



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Inside Region 3

December 2007

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*Wetlands Conservation Pioneer,
First Silver Eagle Award Winner*

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Editor's Note:

Connecting with nature does not look the same for everyone. Connecting with nature means different things to different people. For some it's hunting and fishing. For others, it's walking in the woods or on the beach. What does your nature encounter look like? We want to know. To that end, we have added a regular section called *Let's Go Outside*. We invite you to submit your personal nature encounters, as well as innovative ideas on how to connect with nature. We will run your accounts in this feature segment.

On the cover:

Wetlands conservation pioneer and inaugural winner of the region's Silver Eagle Award, Mugs Townsend standing next to an oak tree that he named after Dick Dorer.

A Vision that Connects People

A Legacy for Our Children



the various federal agencies having natural resource responsibilities in the Midwest. We are marking our first decade by looking ahead to the next decade, and we paused at this winter meeting to listen to experts who are helping us look at coming changes in the political, social, economic and environmental landscapes. Our theme, “2020 Vision in the

Midwest,” gave us the opportunity to better position ourselves for leadership and stewardship in the years ahead. I’m really grateful to the MNRG leaders and members who’ve helped our organization strengthen over the years and focus on issues important for all of us.

In November, we welcomed a host of partners, members, and subject matter experts to the winter meeting of the Midwest Natural Resources Group, which was held at the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge. MNRG was founded ten years ago to advance coordination, cooperation, relations and effectiveness among



For more on the MNRG meeting, see page 8. Clearly, connecting with mission similar agencies and non-government agencies such that we effectively support the vitality and sustainability of our natural resources and the environment is key. But we must also be clear that a vision that connects people doesn’t just stop there. It means building a citizen base that recognizes a distinct and identifiable stake in the conservation effort. That means working with people and helping people to connect on a personal basis. Not only is it one of the six highest priorities identified by our director, H. Dale Hall, but it is vital to our mainstay from a demographic perspective. I invite you to read about the Service’s new initiative, Connecting People to Nature, and the conference by the same name held earlier this month on the NCTC campus. The motto for the initiative is “Let’s Go Outside!” I invite you to submit to IR3 your own personal nature encounters and examine what you are already doing to connect with nature and how you can help others to connect. Leave a legacy to remember.



To learn more about the Service’s children and nature initiative, visit www.fws.gov/children.

Happy Holidays!

Robyn Thorson

Robyn Thorson

Above: RD Robyn Thorson, Children at Chicago Wilderness

Green Before His Time

A Legacy Remembered

The personal effects of 94-year-old Melvyn “Mugs” Townsend, the inaugural winner of the region’s highest honor, the Silver Eagle Award, would be a fitting addition to the Service’s museum.

A scrapbook in the home of the wetlands conservation pioneer and Fergus Falls, Minn., native includes personal letters from then Senator Hubert H. Humphrey and conservation legend Richard Dorer. There were also newspaper articles from the 1950s citing Fergus Falls national influence on conservation issues via the Save the Wetlands club, in which Townsend was an active leader.

Maintained over a lifetime, Townsend’s personal letters, memos, photographs and yellowed articles not only document a story about a conscientious movement in the Midwest that was “green before green was cool,” but reminds us all that the personal conviction of one person can truly make a difference, even in the face of insurmountable odds.

