park ranger for 13 years and ended his career as an assis-
tant site superintendent.

Garrison’s favorite part of his job was dealing with the
culinary aspects of his career.

“THe state is pushing tourism but they don’t
maintain parks the way they
should be,” he said. “There
should be upgrades for water
hydrants, electrical work,
shower buildings.”

A dream realized

Garrison had wanted to be
a park ranger since high school and he feels fortunate to have
achieved his dream.

“I got to work the job that I
wanted to do all along. I got
to do something that I really
enjoyed, be outdoors and be
around people.”

Some of those people were
colleagues who remain close
friends—“the camaraderie
was really unique”—and are
now enjoying their retirement
together.

The union difference

“When I started, we weren’t covered under a col-
lective bargaining agreement,”
Garrison said.

“Things were a lot dif-
erent back then. They didn’t
have to offer overtime based
on seniority, people hadn’t
received raises, and manage-
ment treated you like you were
a second-class citizen.”

Garrison said being part
of a union is critical for job
security, to fight off privatiza-
tion of jobs, for decent health
insurance and for a worker’s
ability to retire.

“I really enjoyed my
career,” Garrison said. “Not
everybody can say that they
can get up every day and enjoy
going to work.”