



NEWSLETTER



U. S. Department of the Interior National Park Service

VOL. 3

NO. 25

A SERVICE PUBLICATION FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL

DECEMBER 12, 1968

CAN YOU KEEP CHRISTMAS?

Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you and to think what you owe the world; to put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance, and your chance to do a little more than your duty in the foreground; to see that your fellow men are just as real as you are; and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy; to own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are doing to get out of life, but what you are going to give to life; to close your book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness—are you willing to do these things even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

Henry van Dyke in "Six Days of the Week"



Merit Promotion Policy Revised

(This is the first of a series of six articles on the revised Federal Merit Promotion Policy.)

Employees will have better opportunities to be considered for advancement and agencies will have greater assurance that the best-qualified employees are selected for higher level jobs under a revised Federal Merit Promotion Policy that will go into effect next year. The revised policy is the result of a thorough study by the U.S. Civil Service Commission of the 10-year-old Government-wide merit promotion system and was issued after extensive consultation with employee organizations and Federal agencies.

The merit promotion policy is intended to help management select the best talent in the ranks of the career service to meet the many challenging problems facing the Nation and to assure employees that promotions are made on a fair and equitable basis. The revised policy should correct many of the weaknesses in present promotion procedures that employees have complained about. It places renewed emphasis on:

- Assuring that employees are considered for higher-level jobs for which they are eligible and in which they are interested.
- Providing the most effective evaluation methods to identify highly-qualified candidates for promotion, with written tests being allowed only when approved by the Commission.
- Requiring selection from among the best qualified candidates.
- Eliminating all forms of discrimination or personal favoritism.
- Keeping employees fully informed about their agency's promotion program and about their own promotion opportunities.
- Providing attractive career opportunities for employees.

The merit promotion policy doesn't guarantee every employee a promotion, but it does give every employee an opportunity for fair consideration under his agency's promotion program.

In revising the merit promotion policy, the Commission had to keep in mind the size, complexity, and dispersion of the Federal work force. All employees in the competitive service are covered by the policy. All white-collar and blue-collar occupations are represented, with jobs ranging from the simplest to the most complex. Over 60 agencies are involved—varying in size from just a few employees to hundreds of thousands, and in complexity and dispersion, from a single headquarters office to intricate structure of worldwide installations. This is why promotion procedures will vary to some extent from agency to agency or occupation to occupation.

As under the present policy, agency promotion programs will operate under merit principles and general procedures established by the Commission. Each agency develops its own promotion guidelines, adapted to the agency's own needs, which set forth the agency

policies and procedures governing promotion practices.

Each agency will continue to develop promotion plans which establish the specific methods to be followed in selecting employees for promotion within the framework of the agency guidelines. Similar kinds of jobs are usually grouped under the same plan. For example, all engineering and scientific jobs may be under one plan, all clerical jobs under another, all trades and labor jobs under a third, etc. Each employee should find out which plan applies to him.

Agencies must modify their promotion guidelines by January 1 to reflect the revised Federal Merit Promotion Policy. They must revise specific promotion plans by July 1. This schedule provides time for agencies to make the extensive revisions necessary in their present promotion programs and to consult with employees and employee organizations in the process.

(Next article: How Employees Are Considered for Promotion.)



Supreme Court Backs Minibus Operation

For some time, the NPS was barred by lower-court orders from operating a round-trip bus service from the foot of the Capitol to the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials with historical lectures along the way. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission and the D.C. Transit System contended that Interior's half-century of "exclusive charge and control" was modified when Congress, legislating for Washington, entered into the transit compact.

Recently, by a 6-to-12 vote, the Supreme Court upheld the Park Service's right to run sightseeing minibuses on the Mall. Justice White said, in part, that Congress "was endeavoring to simplify the regulation of transportation by creating the WMATC, not to thrust it further into a bureaucratic process."

Dissenting Justices William O. Douglas and Potter Stewart argued that the case was such a mini-battle that the high court never should have reviewed it.



Musical Program

According to tradition, the Custis-Lee Mansion, in Virginia, across the Potomac River from the Nation's Capital, will again be the scene of a special, informal musical program on the Sunday afternoon before Christmas.

George Washington Memorial Parkway staff members assigned to the Custis-Lee Mansion are already busy decorating the historic home with evergreens and holly, much the same as it must have been during the Yuletide Seasons that the Lee and Custis families celebrated there.

NPS NEWSLETTER, issued biweekly by the Office of the Director as a communications medium for Service personnel. Edited and Published by Div. of Park Practice, Cooperative Activities. Items of general interest to Service personnel on management, operations, economies, public service, and Service organizations are solicited. Address: Colin Ritter, Editor NPS NEWSLETTER, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.