Townsend, a consummate story-teller, made his living as a food concessionaire

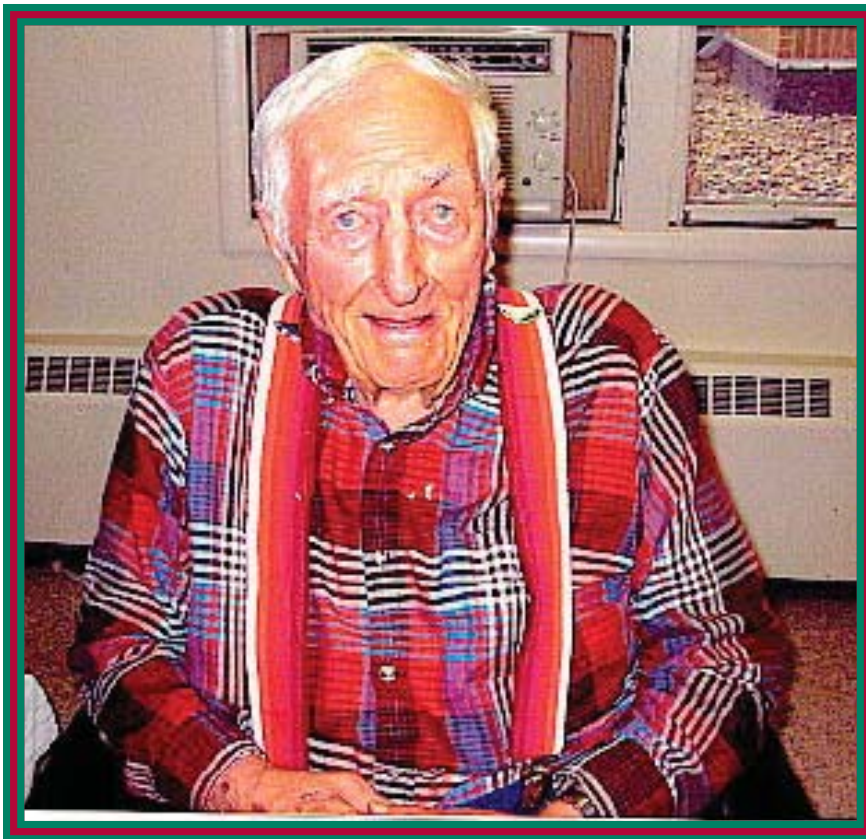
and investor. In the 1940s when he started buying land for conservation, wetlands were considered devoid of value—essentially wastelands. Swamps and marshes were drained at dramatic rates to propagate crops and farmland, an issue further complicated by the issuance of government drainage incentives. Townsend, clearly before his

“We did a lot of traveling together, and he would tell me stories.”

Farmers partitioned the wetlands on their property so they wouldn’t have to pay taxes on them, explains Hansen. After three to five years, the state would auction off the property on the court house steps as a tax forfeiture. “Mugs” Townsend would buy them for \$10 per acre or less.

Eventually, Townsend began to associate with people with a similar conservation mind set, including Richard Dorer, then supervisor of game at the Minnesota Department of Conservation. The two men led the charter of the Save the Wetlands club. Their mission was multi-dimensional, with the objectives to educate the public on wetland preservation, influence and lobby for legislation, to encourage private sale, and finally to expedite and facilitate state government land acquisition through private purchase and subsequent sale to the state, once the funds were appropriated. “Preserve our wetlands!” was their rallying cry.

Townsend then cooked up the idea of an annual fund raising initiative centered around a large scale smelt fry. Club members and volunteers netted the fish out of Lake Superior, cleaned it at the state hospital, and brought it to the National Guard Armory, where the event was held. Besides a hearty meal, attendees were treated to a host of conservation speakers, music, even acrobatics, as well as exhibits

