

FHWA Retiree Newsletter

First Edition – February 2019

Greetings! Hope you recently received Gary White's impressive package about the forthcoming 32nd FHWA retiree reunion to be held in the Chicago/Schaumburg area from May 29-June 2, 2019. The purposes of this first edition of the Federal Retiree Newsletter are to promote the reunion, and also after 32 years to establish a continuing communication vehicle by FHWA retirees for FHWA retirees.

Gary White prepared the following item on the upcoming Chicago reunion. It has been edited to bring it up to date. Gary's article is scheduled to appear in the edition of FHWA News that should be in your mailbox about the time you receive this newsletter. We have included it here as an added notice of the reunion, but also because many retirees on the association mailing list are not on the FHWA News mailing list.

2019 FHWA Retirees Reunion scheduled for the Chicago area

The 32st Annual FHWA Retirees Reunion Host Committee has been working hard this past year to pull together some great tours and expose the retirees to the fun side of the Chicago area. We selected the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Schaumburg, Illinois, as our host hotel and were able to secure a room rate of \$105 per night plus tax (15% tax for a total room cost of \$120.75) for up to four occupants and include a buffet breakfast for two. That's a phenomenal rate for a classy hotel in the Chicago area! And that rate is available for three days before our reunion dates (May 29 to June 2, 2019.) So you could come for the Memorial Day Weekend before or stay for a few days after the reunion and really do the city!

We surveyed last year's attendees in Clearwater and the top requests were to take a tour of the Chicago architecture, visit the well-known Navy Pier, and peruse some world-class museums and parks. There was also a lot of interest in taking a tour of the haunts frequented by Chicago's gangsters and hear their stories as well as attending a major league game. Although we have limited time, we will try to squeeze in as much as we can on our Friday tour and plan to provide information and contacts for you to easily pursue the others that are of most interest to you on your own. As in the past, our target is to have the reunion package out to you in mid-January, 2019. Reservations will be due by March 1st in order for us to complete the arrangements for your awesome visit!

As at past reunions, we will: schedule a round of golf on Thursday morning for those who choose to participate; conduct our silent auction of donated items; host a welcome reception on Thursday evening; hold a final banquet on Saturday evening; and, host a hospitality suite for all to enjoy while catching up with friends in their free time. The hotel is excellent and very well suited to our needs with almost 500 sleeping rooms, both indoor and outdoor pools, many intimate corners for small group discussions, a huge hospitality suite for our exclusive use, several eating establishments on site, and one of the biggest shopping areas in the country across the street! The hotel also has on-site car rentals and bike rentals, a forest preserve of over 3500 acres less than a mile away, free on-site parking, free shuttle service within a five mile radius, and complimentary Wi-Fi.

The members of our Host Committee are excited to be hosting and are working hard to make it the best reunion yet. The group includes: Gary and Sharon White, Martin and Mary Kay Monahan, Michael Rosenstiehl, Allen Msuda, Roger and Mary Stokes, Audrey Slone, Loretta Lymore, and Sherry Warnsley. We could use some more help, both with the planning and when the event is happening next May. So, if there are any other former Region 5 or Resource Center employees who want to join the fun, please call Gary White at 779-875-3179.

You can also help us make this the best FHWA reunion ever by speaking to your former colleagues and friends from work that you are still in contact with and organizing a get-together in Chicago! Mention it to former colleagues and get them organized for a great time in the Chicago area this

May. Isn't it about time you all had that get-together anyway? It's been too many years since you've seen them last so put it together and meet them in Schaumburg next May!

If you have any questions or need more information please feel free to call Gary White at 779-875-3179.

Who are the FHWA Retirees?

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. Some reunion regulars worked for the agency for their entire careers. 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 a 1980s regional office, the backgrounds of the attendees at the annual reunion have likewise expanded. Increasingly, female retirees and non-engineering disciplines are well represented. In retirement all have enjoyed socializing with their former colleagues.

The group that put together the first reunion has slowly evolved into a board. The members of the board today are: Dale Wilken, Chair; George Ostensen, who presides at the business meeting; Phil Miller, treasurer; Kevin Heanue, Bob Callan, Lyle Renz, and Rita Steinke. Gary Hamby maintains the database and handles email correspondence.

Each year, for 32 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 pilot newsletter is an attempt to insure its continued success.

Retiree Humor by George Ostensen

For many years at each reunion George has presided at the annual business meeting with interludes of retiree humor. He provided us with the following offerings. We hope it will be a continuing newsletter feature.

Retiree Reality (??)

You know you're getting older when....

Your little black book contains only names ending in M.D.

You need glasses to find your glasses!

Your back goes out more often than you do.

You turn the lights out for economic, rather than romantic reasons.

Some One Liners

Why do Retirees smile all the time? Because they can't hear a word you're saying!

How many retirees to change a light bulb? Only one, but it might take all day.

Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.

To the optimist, the glass is half full. To the pessimist, the glass is half empty. To the engineer, the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

On the Road again

I didn't realize how bad of a driver I was until my sat nav said, "In 400 feet, do a slight right, stop, and let me out."

With the rise of self-driving vehicles, it's only a matter of time before we get a country song where a guy's truck leaves him too.

"SUBWAY" is definitely the healthiest fast food available because they make you get out of the car.

It Could Happen to You....

An elderly gentleman who had had serious hearing problems for a number of years went to the doctor to be fitted for a hearing aid that would return his hearing to 100%. The elderly gentleman went back for further tests a month later and the doctor said, "Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again." To which the gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"

History

The FHWA Retirees originated in 1987, when a group of retirees with ties to Region 6 met with their wives 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.

This newsletter

At recent reunions there have been discussions about how to communicate more effectively with the broader FHWA retiree community. It has been a great help that FHWA News has always cooperated in publicizing upcoming reunions and reported on completed reunions. A problem occurs because FHWA News is published on an irregular schedule that is tied to when enough material is available to fill an issue. In an attempt to provide a more timely communication mechanism this newsletter is being established on a pilot basis.

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 either Kevin Heanue or Don West or both with suggestions.

Keep your contact information current

If you have moved and changed address or have a new email address please let us know. Send an email to fhwaretires@gmail.com with the following information: name, spouses name (if applicable), street address, telephone number, and email address.

To make a change in your contact information for FHWA News, please provide your new street address to the new Managing Editor Ingrid Perkins. Her address is IngridPerkins@dot.gov. Please note that this is a change. Dee Gallo has retired as Managing Editor of FHWA News.

Mark your calendars: Reunion plans are advancing for **Idaho** in 2020, **Kentucky** in 2021, and **Louisiana** in 2022.

Co-editors of this pilot edition

Kevin Heanue - kheanue@comcast.net

Don West - cthuskers@yahoo.com

Hope to see you in Chicago!