Silhouette

Elloween Saunders

By George G. Fisher, Jr.



Many Park Service areas have their long-term employees without whom "nobody'd know nuthin'." At Badlands National Monument, South Dakota, is such an unsung heroine--Elloween Saunders, a long-time Clerk-Steno, who has been the mainstay of the office since 1955.

Elloween started as temporary office help for Superintendent John Rutter when the visitor center-office building was a small three-room frame building left over from CCC days. After one month as a temporary, she "made" permanent. Present Superintendent John Earnst is the sixth superintendent Elloween has served under.

Residents of the local area since 1935, Elloween and husband, "Cricket" (no one ever calls him by his real name), became local ranchers when they purchased a suburban spread in 1949. Their ranch is a mile and a half south of the city of Interior (South Dakota) which—honest to goodness—was named for the Department of the Interior and is two miles southwest of park headquarters. Interior, once a busy cattle-shipping center of about 400 population, suffered a decline but has now grown back to about 80 population.

The Saunders raise hay, wheat, alfalfa seed, and many head of beef cattle, along with miscellaneous numbers of turkeys, chickens, geese, horses, swine, dogs, cats, and a milk cow. Cricket also cares for a 1939 model J-3 Piper Cub with a super-powerful 65-horsepower engine which he flies from a pasture and runs marauding coyotes to death with. Elloween still hasn't learned to fly the crate yet, but she's willing to forego that pleasure while she practices on her electronic organ.

The Saunders have one son and two daughters, all married, and six grandchildren. Their kids have all flown the coop to live in Denver and Rapid City, but they all return to Interior every now and then to renew their acquaintance with the Interior area's biggest natural attraction—the horizon. Out there, horizon is what we got most of.

Elloween has collected four suggestion awards dur-

ing her 13 years at Badlands. She runs the Badlands Employees Association, and, needless to say, has been on most of the various park committees at one time or another. Since she admits her chances of transferring are slim, she's stuck with such jobs as designated agent and imprest-fund cashier.

Community affairs have also felt Elloween's impact; she's been as active in them as her job will allow. She has held various offices in the PTA, Ladies Aid, the Badlands Project Club, and the local ladies' Current Events Club. Elloween attended the National College of Business in Rapid City for six months, and followed that up with several years of secretarial correspondence courses. She belongs to the National Secretaries Association.

Elloween, a native of South Dakota, has many Service friends from coast to coast and from border to border. She keeps threatening to get Cricket to drive their new pickup camper around the country so she can visit some of them. But relax—you're all safe for a while. She used much of her leave on a recent trip to see the bears in Yellowstone, and it's the Administrative Officer's turn to take off around Christmas this year. But you've all been warned.



See here, Ladies

McKinley mothers' never have to ask "For whom the bell tolls" when school time arrives each fall. While other Park Service parents wave goodbye to their offspring as another 3R session begins, the women of Mt. McKinley wave goodbye to vacation and start the 3R's in the kitchen, basement, or bedroom. Aided by the Alaskan correspondence study course, and abetted by father's knowledge of math and science, there are four teachers and eight pupils represented this year. Jeff Hensley, Scotty Merry and Kelly Scott are beginners in first grade. Pat Hensley, Karla Schott, and Greata Hafferman are the third graders. Kurt Hafferman is in eighth, and his brother, Dan, is taking freshman high school subjects from the University of Nebraska. Despite the qualms suffered by the faculty and student body, past pupils have done well upon transferring back to regular schools.



More Paycheck Deductions

Lest you be caught unawares, you are reminded of changes in HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS, effective January 1, 1969, that will change "benefits," and/or "rates." By the end of December 1968, each employee should have received a copy of a new edition of Pamphlet BRI 41-117, entitled "Information About Plan Changes Effective January 1969." If you do not receive your copy by the end of January 1969, please call your personnel office.

Brochures describing the various health benefit plans are also being revised, but they will not be generally distributed to enrolled employees. However, they may be obtained from your personnel office on request.

OPEN SEASON: The next open season for enrollment and changes in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program will be: November 10-28, 1969.



Phillip R. Iversen, superintendent of Dinosaur National Monument was born on February 23, 1924 in Eugene, Oregon. After military service with the U.S. Navy in the South Pacific during World War II, Iversen attended Dana College in Blair, Nebraska from 1946 to 1948 and Iowa State College in Ames in 1949.

