of the third quarter. Special thanks for contributions above dues go to Colleen Babcock, Al Rutledge, Wayne Webb, Kathy Long, and Kim Rogers. Additionally, contributions were made in honor of Jim Blakey by several retirees. Many thanks for your generosity.

USGS Retirees Account Balance, September 30, 2024



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**Erratum to August 2024 USGS Retirees Newsletter:** Page 3, correction to the photo caption of Jacob Faberstrom. Jacob is with Howard Reeves, not with his supervisor Derrick Hubbell.

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## MEMBER SURVEY

### Help us Craft the Future of our Organization

The Officers of the USGS Retirees' Organization believe this would be a good time to obtain a read from the members on how they feel about the direction and potential ideas for future direction of our organization. The survey printed below is our attempt to accomplish that. Our preferred method for your response to the survey is the following online link:

<https://forms.gle/r1Tkm4RFTsYS47Uv8>. However, we're happy to provide the enclosed paper copy should that be easier. Paper responses should be mailed to: **USGS Retirees, P.O. Box 280, Herndon, VA 20172-0280**. Either option should only take 5-10 minutes to complete.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY BY DECEMBER 31, 2024.**



## Retiree's Current Member Survey

The mission of the USGS Retirees' Organization is to help USGS retirees keep in touch with one another and our former agency.

We publish a quarterly newsletter and an annual directory, hold a biennial reunion, and support the Retirees' Scholarship for active USGS employees. The newsletter provides announcements and updates on member activities and news, memorials for members who have passed, and the occasional technical article. The annual directory provides names, address, phone numbers, and email addresses of members. For privacy protection, the directory is not accessible via the internet. The biennial reunion offers members opportunities to see, hear, and converse in person with other USGS retirees. We also maintain a "Facebook page" for the Retirees where retirees can post news, notes, and photos to the group. Finally, we provide small academic assistance scholarships to active USGS employees who are seeking to qualify for advancement in rank and grow their knowledge. All of these things are put together by unpaid volunteers who donate their time and energy.

The Board would like you to help us prioritize these activities, improve them, and add to them. The following survey is our attempt to gather some of your thoughts and opinions. **Please respond to the survey questions by December 31, 2024.** You may use the enclosed paper copy (and return it to the address noted above and below) or you may use our preferred online version at: <https://forms.gle/r1Tkm4RFTsYS47Uv8>

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If you have other ideas, suggestions, or questions that don't fit this survey format, please feel free to write to us at [USGSRetirees@gmail.com](mailto:USGSRetirees@gmail.com).

### How important is the USGS Retirees Newsletter?

- ☐ 1-Most important
- ☐ 2-Somewhat important
- ☐ 3-Somewhat unimportant
- ☐ 4-Least important

### How important is the USGS Retirees Annual Member Directory?

- ☐ 1-Most important
- ☐ 2-Somewhat important
- ☐ 3-Somewhat unimportant
- ☐ 4-Least important

### How important is the USGS Retirees Biennial Reunion?

- ☐ 1-Most important
- ☐ 2-Somewhat important
- ☐ 3-Somewhat unimportant
- ☐ 4-Least important

### How important is the USGS Retirees Scholarship Fund?

- ☐ 1-Most important
- ☐ 2-Somewhat important
- ☐ 3-Somewhat unimportant
- ☐ 4-Least important

## NEWSLETTER SECTION

How do you use the Newsletter? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ I read the newsletter to learn about the activities and news from former USGS colleagues and friends
- ☐ I read the newsletter to gain ideas about travel or volunteer opportunities
- ☐ I read the newsletter to keep up with what is going on at the USGS
- ☐ My significant other occasionally reads the newsletter
- ☐ News from retirees
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

The Newsletter length is.... *(Mark only one oval)*

- ☐ Too short
- ☐ Too long
- ☐ Usually just right

The Newsletter level of technicality is.... *(Mark only one oval)*

- ☐ Too technical
- ☐ Not technical enough
- ☐ Usually just right

What regular newsletter features do you like? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ President's message
- ☐ New retirement announcements
- ☐ Memorials
- ☐ Technical articles
- ☐ Travel articles

What features/topics would like for us to add to the newsletter?

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Do you know how to contribute an article to the newsletter? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you like to help us put the newsletter together? ☐ Yes ☐ No

## MEMBER DIRECTORY SECTION

Do you use the member directory? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you used the directory recently to contact a former USGS friend or colleague?

☐ Yes ☐ No

I prefer to use Facebook to keep track of USGS friends and former colleagues.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Instead of a directory, I'd prefer access to an online database that I could search.

