

Veterans of the Southeast Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

2011

About 1/3 of our workforce are veterans



Andrew “Maury” Eastwick IV, Pelican Island



Immediately after graduating from Clemson University in 1998 with a BS in Wildlife Biology, Andrew “Maury” Eastwick IV decided to join the officer ranks of the United States Marine Corps. He felt obtaining experience as a Marine Officer would help prepare him for a future career within the wildlife management arena by learning valuable skills in leadership and management, which he did with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit including work during a Mediterranean deployment as well as training in Tunisia and Bosnia. He later conducted transport support operations in Camp Lejeune, S.C.. But in 2002, as his military commitment ended, he pursued opportunities in “Corporate America”



where he worked in Territory Management for a pharmaceutical company and Operations Management with a large retail company, over the past decade. While he liked the companies he worked for, he consistently felt a yearning to play a larger part in the world’s effort to conserve our natural resources.

Consequently, with this passion for conservation and his love and admiration for fish and wildlife, he left the corporate world behind this past spring and pursued the career that he always dreamed of -- to help conserve our nation’s precious natural resources by working with the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



His dream came true when he was offered the position as the Refuge Biological Technician for the Pelican Island NWR this past summer.

“Here I am, in my second month, and I am completely thrilled and honored to have this opportunity to serve our nation’s fish and wildlife by helping in their conservation,” said Eastwick. “I sincerely hope that this is the beginning of a long career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”

“What better way to begin than being a part of the first National Wildlife Refuge, Pelican Island NWR,” Eastwick continued.



Chuck Underwood – Public Affairs – North Florida Field Office

Charles G. “Chuck” Underwood Jr. entered the U.S. Navy in May 1973. During his military career was assigned to units in Japan, Guam, Republic of the Philippines (RP), Georgia, and Florida. Underwood also performed special

assignments or visited ports in Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand,

Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, Kenya, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, and numerous Marianas Trust Territory islands. He retired from the Navy as a Senior Chief Journalist (E8) in November 1993.



He reentered government service as the public affairs officer at Naval Air Station Cecil Field in Jacksonville, FL and Red River Army Depot in Texarkana, TX before assuming his current duties as the

Public Affairs Officer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s North Florida Ecological Services Office in Jacksonville, FL in January 2000.

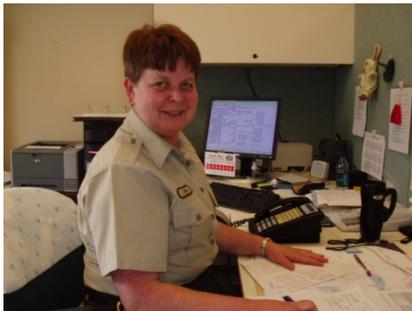
Underwood’s professional awards included three Meritorious Civilian Service Awards, two Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Awards in broadcast production, eight U.S. Navy Chief of Information Merit Awards in print journalism and broadcast production, and numerous meritorious civilian performance awards.

Tennessee NWR

Approximately one-third of the staff at the TN NWR complex are veterans of U.S. military service. We appreciate the opportunity for the following individuals to be recognized in the Director's Veterans Day address on Thursday:



Dale Norris, now an Engineering Equipment Operator at Cross Creeks National Wildlife Refuge, served in the U.S. Navy from 1976-1989 as a Chief Engineer for Surface Warfare, stationed in Norfolk, VA, Nashville, and Charleston, SC.



Jean Ruble, Administrative Officer at Tennessee NWR, served in the U.S. Navy from 1977-1987 and in the U.S. Coast Guard from 1987-1997 as an Electronics Technician. She was stationed in VA Beach, Seattle, WA, and Antarctica, and has been around the world a couple of times as part of her service.



David Zabriskie, Assistant Refuge Manager at the Duck River unit, served in the U.S. Navy on active duty from 1993-1997 and in the reserves from 1997-2001. He deployed in summer of 1995 aboard the U.S.S. Roosevelt to the Persian Gulf, Red Sea, and Adriatic Sea, helping end the Bosnia-Herzegovia conflict.