Largely because of the enthusiasm of his parents for the national parks, Iversen was inspired during his youth with a determination to obtain a seasonal ranger position. In 1948, his wish came true and he started work at Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks. But his seasonal park ranger career soon terminated following his marriage to Patricia Anne Swain—by the way, a grandniece of Major John Wesley Powell—in 1949 when Iversen went into business for himself operating a successful farm feed and produce company in Illinois. However, persistent thoughts of the Park Service left him little peace of mind and Iversen finally returned to the Service in 1956 as a tour leader at Carlsbad Caverns.

From Carlsbad, Iversen transferred to Grand Canyon as park ranger; in 1959, to the C&O Canal; returned to Grand Canyon as supervisory park ranger in 1960; then to Petrified Forest where he served as chief ranger. In recognition of his outstanding work at Petrified, he received a Superior Performance Award in 1963. Iversen's next assignment was to Rocky Mountain-Shadow Mountain in 1965 as West District ranger. He then transferred to Canyonlands in 1966 as Chief, I&RM. In June 1968, he accepted his present position as superintendent at Dinosaur National Monument, where he was also superintendent of Flaming Gorge until the management of that area was transferred to the U.S. Forest Service. In addition, Iversen is responsible for the management of Fontenelle Reservoir in Wyoming, and he is Project keyman for the proposed Fossil Butte National Monument near Kemmerer, Wyoming.

Iversen was truly inspired by his parents' enthusiasm for the national parks. "The variety of assignments in natural, historic, and recreational areas within three regions" he said, "has fulfilled

NEW FACES •

Cross, Mervin A., to Realty Spec., WSC
McConnell, Paul N., to Realty Spec., WSC
Mullen, Walter P., to Realty Spec., WSC
White, William M., to Appraiser, WASO

NEW PLACES

Bala, Gene J., from Pk. Planner, WASO, to Asst. Supt., Hawaii Volcanoes NP
Garcia, Tillie R., from Clk. Steno., SWRO, to Sec., SFSC
Gould, Ronald J., from Laborer, Catoctin Mtn. Park, To Garage Serviceman, NCR
Hagan, James B., from Pk. Ranger, Russell Cave NM, to same, Natchez Trace Pkwy.
Hart, Richard T., from Supt., Devils Tower NM, to same, Casa Grande Ruins NM
Masgai, John E., from Pers. Asst., Big Bend NP, to Pers. Mgmt. Spec., NCR
Minor, David C., from Supv. Pk. Ranger, Saguaro NM, to same, Canyonlands NP
Nelson, Kenneth L., from Maintenceman, Catoctin Mtn. Park, to same, George Washington Mem. Pkwy.
Newbold, Billy C., from Travel Liaison Spec., WASO, to Pk. Spec., National Capital Parks-Central
Peters, Clay E., Jr., Staff Pk. Ranger, Lassen Volcanic NP, to Pk. Planner, WASO
Pimentel, Frank A., from Supv. Constr. Rep. SFSC DS: Grand Teton NP, to same, DS: Lake Mead
Ritchie, John E., from Realty Off., WSC, to same, SFSC
Rothfuss, Edwin L., from Ch. I&RM, Virgin Islands NP, to Supv. Pk. Nat., Mammoth Cave NP
Standlee, Mildred L., from Admin. Off., Craters of the Moon NM, to same, NW National Park Group, North Cascades NP
Steeves, C. Richard, from Landscape Arch., WSC, to Pk. Planner, WASO
Teter, Ray C., from Admin. Off., Joshua Tree NM, to same, Harpers Ferry NHP, JCCC
White, W. Lowell, from Pk. Ranger, Yellowstone NP, to Supv. Pk. Ranger, Redwood NP
Wilt, Irene A., from Sec. Steno., Yellowstone NP, to same, Grand Teton NP

JOINING THE ALUMNI

Bright, Raymond E., from Mgmt. Asst., Olympic NP
Price, Yullie P., from Cartographic Tech., WSC

most of my career objectives. Each step of the career ladder has been rewarding beyond expectation. However, my present position of superintendent is the epitome of work rewards and pleasure."

Very active in the community, Iversen belongs to the Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce in Vernal, Utah, the Lions Club in Rangely, Colorado, the Masonic Lodge in Grand Canyon, Arizona, and is also a member of the Utah, Wyoming, Arizona John Wesley Powell Centennial Committee.

Iversen and his wife, Patricia Anne, have three children: Paul L., 17 years old; Patrick L., 13 years old; and Pamela, who is now 4 years old. The family resides at Dinosaur National Monument, Box 101, Dinosaur, Colorado 81610.