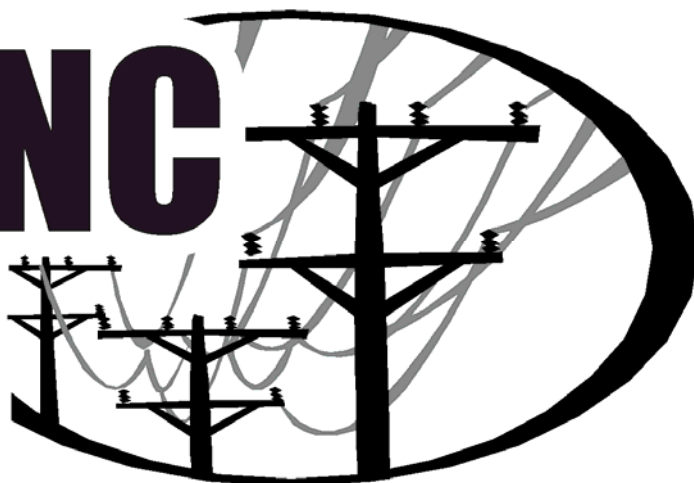


SCS/SNC OUTSIDE



Volume 22

Number 3

May–June 2010

MAY MEETING

As Charles has stated in his message, our luncheon will be on **Friday, May 14**. Please take special note of the date because it is different from our normal meeting dates. All the meeting particulars were sent to you in a separate invitation.

Just be sure you **make your reservation by May 7**.

PREZ SEZ

Spring is here and I am sure all of you appreciate the warmer weather.

Our Spring membership drive is coming to a close. We have 277 members who have renewed or joined, but we still have 99 members who have not rejoined. If you are not sure if you have renewed, please call Dora Brandt, our membership chair, to determine your status. Your membership in the SCS/SNC Retirees organization provides you the opportunity to visit with your fellow retirees at our bimonthly meetings as well as get updates on active members via e-mail or phone, and participate in our fellowship events throughout the year.

Our Spring Luncheon, open to all SCS/SNC retirees, is scheduled for Friday, May 14, at the Pelham Civic Complex. Our speaker will be Chris Hobson, Southern Company's Chief Environmental Officer and Senior Vice President of Research and Environmental Affairs. By now you should have received your invitation to the Spring Luncheon. I encourage you to send your reservation form back to Dora Brandt or call her at 956-0502.

I look forward to seeing you at the May 14 meeting.

— Charles Goodman

BIRTHDAYS

May: 1-Barbara Mohon, 3-Ann Damsgard & Dick Locke, 4-Kennith Burr, Jim Corbitt & Norma Young, 5-Bob Armstrong, Dick Conry & Carol Purcell, 6-K.C. Shelburne, Dominick Viruleg & Betty Windhorst, 7-Don Mansfield, 9-Malcolm Morgan, Bill Ruff, Bob Walker & Dale Wyatt, 10-David Bass & Wandra Wyatt, 11-Edmon Poole, 12-Avis Higginbotham & Cynithia Horton, 13-Judith Irvin & Mary Sue Ludwig, 14-Bill Lee, 15-Elaine Chambers & Dean Koch, 16-Betty Milell & Charlotte Shanlever, 17-Rachel Hubbard, Margaret O'Brien & Ed Williamson, 18-Bob Hart, 19-Linda Griggs & Louise Sensabaugh, 20-Betty Bradshaw, 21-Loraine Messick & Roy Shanlever, 22-Corinne Hart, 23-Eugene Byars, 25-Farook Chandiwala, Don Graham & Bill Guthrie, 26-Sam Bowman & Betty Mikell, 7-Harold Jones & Helen Robin, 29-Joe Katz, 30-Larry Mathews and 31-Earl Parson.

June: 1-Diane Adams & Tony Miemzak, 3-Warren Glover & Joyce Hickman, 4-Bill Newman, 5-Mary

Want to keep up with what's happening? Got a computer? Visit the SCS Retiree Website
<http://www.scsretirees.com>

