

FHWA RETIREES NEWSLETTER

2ND EDITION

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Greetings!

Hope you recently received the registration package from the FHWA Retirees for the upcoming reunion in Boise. It promises to be a first-rate experience. We have provided a summary below but urge you to look at the entire program. It offers an excellent meeting program and a unique opportunity to explore the

best of southern Idaho. The Boise reunion follows a proven format for retirees from all over the country and every level of the FHWA organization to connect with old friends, to meet new people, and to experience a unique part of the country you may never have visited.

2020 FHWA Retirees Reunion scheduled for Boise, Idaho, April 27 – May 1, 2020

Following the outline of past reunions, there will be registration and opening of the hospitality suite on Monday April 27. On Tuesday a morning round of golf is available for those who choose to participate, join in the fun and maybe challenge those who think they are FHWA's best golfers. For those who do not join in the golf, there will be a shuttle to explore downtown Boise with shops, museums, and galleries celebrating its historic past.

On Tuesday evening the host committee will provide a welcoming reception with a great buffet and a

cash bar.

Also the silent auction of donated items to help fund future reunions will begin. You are urged to donate something you may have crafted, a sample of a product from your home area or any item that might appeal to other retirees. On Wednesday, the host committee will provide a bus tour of the broader Boise area to allow you to experience this jewel of the Pacific Northwest.

Thursday opens with the annual retiree business meeting. Once

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again, George Ostensen will preside in a fast paced meeting that will summarize where we have been as an organization, our current status and our future goals. He will solemnly recognize those who have died in the past year. He will also salt the meeting with an overview of Idaho history and a healthy dose of retiree humor.

The mid-day and afternoon are free to further explore Boise or the surrounding area or spend time in the hospitality suite with old friends or

new acquaintances.

You can also help make this the best FHWA reunion ever by speaking to your former colleagues and friends and organize a get-together in Boise. It has been too many years since you've seen them, so put it together and meet in Boise. If you have any questions or need more information, please feel free to call any of the members of the host committee listed below. Their contact information is in the registration package.

FHWA Retirees are Changing

Basically, we are a group of BPR/FHWA retirees, spouses, widows, widowers, partners, friends, etc. We come from every geographic element of FHWA, field and Washington and every level in the organization. Some reunion regulars worked for the agency for their entire career. Others worked there for a time, but then moved on. As the workforce of FHWA has evolved in recent decades to expand beyond the core disciplines of an 1980s regional office, the backgrounds of the attendees at the annual reunion have likewise expanded. Increasingly, female retirees, non-engineering, and administrative disciplines are all

represented.

In retirement all have enjoyed socializing with their former colleagues in an interesting part of the country where a host committee has spared no effort to provide a rewarding experience. Each year, for 33 years, an organizing committee for the next year's reunion has stepped forward to produce a venue and program that has proven the merits of the basic program outline and shown the enthusiasm of each set of organizers. It has been a great run and this second newsletter is an attempt to help ensure its continued success.

Current Retiree Leadership

The group that put together the first reunion has slowly evolved into a board. The current board reflects several changes made in Chicago. Members of the board today are: Lyle Renz, Chair; Dale Wilken, past chair, George Ostensen, who presides at the business meeting; Phil Miller, treasurer; Joyce Curtis, Kevin Heanue, Steve Moreno, and Rita Steinke. In addition, Gary Hamby is the mailing coordinator and Al Steger is the

website coordinator.

For those who might not know him, our new chair Lyle Renz retired in 1994 as Division Administrator in Illinois after 32 years of service. He started his career in the 1962 training program after graduation from South Dakota State University. He served in many locations in a variety of specialties. He has attended most reunions since his retirement and has been very active on the board.

Retiree Humor

- I've reached the age where my train of thought goes through the station without me.
- Is it my imagination or do buffalo wings taste like chicken?
- I've gotten so old that I've had bypass surgery, had bouts of dementia, and can't remember whether I am 85 or 92, but thank God I still have my driver's license.
- Happiness is not having to set an alarm clock for the next day.
- In retirement you get six Saturdays and one Sunday.
- Aging – eventually you reach the stage where you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.
- A reporter asked a 104-year-old woman what was the best thing about being 104. Her answer – no peer pressure.
- I've found my calling – retired.