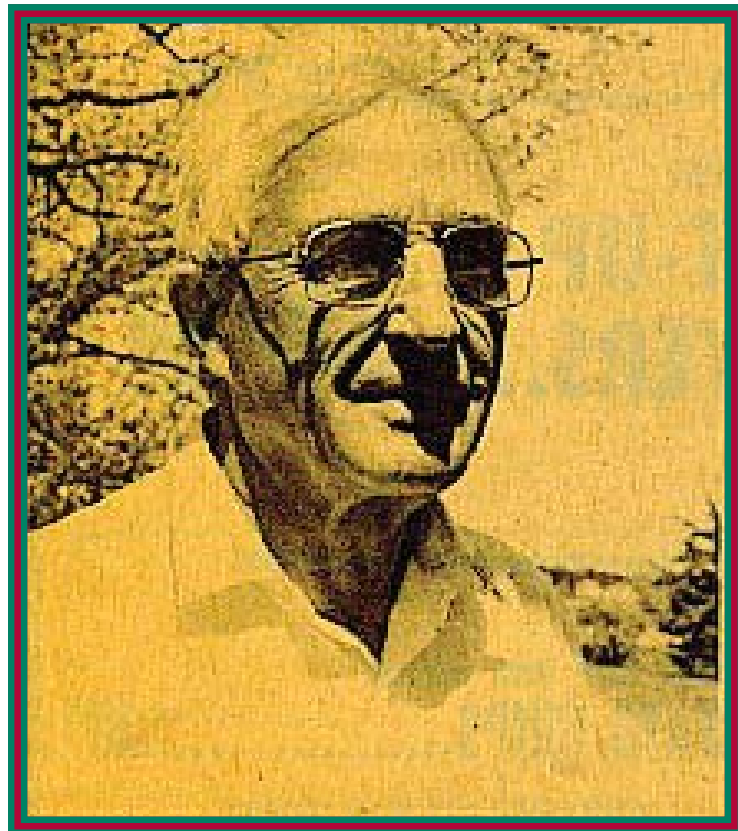


Current Photo of Melvyn “Mugs” Townsend; - Family Courtesy Photo

time, was often ridiculed for his visionary efforts. In a post-depression era where production was the trend, many farmers did not have an appreciation for what Townsend was doing, and most had the same mind set, according to his son-in-law, Don Hansen. “Here’s this city slicker buying up swamps and they thought he was foolish,” says Hansen.

featuring new boats and camping equipment. The popular event began in 1955, and continued on well into the 90's. Each attendee paid \$1.00 for an all-you-can-eat fish fry and membership to Save the Wetlands, which helped the club build a viable mailing list. The proceeds were used to purchase valuable wetlands. Aging membership forced transfer of the club's activities to the Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club, according to Rodger Rustad, smelt participant and friend, who turned over some of Townsend's materials to the Otter Tail County Historical Society in Fergus Falls.

In the early days of the club, "Mugs" Townsend, who got his nickname from his young sister who could not say "Melvyn," was a force to be reckoned



Current Photo of Melvyn "Mugs" Townsend in the 70s; - Family Courtesy Photo

with. "Melvyn had conviction. He put his personal money where his philosophy led him. He bought wetlands personally in order to preserve them. He planted uncountable amounts of trees," says Hansen. "He was consistent in all aspects of his life in being concerned about and enjoying the environment."

Hansen says Townsend was known for planting trees, for enjoying the outdoors, establishing wildlife refuge areas, for fishing and hunting and not wasting any of the meat, the hides or even feathers.

"He really saw himself as a steward of God's creation and lived a life that reflected what that meant to him," Hansen says.

Apparently, Mugs was never one to squander anything. Son-in-law, Rev. Rod Spidahl, tells a story of one family stop at a restaurant. At the close of dinner, Mugs asked the young waitress for a little more bread to "sop up" the gravy that was left on his plate. "We laughed a lot at that one!" Spidahl says. "Mugs helped me realize the beauty of creation in ways I could never have discovered on my own. Most of all, he practiced what he preached because he wore out tires beyond the legal limit!"

Townsend wore out carpets, saved everything he could save and always was careful about spending.

"For awhile Mugs had a VW Rabbit diesel and it would be long between bathroom breaks because he did not

FORFEITED TAX SALE STATEMENT									
Page: _____ Auditor's Office, Otter Tail County, Minn.								No. 41	
Fergus Falls, Minn. May 2 19 60									
TO COUNTY TREASURER: You will receive from <u>Regina Davis Cua Dea de Dakota</u> Dollars (\$ _____)									
in payment as stated below:									
Subdivision of Section, Lot or Block	Legal	Tract	Block	Ac.	Amount	Interest	Final	TOTAL	
<u>Full payment for purchase price</u>									
<u>8366-11-12 & 14</u>				<u>4.13287</u>				<u>200</u>	<u>32.00</u>
Received the above and have credited the same to the Forfeited Tax Sale Fund.									
By: <u>CLGA TORVIK</u> , County Treasurer.								S. B. JOHNSON, County Auditor.	
By: <u>CLGA</u> , Deputy								Deputy	

Receipt from one of Townsend's forfeited tax sales; - Courtesy Photo.

want to stop and waste energy," Spidahl says. "He claimed to get 50-60 miles per gallon and I know I learned bladder control!"