SCS OUTSIDE
 May -June 2010

Morgan, James Lee Murphree & Ethel Rushing, 6-
 Mary Ward, 7-Joel Connor, John Davis, Eunice
 Draper, Peggy Howard & Angie Walker, 8-John
 Brandt, 9-Jim Newton, 10-Edna Wright, 11-
 Catherine Bailey, Richard Howard Money & Jerry
 Smith, 12-John Adrian, Mary Dougherty & Houston
 Welch, 13-Malek Barroody, 14-Ann Batum, Bill
 Coughlin, John Thies & Bob Winter, 15-Glenn
 Brothers, 16-Mike Burns & Peggy Hinton, 17-
 Clyde Howard, Mary Lou Johnston, Ron Meade &
 Brooke Mehaffey, 18-Willie Bonds, 19-Melvin
 Evans, 20-Sara Jo Blackwood, Dewana Green,
 James Killingsworth, Nell King Larson & Wayne
 Walton, 21-James Hartin & John Heatherly, 22-Ray
 Bailey, Betty Jackson & Beverly Vincent, 23-Jane
 Hawkins, Joyce Steel & Jackie Woodard, 24-Carol
 Taylor, 26-Nancy Adrian, Jeri Corbitt & Glendean
 Swearingen, 27-Gary Chambers, Kate Newman &
 Doug Wiles, 28-Mike Griggs & Ivagene Quick, 29-
 Judy Coggin, Betty Danford & Cheryl Locke and
 30-Gayle Busby, Bipin Patel & Karen Hubbard.

— Jay Dorrance

MEMBER CARE

One of our members, **Norma Jean Johnston**,
 has not been able to attend our meetings for some
 time. She is suffering from lung problems.

John Carter, husband of **Margaret Carter**, has
 not been well recently.

Mike Zyne who resides at Fairhaven Nursing
 Home recently had surgery, but is now back at
 Fairhaven and recuperating very well.

— Liz Winter

Cheerfulness, like Spring, opens all the
 blossoms of the inner man

— Jean Paul Richter

When one tugs at a single thing in nature,
 he finds it attached to the rest of the world

— John Muir

Spring, thy name is color!

— Libbie Fudim

**SCS RETIREE LEADERSHIP
 FOR 2010**

Officers	
President	Charles Goodman 823-5187
Vice President	Wayne Walton 822-1875
Secretary	Linda Griggs 823-7950
Treasurer	Henry Garrett 853-6079
Directors	
Jim Coleman	991-7403
Mike Griggs	823-7950
Don Irvin	491-3841
Gray Murray	871-5194
Jim Rooker	287-3210
Carol Yeager	822-5506
John Brandt (ex-officio)	956-0502
Committee Chairs	
Arrangements	Jay Dorrance 663-2828
Audit	Mike Griggs 823-7950
Fellowship	Joe Leamon 870-5637
Finance	Henry Garrett 823-6079
Member Care	Liz Winter 822-6142
Membership	Dora Brandt 956-0502
Newsletter	Dan & Myrna Wise 942-2336
Nominating	Fred Ehrensperger 655-2725
Program	Open
Website	Charles Hickman 823-4597

OBITUARIES

In Memoriam

Robert LaRhoy Swearingen, 86, of Birmingham, Alabama, passed away on Thursday, February 18, 2010. He retired from the SCS C & A Design Department in June of 2003 with 34 years of service. He is survived his wife, Glendean, a daughter, a son, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. A funeral service for Mr. Swearingen was held on Monday, February 22.

Robert Bruce Bailey, Sr., 85, of Birmingham, Alabama, passed away on Thursday, March 18, 2010. He retired from the SCS System Planning Department in September of 1986 after 38 years of service. He is survived by his wife, Gladys, a daughter and a son. A funeral service was held for Mr. Bailey on Monday, March 22.

Raymond "Radio Ray" Roberts, 59, of Birmingham, Alabama, died on Tuesday, March 30, 2010. He worked for both Alabama Power Company and the Southern Company for a total of 20 years. He is survived by his children. A funeral Mass was held for Mr. Roberts on Monday, April 5.

Timothy Sullins, 56, of Birmingham, Alabama, died on Thursday, April 1, 2010. He retired from the SNC Design and Drafting Services Department in February 2009. He is survived by a son and two sisters. Graveside services were held for Mr. Sullins on Monday, April 5.

Condolences

Sympathy is extended to the family of the late **Clarence V. Swindle** in the death of his widow Mary Evelyn Swindle, 87, of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, who passed away on Wednesday, February 24, 2010.

Sympathy is also extended to the family of SCS Retiree the late **Bill Valekis** in the death of his widow Maria Valekis, 84, of Birmingham, who passed away on Sunday, March 28, 2010.

**He that plants trees loves others
besides himself.**

— English Proverb

MARCH ATTENDANCE

Jay Dorrance reports that 45 members and guests attended the March meeting

A LITTLE OF THIS, A PINCH OF THAT

Night Train to Prague

Have you ever been caught red-handed? You are in the wrong, and you know you're going to get it? Remember the chill of fear?

It happened to me on a train from Vienna to Prague, thirty years ago, when the Russians were closing their iron fist on the Czechs after a flowering of freedom in 1968.