Michael Hottes, Engineering Equipment Operator at Duck River unit, served in the U.S. Air Force on active duty from 1996-2001 and in the reserves from 2001 to present. His tours of duty included Germany in 2003 and the United Arab Emirates in 2002 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Michael Heck, Engineering Equipment Operator at Duck River unit, served the U.S. Navy's Construction Battalion (SeaBees) on active duty from 1977 until retirement in 1995. He mobilized and deployed to various sites around the world in support Marine Corps operations and natural disaster response.



Jeremy Curtis, Law Enforcement Officer at Tennessee NWR, served as a Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1997-2001, stationed at Paris Island, SC, Camp Lejune, NC, Lackland AFB in TX, and Camp Pendleton, CA. He then served in the U.S. Army National Guard from 2001 – 2011, including tours of duty in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Homeland Security.

Cindy Brashear Fury -- Project Leader for Florida/Caribbean Field Office --Migratory Bird Program,



Cindy was in the Air Force when the first Gulf War broke out, stationed at Ramstein AFB in Germany working in the communications and encryption facility – She was of the first to know when things were going to happen, and was head of Quality Control and briefed the generals on the status of communications throughout the European theater. She modestly indicated “But I’m sure there are vets that actually served in the desert would be much more interesting and have more interesting pictures and stories.”

Cindy Brashear Fury holding a loggerhead turtle hatchling in an office at Hobe Sound Refuge (they were being released that night),



David Kitts, Pocosin Lakes NWR, N.C. in boot camp. Served in the U. S. Marine Corps from 1970--1974 was a sergeant E-5 when he got out. He served in Viet Nam just before the end of the war.



Matthias Laschet, *Biological Science Technician, Panama City Field Office*

Matt joined the Fish and Wildlife service in 2009. His military training was utilized heavily during The Deep Water Horizon oil spill, both in interacting with other stakeholders and working in the field. He served in the United States Army for six years. During the Gulf war (1990-91), Matt served as a Fixed-wing aircraft mechanic, a Nuclear Biological and Chemical Non Commissioned Officer (NBC NCO), and as public relations specialist for his unit. His “Can do attitude” and organizational skills learned in the military helped get things started at the onset of the oil spill. Taking care of the of the team through “Safety first” and “lead when leadership is needed, follow as ordered “ approach helped build an effective team during the initial stages of the oil spill.



Ted Martin Alabama Field Office Fish and Wildlife biologist was in the Navy from February 1967 through February 1973, assigned to a high security ocean sound surveillance program referred to as the “O” Program. He received advanced electronic training in Great Lakes, Illinois and Fleet Ballistic Missile sub sonar training in Key West, Florida. His “O” Program duty stations were: Adak, Alaska / Argentina, Newfoundland / and Centerville, California. Some of his more exciting times were flying in P3’s (four-engine turboprop anti-submarine aircraft) over the Bering Straits.



Toby Price, Piedmont NWR, Georgia, has 15 years in the Navy Seabees thru Present Day. He served in Iraq in 2004 and has an upcoming Deployment to Afghanistan.



Glenn McMichael and Toby Price, Engineering Equipment Operators at Piedmont NWR. Glenn served the Army 18 months in Vietnam 1970-1971



Tom MacKenzie, External Affairs, Atlanta . Colonel, U.S. Army Reserves

Tom MacKenzie entered the U.S. Army in 1978 serving as an Armor Officer in Kentucky, West Germany, and New Mexico. He continued his military service in the Army Reserves, serving in operations, public affairs, and exercise positions, with the 91st Division (Exercise), Forces Command Augmentation unit, Joint Forces Augmentation Unit, Combined Forces Command –Afghanistan, and 9th Mission Support Command in Hawaii. He retired as a Colonel, U.S. Army Reserve.



Band of brothers:

All five of Tom's brothers served in either the Marine Corps or the Army. They include:

1st Lt. Toby Gritz who was killed in Viet Nam in a aircraft crash in his cobra attack helicopter on his second tour,

John Gritz, who retired as a Colonel in Special Forces, Retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Paul Gritz, Captain Rock MacKenzie who served five years, and Major Bob MacKenzie (medically retired).