What's compelling about Townsend's story is that within each of us is the capacity to dare to dream. Some of us exercise that capacity with a vision that we can make a difference; that we can leave our stamp on the world. Some of us take a chance and launch that vision into action. Some others of us, hold on to that vision with conviction and determination, even in the face of inevitable, sometimes painful opposition, until the vision is made manifest. "Mugs" Townsend embodied all of that, and while he is not in the best of health these days, he can take comfort in knowing that he inspired a conservation consciousness in the Midwest and without a doubt, helped to preserve the state's valuable wetlands. In short, he made a difference. And once more, he's still got conviction! We can all take a lesson from that.

--Valerie Rose Redmond, External Affairs

Missouri Mussels Put on Weight for River Homecoming

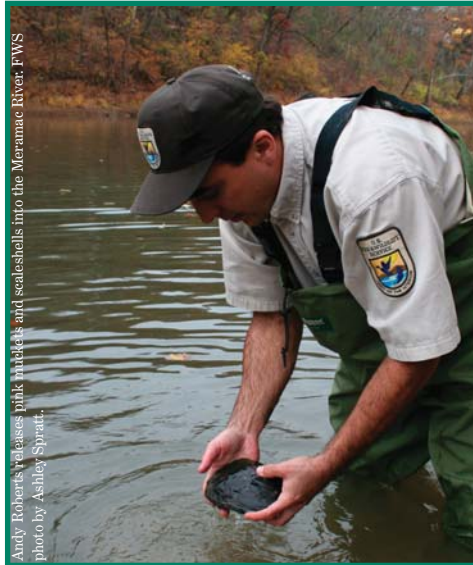
Our People

A team of mussel experts from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Missouri Ecological Services office released more than 100 dime-to golf ball-size endangered pink mucket and black sandshell mussels into the chilly waters of the Meramac River just south of St. Louis this November. Just a year ago, mussel researchers could only release microscopic freshwater mussels into Missouri waters; these mussels did not stand much chance for survival due to their small size. Dr. Chris Barnhart from Missouri State University has been testing methods for mussel propagation and rearing since 1999. For the first time last summer, Barnhart, the lead researcher on the mussel conservation project, successfully grew out the mussels to a large enough size for them to be tagged. By tagging the mussels, researchers will be able to monitor their growth over time. These larger mussels also stand a much higher chance of survival when released back into the wild.

The mussels released in the Meramac River were grown using a device called a "flupsy" that stimulates natural stream flow in hatchery ponds. Originally collected as larvae from female mussels, they were first propagated in a laboratory at Missouri State University. After propagation, the juveniles were transported to the Kansas City Zoo where some grew over four inches in three months.

"This is the fastest growth we have ever recorded," says Barnhart.

To celebrate this breakthrough in mussel conservation, the Kansas City Zoo hosted an open house for members of the media to see the four species grown there over the summer, including one federally endangered species. Black sandshells, pink heelsplitters, fatmuckets and endangered pink muckets were weighed, measured, and tagged by MSU graduate students in preparation for their release.



Andy Roberts releases pink muckets and scaleshells into the Meramac River. FWS photo by Ashley Spratt.

The pink muckets and black sandshells would return to the home of their broodstock in the chilly waters of the Meramac River. The pink heelsplitter and fatmucket mussels were later released in the Sac and Silver Fork rivers.

This breakthrough in mussel conservation is part of a larger effort to increase public awareness of the relationship between freshwater mussels and the health of Missouri streams. Native freshwater mussels serve important roles in stream ecology.

Fish and wildlife biologist Andy Roberts explains, "Mussels act as sorters of the stream, eating and digesting some food while releasing the rest in a mucus strand that feeds benthic invertebrates."

Mussels' sensitivity to water quality degradation also makes them great indicators of water quality for environmental toxicologists. They are a food source for fish and small mammals such as raccoons and river otters. However, many native freshwater mussel species are on the decline. Out of the 65 native mussel species in Missouri, 10 are endangered at either the federal or state level and more than half are of conservation concern.



