

[From Summer 2006]

## **Chincoteague Natural History Association Celebrates Twenty Years of Service**

By Joyce Maher

On May 20th in the Bateman Center past and present members and staff of CNHA gathered to celebrate 20 years of continuous service to the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. The Bateman Center was decorated with T.R. Bears, flowers, streamers and balloons by our dedicated staff. Following the annual board meeting, a buffet supper from Skipper's Restaurant was served to approximately 40 people, after which participants convened in the theater to enjoy a power point presentation highlighting significant events in our history created by board member, Myrna Cherrix. She chose excellent photos of volunteers in Washington, members receiving our 2004 Friends Group of the Year plaque and check from the National Wildlife Refuge Association, having fun in the Christmas parade with our lighthouse float, which to our delight won first prize, volunteers climbing on the bus to give tours and many other fun activities.

After we enjoyed our walk down memory lane, certificates were presented to all members by former president, Bill Englehart, who served in that office longest and was a great spokesman for our congressional visits in Washington, D.C. He also gave some people who had made outstanding contributions a small gift. Such a couple is Rose and Frank Moore. Both have made tremendous contributions over the years as officers and editors of the newsletter and much more. Rose is the only current board member who was involved in the founding in August of 1986. She stated, "I can't believe it has been 20 years since Charlie Holbrook and a handful of us decided we'd like to help raise money for the refuge. Ultimately, CNHA gave the first \$125,000 toward building the Bateman Center and the rest is history."

Former vice-president, Christine Shields-Anderson, journeyed from Ohio to take part in the fun and said: "I am so glad to be here tonight and enjoyed reviewing highlights of the many good times we have had together. Although I had to leave the board, I hope to get back soon and pick up where I left off volunteering and being a member of CNHA."

Two long time members who volunteered with the history association, served on the board and also helped in other refuge work are Ted and Charlotte Thomas. They traveled from Pennsylvania to take part in the festivities and said, "We miss our friends here and are trying to organize bus trips from the retirement community where we now reside back to Chincoteague. We live in Pennsylvania but Chincoteague is our home." Charlotte was one of the first volunteers to give star walks at night on the beach and advised our earlier business manager on ordering books about botany, birds, constellations and many other natural topics.

Vice President, Bob Wilson, a local photographer, has played diverse roles at the refuge over the years and shared some of his feelings. He was an assistant refuge manager and later an outstanding volunteer. He has generously donated shots of the refuge featuring images of the scenery and wildlife which are unique and beautiful. Both Bob and his wife Sue have some beautiful photos currently on sale in our gift shop.

Shuli Tor, who has recently accepted a staff position, served on the board in different capacities over the years and recruited many of today's members. We hate to lose her board participation, but are happy to welcome her as a new employee.

At the end of the day, a good time was had by all. As you read about our current efforts, I'd like to remind you that we are always seeking new members, new volunteers, and new officers. Opportunities abound to participate in diverse activities and have fun in the process, so if you know

anyone who might like to check us out please ask him or her to drop by the Bateman Center or call our business manager Lynn Talbot at (757) 336-3696 today.