Tom has served with the Fish and Wildlife Service since 1998 in External Affairs in Georgia. Prior to coming to us, he conducted public affairs with the U.S.

Small Business Administration and the U.S. Army. He has a nephew, Jeff Gritz in 5th Special Forces group who joined after 9/11, rising to the rank of Sgt. First Class. His God daughter and Niece Dawn MacKenzie is an Air Force E-6 in Hawaii helping service members.

Cutlines: 2LT Mackenzie at Ft. Knox 1978

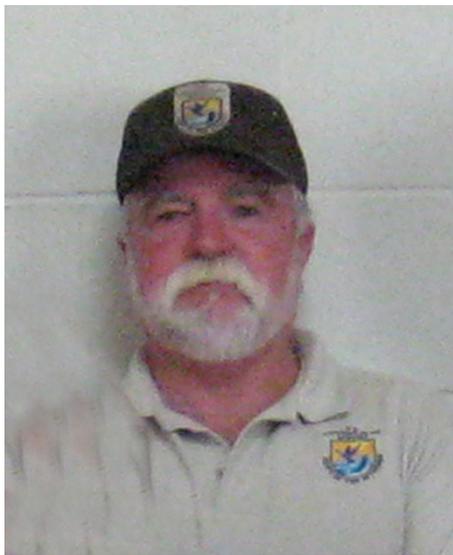
COL MacKenzie on Holiday Sentry Duty in Kabul 2004.

Tom MacKenzie on a Coast Guard aircraft overflying the Deepwater Horizon oil spill site. 2010.

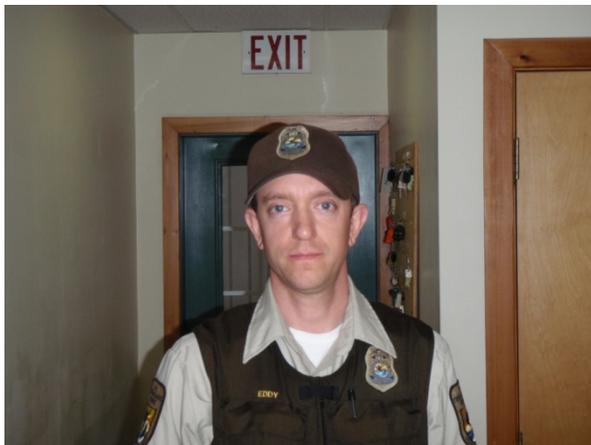
Alligator River NWR vets:



Dennis Stewart, Alligator River NWR Refuge Wildlife Biologist since 1994. Served in the U. S. Army from 1971 to 1973.



Bruce Creef, Alligator River NWR Refuge Maintenance Supervisor since 1974. Served in the U. S. Coast Guard from 1970 to 1974.



Jay Eddy, Alligator River NWR Refuge Law Enforcement Officer since 2006 (came to Alligator River in 2008). Served in the U. S. Navy from 1993 to 1997.



Lisa Borel, Alligator River NWR Refuge Firefighter since 2009.
Served in the U. S. Air Force from 1995 to 2002.

South Florida Ecological Services Office Report

Ten Staff Members Bring Military “Edge” to the SFESO

As an Army paratrooper Chuck Kelso survived two parachute malfunctions and went on to become an instructor at the U.S. Army Sniper School, but Chuck, now a Service biologist, says the best thing about his time in the Army was meeting his future wife LeeAnn, who served in the Army as an administrative specialist.

The Kelsos are two of the 10 military veterans currently working at the South Florida Ecological Services Office (SFESO). “I’d like to think we bring a little bit of that military edge in terms of discipline and leadership,” LeeAnn said. “Most of us approach our jobs here just like we did in the military. To us it’s more than just a job. We’re doing something for our country.”

LeeAnn, an administrative specialist with the SFESO, added, “I was assigned to the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, which teaches marksmanship skills. We also competed in national and international competitions. In 1988, I traveled to Chile for an international armed forces competition known as the CISM Championships (Conseil International du Sport Militaire). The U.S. team cleaned up!”