Left to right: Scott Faiman (MDC), Andy Roberts (FWS), and Steve McMurray (MDC) release pink muckets and scaleshells into the Meramac River. FWS photo by Ashley Spratt.

Historically, freshwater mussels have been used commercially to make buttons, jewelry and tools. However, their commercial use has declined along with their numbers. Poor land-use practices, pollution, damming, and the introduction of invasive zebra mussels have all disrupted the stable habitat required for native mussels to survive. Many native mussel species are extremely rare but the environmental conditions they need to survive are improving.

Dr. Chris Barnhart's team will return to the Meramac next summer to monitor the growth and weight of the mussels.

"We hope to recapture as many as possible, but there's no way of knowing for sure how many survived the first year," biologist Roberts said. "However, augmenting populations in areas where environmental conditions are improving will help create strongholds for extremely rare species, like the pink mucket, and buy time for other aquatic areas to improve."

For mussel species on the brink of extinction, that extra time may be just what Missouri waters need.

*--Ashley Spratt and Andy Roberts
Columbia, Missouri Ecological Services
Field Office*

River of Words

Connecting People to Nature



Coaster brook trout release at Whittlesey Creek with Katie and 6th grade students. Courtesy photo.

Katie Goodwin, the visitors service manager and park ranger at Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Ashland, Wis., is a woman on a mission—a mission to connect people with nature. After noticing a “nature deficit” in the Ashland area—a deficit that was even more troubling given the location on the shoreline of Lake Superior—Goodwin sprang into action. She developed and implemented the public use program at the relatively new refuge. She focused on education, interpretation outreach, special events and wildlife dependent recreation. She launched several programs including the very successful “River of Words.”

Piloted in partnership with local school children, River of Words has at its core a bound book featuring the poems, art work and journal pages of young children who had chronicled their recent visit to the refuge. The students beam with pride when the published book seals their young background with the words, “published author.”

“Giving people opportunities to connect to nature, giving them a chance to care and want to do something for our earth really can give us hope for our impending future,” Goodwin says. Giving kids a safe environment to experiment with the outdoors is one of the best things refuges can offer. This ensures our future generations have a connection with nature and will support our efforts.”

After learning of the refuge’s phenomenal success, Rick Lemon, NCTC director and directorate liaison for the Children and Nature Working Group, hand-selected Goodwin to attend and present at the Connecting People to Nature conference at NCTC in early December.

Goodwin came back from the conference energized. “The conference overall was a great way to network and share what is going on across the country,” she says. So many members of the Service realize that this really is important for our nation’s future as well as the Service’s. The time allowed attendees to work towards solutions

and strategies to help get people back outside and connected to nature.”

Born in Fairbault, Minn., Goodwin’s family moved to Minnesota’s Iron Range when she was two.

Goodwin, who was introduced to the outdoors by family members, has a diverse background that includes participation in a student program with the Service and higher education in Sitka, Alaska at Sheldon Jackson College. She ultimately earned her bachelor’s degree in natural resource management from the University of Minnesota—Crookston. She joined the Service in 1998. Goodwin and her husband, Chris, work hard to keep family traditions alive and they pass them on to their two sons, Sawyer 6, and Hudson 3.

Goodwin says she finds that communication and time are key to successful programs and partnerships.

“My advice for other stations,” she says, “would be to recognize what you could do with the public. We are in a position of expertise and leadership that so many people look up to.



Katie surrounded by a group of kids from the River of Words Program. -Courtesy Photo.

“Your enthusiasm and passion for what you do and care about shines through your words and actions because it is genuine,” Goodwin says. Enthusiasm and passion is contagious. Why not pass that on?”

--Valerie Rose Redmond, External Affairs

Midwest Natural Resource Leaders Look Ahead

Connecting People with Nature



Midwest natural resources managers and other resource professionals gathered at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Bloomington, Minn., Nov. 28 and 29 to discuss the challenges ahead for Midwest resources leaders.