History

The FHWA Retirees originated in 1987, when a group of retirees with ties to Region 6 met with their spouses for a reunion that included a hotel, golf match, hospitality suite, and a dinner. The reunions went national in 1996 and have become an annual event for many retirees. Like clockwork, retirees on the mailing list expect to receive early in

the year, a mailing that describes the upcoming reunion and particulars on venue, costs and a reservation form. Red Lindsay, retiree from Region 6, was at the first reunion and has attended all but two reunions since. He provides wonderful continuity to the organization.

Improving FHWA Retiree Outreach

We are happy to report that discussions at last year's reunion in Schaumburg, Illinois, have resulted in follow-on activities and action. First a group of board members and other volunteers developed a questionnaire that was sent to the entire email list. It posed questions about your thoughts on past reunions and requested recommendations for the future. There were more than 200 responses to the questionnaire, which is remarkable. Over 50 respondents, in addition to answering the specific questions, provided written suggestions in a number of areas. The most popular suggestion for improving communications was the development of an FHWA Retiree website. Lyle Renz, our new Chair sent out two memos to the mailing list soliciting help in setting up a website. We are happy to report that Al Steger, a long-time reunion attendee, with significant experience in website development and

operation, responded with an offer to take on the task, which was reviewed and accepted by the board and is now in advanced stages of implementation. We will continue to work with FHWA News to provide coverage of retiree activities. In particular we want current FHWA employees to know that FHWA connections do not have to end with retirement. Our membership and the many reunion attendees prove it. Lastly, a website is a destination which users can search. We recognize that we have to do a better job of proactively communicating with FHWA retirees. This newsletter is a start. In future issues we hope to include short summaries of interesting or unusual things retirees are doing and photos. We welcome other suggestions. Let us hear from you. Send an email to Kevin Heanue (kheanue@comcast.net) and/or Lyle Renz (renzvi@comcast.net) with suggestions.

Ten Reasons to Attend the Boise Reunion

1. You have attended many prior reunions and you do not want to miss this one.
2. You have never attended a reunion and want to start.
3. You have a bucket list of states you have not visited, and Idaho is on it.
4. First timers are enrolled in a drawing for free registration, tours and the banquet.
5. There will be free shuttles to downtown sites.
6. You can ride a gravity coaster in a ski area.
7. You can see where Evil Kneivel jumped the canyon on his motorcycle.
8. East of town you can see the highest free-standing sand dunes in the US.
9. You can visit the Basque block with its museum. Boise has the largest Basque community in the US.
10. You can reconnect with old friends and exchange retiree experiences.

The Host Committee

Steve and Carol Moreno

Jerry and Carol Heimbuch

Jack and Pat Coe

Frank Tooke

Chuck Chappell and Spouse Ingrid Sather

What's New in Washington

Executive Director - Thomas D. Everett

Tom joined FHWA in 1985 following his graduation from Rutgers and entered the training program. He came up through the ranks as a bridge /structural engineer rising to the Associate

Administrator for the Office of Infrastructure before being selected as Executive Director. In this position he is the senior career official in FHWA and manages the day-to-day operations of the organization while advising senior political appointees.

Legislation

We hoped to provide an update on highway legislation, but there is no clear direction at this time. The House, Senate, and White House are all heading in different directions and no one is seeking additional revenues. It looks like we will have to wait until after the elections for direction. In the meantime, some states are moving out with new toll financed managed lanes,

peak hour pricing, and innovative public/private partnerships. New vehicles are coming equipped with innovative and even revolutionary safety features. Self-driving cars and trucks are on the horizon. Our colleagues working at FHWA are still dealing with most of the issues we faced, but added on are a host of new issues and opportunities.

Keep your contact information current

If you have moved and changed address or have a new email address or if you received this newsletter from a friend and want to get on the email list please let us know. Send an email to fhwaretires@gmail.com with the following information: name, spouse's name (if applicable), street address, telephone number, and email address.

If you received this newsletter from a friend and want to get on the email list to receive FHWA News or make a change in your contact information, please provide your name and street address to the Managing Editor Ingrid Perkins. Her address is: Ingrid.Perkins@dot.gov

Note on your calendars: After you make your Boise reservations, look forward to Kentucky in 2021, and Louisiana in 2022 where reunion plans are advancing.

Hope to see you in Boise!