I had gone to Europe on a junket—the Army had moved a whole division to Germany, with a steady procession of C-141s crossing the Atlantic, moving 12,000 men to Germany, showing the Russians we meant business.

I did my duty, found the Alabama tank drivers in the snow, took their pictures, wrote stories about them. Then a Kansas City Star reporter and I decided we would go to Prague, still surrounded by Russian tanks after the invasion.

We went down to Vienna and lied on visa applications, because they weren't letting newspaper people into Prague. He was in real estate and I was in public relations.

We boarded the train at the great barn of a train station—the Franz Joseph Bahnhof in Vienna. It was snowing, and the Danube was a gray ribbon off to the right. When night came, the sparks from the engine swirled into the darkness and spent themselves in the snow.

At the Czech border, I was cold with fear. If they catch us in our lies, we're going to be looking out through bars for a long time. A kid in a green uniform, with an AK-47 slung over his shoulder, came into our compartment. Passports, and visas, and he was trying to look stern and grown-up, but the baby fat betrayed him. He was just a kid in a green Czech uniform.

SCS OUTSIDE

May -June 2010

He looked at our papers, and gravely stamped them. Then a young woman came in the door. "Ich bank," she announced. I am the bank. I gave Miss Bank \$10 and she gave me a fistful of Czech Crowns. She smiled at the kid in the green uniform, and I knew they were friends.

She got off the train while we were stopped at the border, and we pulled out, heading north into the darkness, into Czechoslovakia.

The kid in the green uniform came back and demanded to look at the papers of a young man sitting by the window. He looked at his ID and spoke angrily in Czech. This is not your picture.

Another soldier came and they took him off the train at the next stop. My friend and I were terrified, cold with fear.

Twenty minutes later, the guards and a ferret-faced civilian came into the compartment and stood in front of...us.

"Which one of you is Stallworth?" he asked.

The chill of raw fear enveloped me. I was caught. They got me. They are going to put me into a Czech jail and never let me out. I will never see Annie or the kids or Birmingham again.

"I am," I said casually, waiting for the axe to fall.

"Well," he said, "the lady with the money, back at the border, she gave you too much. You gave her a \$10 bill and she gave you change for a \$20 bill. If she doesn't get it back, she will have to make it up out of her own pocket."

"No problem," I shrugged, and gave them back half the Czech crowns she had given me.

The kid was grateful. Miss Bank, apparently his girlfriend, had gotten off at the border, found her mistake, and called ahead to the next station. Thank you, thank you, thank you, like Gomer Pyle in Czech.

The night wore on, and the train swirled its way through the snow toward Prague. I went to the next car, where beer was sold, but the door was locked. Two guards stood in the space between the cars.

"Getrinken," I said, motioning with a drinking motion. "Voh is das bier?" I knew that much German. "Schlaffen," the kid said, they're sleeping in there.

I shrugged, they shrugged, I went back to my compartment. I dozed off, and woke to find the kid shaking me by the shoulder. In his right hand, splayed between his fingers, were two bottles of beer from Pilsen, the Mecca of beer.

I asked him how much and he shook his head. "Freundschaft," he grinned. Friendship, it means.

A lot has happened in 30 years. The Soviet Union has collapsed. Czechoslovakia is now two countries, two free countries, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The kid in the green uniform is in his mid-50s now, and I hope he is enjoying his freedom.

I wish I could see him again. I would hand him two beers from Pilsen and say one word.

Freunschaft.

— Clarke Stallworth
Senior Living
October 2009

Pickles and Chocolate

The title sounds a lot like the wild cravings of a pregnant woman! It actually refers to the disconnected bits and pieces that make up this article. Allow me to try to clarify.

People who know me well are fully aware that I'm a confirmed chocoholic. I often hear a friend remark, "Every time I see chocolate, I think of you." In recent years, the comic strip *Pickles* has become a favorite and I recommend it to all my friends. It isn't unusual for someone to say, "Every time I read *Pickles* I think of you!"

As I sought a title for this piece, a mélange of unrelated snippets of memories, *Pickles and Chocolate* ultimately seemed just right. When I was about 5 years old, my home state of Kentucky began to hire its first highway patrolmen. My father had difficulty providing for our family as a rural school teacher, so he became a highway patrolman. Tall and handsome in his gray uniform, shiny pistol strapped in its holster at his side, he was a striking figure. However, to me he was a fearsome sight! When Dad came home on weekends, I hid behind my mother until the gun was out of sight. It was only then that I would hug him.