“2020 Vision in the Midwest” was the theme for the annual meeting of the Midwest Natural Resources Group,

for water and energy and the predicted changes in climate.

Speakers and presenters at the meeting came from the federal and state government, national nonprofit conservation organizations, corporations, academia and think tanks. Invited guests included the MNRG senior executives and other representatives

– Change in Magnitude and Composition of Population.” Other speakers addressed the demographic changes within the federal government and the importance of connecting people with their natural world.

Afternoon presentations on Day One



Midwest Regional Director, Robyn Thorson leads a panel discussion on *Challenging the Feds in the Years Ahead*. L to R: Gretchen Bonfert, Mcknight Foundation; Laurie Martinson, MDNR; David Ullrich, Great Lakes Cities; Jim Zorn, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission; Thorson.

a forum for federal agency senior executives to coordinate activities in the Upper Mississippi River, Missouri River, Ohio River and Great Lakes watersheds. Hosted by Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Regional Director Robyn Thorson, who leads the MNRG for 2007-2008, the meeting provided a comprehensive look at the decade ahead and featured presentations on demographic shifts, changes in public service roles and workforce composition, and resource issues such as demands

of Midwest federal natural resource agencies; state natural resource agency leaders; non government organizations; and Fish and Wildlife Service managers and employees from several regions and the Washington Office.

On the first day of the meeting, the keynote speaker, demographics expert Dr. Emilyn Sheffield, illustrated the changes in the public that natural resource professionals serve with her presentation, “Gens, Trends and Friends



John Austin of the Brookings Institution encourages participants to promote the Midwest’s natural resources, like Lake Superior as vacation destinations.

focused on two major issues looming on the horizon for resource managers: climate change and maintaining healthy waters.

On the second day, attendees heard from stakeholders who had something to say about working with “the Feds” in the years ahead. City, state, tribal and NGO leaders presented their perspectives on challenges facing natural resources and the federal agencies that manage them.

After a working session among MNRG’s senior executives to plan next steps, the meeting adjourned and participants left, energized to face the challenges ahead of them.

--Rachel F. Levin, *External Affairs*

Connecting People with Nature

Making It Happen In Your Community

Selected FWS employees from across the nation were nominated to represent their regions at the December 3-7, 2007 “Connecting People with Nature: Making it Happen in Your Community” training workshop at the National Conservation Training Center. The week was both motivational and informative. The goal of the workshop was to “motivate and prepare participants to serve as ambassadors at their field stations and in their local communities to work with children and families to develop strong, enduring conservation values by connecting people with the natural world.”

To that end, regional representatives heard from a host of fabulous presenters, including Director, H. Dale Hall, NCTC director, Rick Lemon, recently retired Mamie Parker, professor and demographics expert, Emilyn Sheffield, and wildlife photographer, Dudley Edmondson, among others. The overarching theme was to connect people with nature, which director Dale Hall has identified as one of the Service’s six highest priorities. He told participants in his address that if we don’t do this, nothing else we do matters. The message was consistent, clear and succinct: Build a citizen base with a conservation ethic or risk extinction. In other words, *if there was an endangered species list for government agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be on it.* Speakers encouraged participants to develop strategies to help Americans, specifically those in key demographic groups to establish a personal connection with nature. Professor Sheffield painted a lucid picture, keying in on the changing demographics in the United States. She encouraged the Service to make connections with people of color by highlighting our refuges and other natural resources as vacation destinations and recreation venues. The workshop culminated with a poignant play about Rachel Carson.

The Midwest Region recognizes that the Service is part of the “community”. Right: Staff and other guests at the MNRG winter meeting connect with nature at the Minnesota Valley NWR.



The Torch Award

Recognizing Our Talented Workforce

The prescribed fire program in Region 3 is consistently regarded as one of the best in the Service. Annually, regional burn targets are met or exceeded despite challenges from drought, floods, wildfire suppression, suppression assistance provided to our cooperators, support we provide to national mobilizations, The success of our program is no accident. The dedication and professionalism of the core fire organization and the support of refuge staff and management, continues to insure the success of the program.

