

[From Spring 2003]

## **Long-Time Staff Members Retire**

Two long-time members of Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge's staff, Irvin W. Ailes and Carlton 'Corky' Collins, retired in January and February 2003, respectively. Both men, who have worked at the refuge and resided in the Town of Chincoteague for decades, are already sorely missed by their co-workers.

"Although both men were well respected and considered irreplaceable by their colleagues, they were very excited to enter retirement," according to Refuge Manager, John D. Schroer. He added that the refuge is readjusting and re-prioritizing work activities to fill in the gaps left by the retirement; Irv, the refuge's Wildlife Biologist since 1979, was an avid supporter of wildlife conservation and management. He was instrumental in developing refuge policies to protect piping plovers and other threatened or endangered species. He also served as the source for institutional knowledge regarding the refuge's wildlife management program. While anxiously awaiting the arrival of his first grandchild, Irv is working towards his rating as a Master Gardener as well as serving as an environmental consultant.

Corky, a member of the maintenance staff since 1976, was renowned for his carpentry skills and helped to lay the groundwork for most of the refuge's wildlife observation platforms and boardwalks. He also directed the remodeling of several refuge facilities including the administrative offices and Visitor Contact Station. Corky had the rare pleasure of working with his daughter, Susan Fair, who joined the administrative staff in 2000. He looks forward to spending more time with his four grandchildren.

The refuge staff will truly miss these two colleagues and wish them well in their retirement!

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