Mother was 15 years younger than Dad. Before their marriage, he had been principal of the country school where she taught. Of course, she called him then by his surname, Mr. Ray. After they were married, she continued to address him in that way. Neighbors chuckled when they heard her calling him to supper.

As a child I was not allowed to go barefoot until mother had seen the first summer butterfly!

In those days, okra was not grown in our part of Kentucky. Once, Dad was given enough okra seed to sow a whole row in his garden. He watched over the plants eagerly, waiting for the time to pick the okra pods. Mother had no idea how to cook them. A well-intended soul told her to lay the pods on top of green beans as they were cooking. She did so as Dad eagerly awaited the first bite. After one taste of the slimy stuff, he rose from the table, strode out to the garden and pulled up every okra plant! Many years later, after my husband and I had moved to Alabama, I introduced Dad to fried okra. He loved it!

Dad was a wonderful whistler and taught me to whistle despite my grandmother's displeasure. She repeatedly reminded him that a whistling woman and a crowing hen would always come to some bad end. How disappointed she would have been to know that, years later as a college freshman, I whistled solo at a talent show.

Mother wanted me to learn to play the piano. Mrs. Bush was the only person in our little village who knew how to play one. At the time, we owned a milk cow. Mother persuaded her to teach me piano once a week in exchange for a quart of milk and a pound of churned butter. All went well until the cow went dry. Alas, that was the end of my piano lessons!

At my small junior college, in the antiquated old dorm where we girls lived, we thought it incredibly funny after study time to gather in the halls in the evenings and sing crazy songs such as:

The horses go around
Their feet are on the ground
Why did they build the shore so near
The ocean, the ocean?

We feed the baby garlic so we can
Find her in the dark
And we hope that Grandma's teeth
Will soon fit Johnny, Johnny!

I was in college during the trying days of World War !!. We gathered around bonfires to pray and sing songs like this one:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus.
Look full in His wonderful face.
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

Because of World War II, there were few young men on campus. Most were ministerial students. Needless to say, the few who were there were very popular. My roommate and I always felt special when one of them stood beneath our second story window and serenaded us. It happened once the night before Christmas vacation. Snow covered the ground as a young man sang *White Christmas* Just for us.

Those were the days and there you have my
Pickles and Chocolate.

— Joyce Ray Wheeler
Senior Living
February 2009

Senior Citizen Blues

I felt pretty young until I passed a mirror in the hall.
Who is that old lady that's stooped against the wall?

Why that looks like me...or is that my mother?
Maybe it's my older sister...or could it be some
other?

The hair looks limp, and the eyes have a red rim.

It's very hard to tell...my sight is so dim.

When I went to the store people addressed me as
ma'am.

I walked through the mall and was weak as a little
lamb.

Could I somehow be getting older> How can this
be?

Just a few short years ago, I was only 33.
Gray hair, double chin, and signs of age abound.

SCS OUTSIDE
May -June 2010

I used to be a size 6, and now I am a size rounq.
But when I paid for my purchases,
I felt a little redeemed.
I was eligible for a senior discount
on a lot of stuff it seemed.

— Patricia Simmons Taylor
Senior Living
August 2009

Say What?

When a colleague's cousin was visiting from Washington, D.C., we took her on several nature walks among our many citrus groves and rolling hills. On one particularly beautiful morning, we were hiking downwind of a large orchard lush with orange and lemon blossoms. The light breeze carried their scent to us in heady waves. The woman reached our her arms and spun around in sheer joy. "This is incredible," she exclaimed. "It smells like a room freshener!"

— John W. Gilyard
Reader's Digest
May 1999

En Route

As my parents approached their 50th wedding anniversary, dad steadfastly refused to have his picture taken. Finally, we used the old argument, "What if something should happen to one of you?" Dad reluctantly agreed to go to the photographer.

On the way home, we did the weekly grocery shopping. Dad was riding in the back seat with all the packages, when we rounded a curve and suddenly hit a cow. The impact was terrific, and when the car stopped, Mom and I turned and screamed simultaneously, "Dad, are you all right?"

From the welter of dust and packages in the back came dad's disgusted voice: "What difference does it make. We've had our pictures taken!"

— Mrs. Tom Shauers
Reader's Digest
July 1969

What is so rare as a day in June—except
the 32nd of October!

— Churchy la Femme
Pogo comic strip

SCS RETIREES
P.O. BOX 2625
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35202

MEETING DETAILS:

When: FRIDAY May 14, 2010

Where: Pelham Civic Center

Check-in: Starts at 10:30 a.m.

Board meeting at 11 a.m.

Lunch: 12 Noon

Program: 12:45 p.m.