As with any program of this magnitude and complexity, no one person is responsible for its success or failure. We succeed or fail collectively. But within any successful organization, a few individuals stand out from the crowd, going above and beyond what's normally expected of an employee to insure the success of a program.

The first Annual "Torch Award" is an opportunity to recognize such an individual. This recognition is by the peer group of firefighters who are the mainstay of our prescribed burn program.

As a fire program technician for the Sherburne NWR Complex and Fire Management District, Chris Mursu consistently exhibits a dedication to excellence that is an example for the entire Service.

Chris' knowledge of native plants and local fuels provide critical insight for the prescribed fire and monitoring program on the District. Chris is also instrumental in meeting Service fire management goals throughout the Region and can often be found supporting fire suppression efforts on the local, state and national level.

In addition to his "day job" of supervising seasonal employees, maintaining an increasing assortment of databases, working with GIS, and assisting the fire management officer manage the prescribed fire and suppression program for the District, Chris also takes on the extra responsibilities of working with the Minnesota Zone Radio Complex. Because of his tenure at Sherburne NWR, Chris also provided a stable knowledge and support base during a period of "Acting" FMO leadership this summer and continues to provide that support during the transition to a new District FMO.

Chris' great attitude, love for the resources entrusted to our care, and cooperative spirit, combined with his work ethic, motivation and professionalism, truly make him an example for employees throughout all branches of the Service.

In November, the Region 3 Fire Management Officers' Workshop, the "2007 Torch Award" was presented to Chris Mursu of Sherburne NWR.

*Stephen Jakala
U.S. Fish &
Wildlife Service
Regional Fire
Management
Coordinator*



Chris Mursu holding the 2007 Torch Award.



The Multi-Generational Workforce:

Appreciating Different Approaches

Our workplace is increasingly diverse. The presence of several generations working alongside one another within the Fish and Wildlife Service contributes to this diversity. Each generation brings a unique perspective to the workplace that may be difficult for other generations to understand or appreciate. To enhance our understanding of generational differences, and how they affect decision-making, problem-solving and relationships, I thought it would be helpful to provide a brief overview of each generation.

While there are exceptions to every generalization, sociologists, anthropologists and psychologists acknowledge that the times we live in shape the adults we become.

This is especially true when assessing and analyzing population traits and trends by the age of an individual. In a four part series, I will explore and explain the gifts and talents of each of the following defined generations: The Traditionalists, The Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.

Part I. The Greatest Generation – Traditionalists, 1910-1940

My grandmother, Gypsy Pearl Young Newberry, is 96 years old. She grew up on an isolated farm in Roane County, W.V. She had seven brothers and sisters, no running water and mules for transportation. Her public school only educated students to the eighth grade – although she is proud to have been the spelling champion of the one room schoolhouse she attended. She has witnessed a societal and technological revolution.

Her first paying job was at DaVisco Textile Mills in Parkersburg, W.V. in 1927. The first thing she purchased was red silk to sew a fashionable dress, as growing up all of her clothes were made from old feed sacks. She lost her job at the mill when the Great Depression enveloped the nation and she remembers waiting in line for flour and cornmeal at the municipal food pantry.

FDR was a hero to her family and two of her brothers were hired by the Civilian Conservation Corps to build community infrastructure.

She met my grandfather in 1935 when she took her bicycle to his family's hardware store for repairs. They built a brick house on Fifth Avenue in Parkersburg, W.V. where she



lives to this day. My grandmother tuned in to the radio every night from November 17, 1939 through February 22, 1944 while my grandfather was deployed as a Navy Seal in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

I asked my grandmother what events and situations shaped the strong woman that she is. She named those that stood out in her mind.

- Rural isolation and urban relocation
- The Great Depression and the New Deal
- World War II
- The Age of Prosperity and Economic Revitalization in the 1950's

These are the events that have figured the most prominently in individuals of

that generation. According to several sociologists, these events instilled the following values and characteristics in that generation:

- Loyalty
- Thriftiness
- Obedience to the Chain of Command
- Unquestioning Respect for Leadership
- Value of Stability

According to these sources, there is a general distrust of modern technology and wariness of rapid change, as they have seen so much of it in their lifetimes. I see this echoed in the fact that my grandmother refuses to abandon her rotary phone or buy a microwave. This generation may be resistant to change and wary of technology. These traits can cause communication barriers between other generations who are more comfortable with change and accustomed to the implementation of technology.