☐ Yes ☐ No

## BIENNIAL REUNION SECTION

Have you been to a Retirees reunion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you plan to attend a reunion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, why not? (*Check all that apply*)

- ☐ Too expensive
- ☐ Too much of a bother
- ☐ Too much of a time commitment
- ☐ Too far
- ☐ I am not able to travel
- ☐ NA
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

What activities should we include in future reunions? (*Check all that apply*)

- ☐ More technical sessions
- ☐ More outdoor excursions
- ☐ More indoor excursions
- ☐ More on current USGS programs/activities
- ☐ Breakout sessions (Pubs, Admin, IT, Groundwater, etc.)
- ☐ Healthcare strategies-focused breakout sessions
- ☐ Fitness strategies-focused breakout sessions
- ☐ Group exercise classes (Yoga, 5K, Photo-walk, Bike ride?)
- ☐ Sing-a-long/Karaoke/band events
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you can't attend the reunions in person, would you participate in hybrid reunion sessions (sessions that are done both in-person and via a Zoom meeting or similar electronic format)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## OTHER MEETINGS/MEETING FORMATS

### 1. Virtual Meetings

In addition to the reunion, technology can help us stay in touch with former USGS friends and colleagues. Virtual meetings of the Retirees organization could be held to inform members about Retirees activities and plans, permit members to hear from USGS officials, and even engage one-on-one with one another. Though they are not the same as in-person meetings, they are far less expensive and much more convenient than traveling to in-person meetings.

Would you attend virtual meetings of the USGS Retirees? ☐ Yes ☐ No



What features would you prefer in a virtual meeting? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ Reports from Org officers (e.g., president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer)
- ☐ Reports from regional Retiree Representatives
- ☐ Presentation/Interviews of USGS Leadership
- ☐ Technical topic breakout sessions
- ☐ Lifestyle breakout sessions
- ☐ Travel breakout sessions
- ☐ Healthcare-strategies breakout sessions
- ☐ Fitness-strategies breakout sessions
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Virtual Reunions

Some software would enable us to hold virtual reunions in which attendees can see and interact with other attendees individually or on a small group basis, remotely.

Would you welcome/attend a virtual Retirees national or regional reunion (60-90 minutes in length)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you be willing to pay a small fee (\$3 to \$5) to attend a virtual reunion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

## 3. Virtual Communities

It is also possible to build communities of practice or “virtual communities” or “clubs” in which small groups of people sharing specific interests can meet remotely via a technology like Zoom and talk as a group about that interest/activity. Small-group clubs could be formed around hobbies, cooking, barbecuing, games, sports/fitness, travel, lifestyles, professional interests.

Would you be interested in joining a **Virtual Community**? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you be interested in starting/leading a **Virtual Community**? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If we were to offer **Virtual Communities**, what topics/groups would you be interested in joining? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ A USGS Mission Area oriented community
- ☐ Retirement lifestyles (RV living, senior communities, etc.)
- ☐ Retirement travel (cruising, adventure travel, biking, boating, fishing, etc.)
- ☐ Hobbies (crafts, gardening, knitting, woodworking, tying flies, photography, bird watching, etc.)
- ☐ Games (card games, video games, board games, etc.)
- ☐ Sports and fitness activities
- ☐ Health concerns
- ☐ Book clubs
- ☐ Discussion groups
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Opportunities

Many retirees volunteer for the USGS, other agencies, non-governmental organizations, and many charities. We have been having discussions with USGS leadership about recruiting for USGS volunteer opportunities, including projects handled through the USGS emeritus program.

Would you be interested in learning about volunteer opportunities? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What types of volunteer opportunities would like to learn about? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ USGS emeritus and volunteer projects
- ☐ Non-USGS volunteer science programs (FWS, NASA, NOAA, Nature Conservancy, etc.)
- ☐ Environmental issues and policies (Union of Concerned Scientists, Sierra Club, Climate Action, etc.)
- ☐ Societal issues and policies
- ☐ USGS Retiree officer or committee activities
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Retirees Scholarship Program

The USGS Retirees have been sponsoring a scholarship program for many years. Each year we solicit applications from USGS employees who want to take college or technical courses to acquire skills in a priority area or who need select courses to advance their career. In recent years, we have emphasized applications from students and early career hydro techs, but we consider all applicants without bias regarding position series. However, the scholarship amounts are small, often less than half of that requested by any student.

Do you favor continuation of the scholarship program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Who do you think should be eligible for a Retirees scholarship grant? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ All USGS career employees regardless of position description
- ☐ USGS hydrologists
- ☐ USGS hydrologic technicians
- ☐ USGS student and intern employees

Would you support expanding the impact of the scholarship program with larger individual grants? ☐ Yes ☐ No

## END OF SURVEY

Mail your completed paper survey to:  
**USGS Retirees, P.O. Box 280, Herndon, VA 20172**

We sincerely thank you for providing the USGS Retiree's Organization with valuable insight into our members' wishes and concerns. Please feel free to write to us at: [USGSRetirees@gmail.com](mailto:USGSRetirees@gmail.com) or visit us at <http://wrcretirees.org/>