The other military veterans on the SFESO staff are:

Patti Bowser – She spent 20 years in the U.S. Air Force before retiring as a recruiter in 1999 and now works for the Service as an office automation assistant. Patti’s military career highlights included stints as a satellite computer operator at Templehof AB in Berlin, Germany and an intelligence computer operator at Royal Air Force Chicksands in England.

Wayne Burden – He retired with a combined 22 years of active and Reserve Air Force service. Wayne, an information technology specialist with the SFESO, served at several military bases

around the world including Texas, Oklahoma, Panama and Germany. He liked the military because it gave him the chance to travel and meet all sorts of interesting people.

Sandy Cardenas – She was in the U.S. Air Force for eight years as a parachute rigger. Like the Kelsos, Sandy met her future spouse (Joe) while serving in the military. “I met my husband packing his parachutes when we were stationed on Homestead AFB, Fla. When Joe tells people his wife saved his life, he means it literally. Several months after we were married, Joe was on a night jump mission. His main parachute failed (jump master error, not rigger error) and the reserve he used had been packed by me,” said Sandy, an office automation assistant with the SFESO.

Shawn Christoperson – Shawn currently works at the SFESO as a biological technician. He’s a former submariner who served in the U.S. Navy as a sonar technician aboard the USS Narwhal from 1994-1996. “Our homeport was Norfolk, Va. The longest time I spent continuously under water was three weeks. It wasn’t too bad. Submarines aren’t as small as most people think. You just have to find ways to make yourself feel at home. Once I remember sleeping next to a torpedo,” he chuckled.

Melissa “Missi” Hatfield – She spent 20 years in the Air Force as a meteorologist before retiring in 2000. She joined the SFESO as an office automation assistant in 2010. Missi was deployed to Saudi Arabia twice during Operation Desert Storm. “I enlisted at 17...right out of high school and had to get my parents’ permission to join. I turned 18 while at basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas,” she said.

Liz Landrum – Liz works for the Service as a biologist. She served in the Air Force from 1988-1992 as a mainframe computer operator at Eaker AFB, Ark. A couple of Liz’s fondest memories of her military days are when she was part of a group that had to figure out how to salvage 24 secure telephone units that were returned from Lakenheath AB, England with a foot of water in the bottom of the shipping container and volunteering with the local chapter of the Civil Air Patrol.

Brian Scofield – He served six years in the Kentucky Army National Guard. During that time Brian was deployed to Iraq for a year as a military policeman. He was awarded the Army

Commendation and Army Achievement Medals for his service in Iraq. Brian currently works for the SFESO as a wildlife biologist at the Avon Park Air Force Range.

Ken Warren – He served a total of 26 combined years in the Air Force and the Air Force Reserve as a public affairs officer and inspector general before retiring in 2009. “Being part the space program at the Cape was probably my career highlight. Over the course of about 25 launches from 1988-1992, I was the Air Force’s primary space shuttle spokesperson. That was a great responsibility and honor for a young captain,” said Ken, a public affairs specialist at the SFESO.

“Hat’s off to all of our veterans, I salute them for their service and sacrifice. I also salute them for continuing to serve America as part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Their pride and patriotism are displayed everyday in the great work they do,” said Larry Williams, Field Supervisor for the SFESO.



1. SFESO Veterans - From left bottom row: Missi Hatfield, Patti Bowser, LeeAnn Kelso and Ken Warren. From left upper row: Liz Landrum, Chuck Kelso, Sandy Cardenas and Wayne Burden. (Shawn Christopherson and Brian Scofield were not available for the photo).



2. DOC004 - Senior Airman Liz Landrum re-enlists in the U.S. Air Force in 1991.



3. LeeAnn Army Strong - U.S. Army Specialist 4 LeeAnn Kelso competes in an international marksmanship competition in 1988.



4. Sandy Cardenas_USAF_June1995 - Airman Basic Sandy Wesson while at Chanute AFB, Ill. in 1975 for technical training.



5. missi - Air Force Staff Sgt. Melissa Hatfield is lowered into the Persian Gulf for water survival training in 1991. She was deployed to Saudi Arabia twice for during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.