Traditionalists are very aware of the chain of command and generally obey it – regardless of whether or not they agree with a decision on an individual level. Other generations are more likely to question decisions made from a hierarchical standpoint and may emphasize collaborative or individual viewpoints. This difference in approach can lead to misunderstanding and frustration.

In retrospect, although this generation may be seen as unyielding in many ways, it has much to teach us about reconciling our place in the world and their stories should be collected and cherished.

–Andrea Kirk, *Migratory Birds, RO*

Let's Go Outside!

A Slice of Heaven

The summer of 2006 was nearing a close. Life's stress-o-meter had reached a crescendo, fueling the internal beckoning of my soul for healing and release. My desire to get away was as high as my funds were low. I needed a holistic, natural cure—a prescription for vacation. What to do? After some thought, meditation and introspection, I had an epiphany. I live in a state that is home to the largest fresh water lake in the world! Eureka! Rated by *Outside Magazine* as one of America's top 10 outdoor towns, Duluth on Lake Superior was the holistic answer that I'd been searching for.

I packed up my girls, Samantha, 16 and Taylour, 8 and headed due North on I-35 to what some call the "San Francisco of the Midwest," or "the third coast".

The temperature soared well into the 90's that afternoon, as we neared our destination. Towering evergreens on either side of the highway formed a canopy and ushered us in like a welcoming gateway to what VisitDuluth.com calls simply, "a slice of heaven for outdoor enthusiasts."

And it was, from beginning to end. We had fun in the outdoors on our own terms. We explored the historic city in a trolley car, where rumors swirled that the spiking temperatures might shatter a long standing record.

We threw rocks into the massive lake and were awed at the power and beauty of it. Amazingly, even in the sweltering heat, we could keep our feet in the frigid waters for only a few short seconds. *How is it possible, I wondered, for a body of water to maintain such an icy temperature in such intense heat?* We rode striped red canopy bikes along the lake. We walked the pier to the lighthouse and watched the world-famous aerial bridge lift for passing barges. We cruised the lake on a Vista fleet, marveled at the pristine waters and learned about the Twin Harbors. We visited the Maritime Visitor's Center in



Canal Park. Our outdoor adventures were many, but culminated with the "Lakewalk." The waterfront boardwalk stretches 4.2 miles and goes to Brighton, Beach. We didn't walk that far, as my youngest daughter, whose perspective slightly skewed by metro lakes, caused her to remark the now unforgettable words, "I hope we don't have to walk around this whole lake, cause it's hot out here!"

Valerie Rose Redmond,
External Affairs



Above: Emilyyn Sheffield gives a plan of action to participants at the Midwest Natural Resources Group meeting in Bloomington, Minnesota.



Above: H. Dale Hall and Lynn Scarlett present Mamie Parker with a letter from George W. Bush at her retirement. (Washington)



Staff from the Missouri Ecological Services Field Office volunteered to perform Dr. Seuss's The Lorax at Lee Expressive Arts School. Fourth grade classes performed on stage with FWS staff at Paquin Park.

-FWS Photo by Rick Hansen.

Update on Technical Problems with Accomplishment Reporting System:

Recent changes to computer servers and software have caused many ARS users to encounter problems when attempting to use the system. Users may not be able to log onto the system, enter reports or attach photos. We are aware of these problems and working as quickly as possible to correct them.

Because of these problems, we don't have many photos to highlight in this "Around the Region" section. We ask that users be patient and we hope to have these problems corrected by mid-January. Once these problems are fixed, please continue sending reports and photos so we can highlight all the good working going on around Region 3.

Please contact Regional ARS Coordinator Chuck Traxler, 612-713-5313, with any questions or concerns.



Quote of the Month

I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in tune once more.

--John Burroughs

Happy Holidays!



Above: Staff at the RO celebrate the holidays.

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