

Valley Views

**Potomac
Valley
Audubon
Society**

Volume 22, Issue 3

November 2003

President's Perch

Hi Everyone – It looks like Autumn is upon us with all its glory! It's hard to stay inside these days. The Slate-colored Juncos are back (snow birds to some), to remind us that winter is on its way...

This newsletter contains a lot of information on "Take Back Audubon" (TBA). It sounds a bit aggressive, and it is meant to be. We, the grass roots of National Audubon Society (NAS), want Chapters (PVAS is a Chapter) to remain a focal point in the NAS organization. The move to focus on Audubon Centers and State Offices is taking members, dollars, and support away from Chapters, and Chapters are suffering as a result.

I don't think PVAS would exist today if it were not for the support that we received from our (now closed) Regional Office in nearby Harrisburg, PA. As the years have gone by we, the Chapters of Audubon, have seen a steady decline in services and support from NAS. The latest is the readjustment of the "net dues share" (now revised and called the "security net"). PVAS was receiving \$5.50 "net dues share" for every membership that PVAS generated. This year we received approximately \$1 for PVAS generated members, and this may be the last year we receive any money at all. With approximately 600 members, many of which were generated by PVAS, this is a real budget cut! NAS advertises that with your subscription to the magazine you get a "free" membership in your local Chapter (it isn't free to us! We pay to give service to our members, like this newsletter you're reading!)

I have been an Audubon member for many years and I hate to see NAS moving away from being a grass-roots inspired organization. I would like to see that change reversed. At the



October board meeting, your PVAS Board, agreed that the idea behind TBA is a good one, and voted to support it. The way we can put some muscle in that vote is by asking each of you to fill out, sign, stamp and send the Proxy that we have inserted in this issue of Valley Views.

... and then get out there and enjoy all the great Autumn leaves, birds, pumpkins, wood-smoke, applebutter, and other things that make the season special for you ... *Diana Mullis, President*

Notices and Field Trips

November Field Trip

November's field trip will be close to home. Bob Dean and his family have generously agreed to have PVAS members come to their home near Kearneysville on a Saturday in November. The date is not set yet but will probably be on the 8th or 15th. This is a wonderful opportunity to see birds up close as they are removed from the net, measured, weighed and banded. It is also a chance to visit with friends and make new ones. When we have a date, it will go out on the email list, otherwise please feel free to call Ken or Patsy Hunter at 304-725-3936 or e-mail at phunter@npca.org for the date and directions.

Christmas Bird Count Is Coming

This is an early reminder, reserve December 20 for the Charles Town (Jefferson County) count and January 3 for the Inwood (Berkeley County) count.

...*More Notices on Page 3*

*Potomac Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to preserving, restoring,
and enjoying the natural world through education and activism.*



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Threatened with Oil and Gas Drilling...Again

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is often referred to as America's "Serengeti." This incomparable wilderness is habitat to more than 250 animal species, including polar bears, wolves, grizzlies, caribou and millions of migrating birds. The migrating birds that inhabit ANWR include the Tundra Swan, Lesser Scaup (inset), Spotted Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper and Common Redpoll that over-winter or migrate through West Virginia to breed on the coastal plain. But this is not important to oil people.



They're at it again! Audubon Advisory reminds us that special interests and their allies in Washington are pulling out all the stops to get their hands on Alaska's wilderness. They are trying to win over key members of the U.S. Senate by loading up the "energy bill" with measures that would benefit their states. This includes proposals to increase the use of corn-based ethanol in the nation's gasoline supply, and boost energy assistance to low-income families for heating and cooling. These are important issues that deserve to be addressed and *passed on their own merits*, not used as lures or bait in exchange for opening ANWR to oil and gas drilling.

The Wilderness Society reports that "the amount of oil that the U.S. Geological Survey estimates could be recovered from the Arctic Refuge would amount to *less than a six-month supply* for American consumers. In two early reports, the U.S. Department of Interior stated the odds for *economically recoverable* oil in ANWR was between 20% and 43%, tops...not even 50%!

According to the Congressional Research Service report to Congress, we export crude oil to North Korea, Japan and China. If we have an energy security issue, as this administration wants us to believe, why are we *exporting* our precious Alaska oil to other countries? According to the Congressional Research Service report to Congress, we export crude oil to North Korea, Japan and China. The energy security argument is not based on honest facts.

There are other solutions! Did you know that if only 27% of cars in 2000 were the 48-49-mpg hybrid electric models, or 15% were ultra-light hybrid SUVs, they could displace *all* Gulf oil imports? *Already-designed*, un-compromised, cost-competitive, quintupled-efficiency cars that use no oil but only hydrogen fuel cells, if used worldwide, could displace *all* of OPEC's output. Why aren't we doing this? Think about it!

As currently written, the so-called "energy bill" does not call for an increase in the fuel efficiency of cars and trucks. It *rolls back* existing environmental safeguards for oil and gas

drilling on public lands. It does not include measures to diversify America's energy supplies, nor does it address meaningful ways to reduce global warming. Allowing drilling in ANWR would also make it easier to drill in other sensitive places.

Keep the pressure on! West Virginia's Senator Byrd (202-224-3954) is among the 16 senators being targeted for "luring" their votes to end the filibuster that would send the bill back to the drawing board! This isn't an "either-or situation" – our lawmakers do not have to trade away the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in order to bring jobs back home, or supply Americans with clean, affordable and reliable energy.

Call, write, and/or visit your Senators and *tell your friends in the states listed below to contact their lawmakers to voice support for a filibuster*, and send the measure back to the drawing table. Tell them to encourage their colleagues to oppose efforts to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling! The 16 senators that need to hear from their constituents are: Arizona's John McCain; Arkansas' Mark Pryor and Blanche Lincoln; Illinois' Peter Fitzgerald; Indiana's Evan Bayh and Richard Lugar; Maine's Susan Collins; Minnesota's Norm Coleman; Nebraska's Ben Nelson; North Dakota's Kent Conrad and Byron Dorgan; Ohio's Mike DeWine; Oregon's Gordon Smith; Pennsylvania's Arlen Specter; Vermont's Patrick Leahy; and *West Virginia's Robert Byrd* (202-224-3954).
...Diana Cummins

PVAS Heads Up List

Sometimes field trip, program or other opportunities and information happen that cannot be published in Valley Views because of their timeliness.

The PVAS Heads Up List is for those of you who have email and wish to be kept informed. If you are not already on it and wish to be, you need only contact Diana Cummins at montex@frontiernet.net and say you wish to be on this list. See you on the net!



Conservation Film Festival Coming To Shepherdstown

An upcoming event of interest to PVASers is the American Conservation Film Festival, to be held November 7-8-9 in Shepherdstown. The film festival is sponsored by the National Conservation Training Center, the Harpers Ferry Center, Shepherd College, the Shepherdstown Opera House and the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, and will feature films dealing with a wide range of conservation topics. For more information check out the Web at www.conservationfilm.org

News from the Yankauer Nature Preserve • • •

Welcome Ann Craig!

PVAS is happy to announce the addition of Ann Craig of Shepherdstown to the Yankauer Team. Ann has recently been contracted as the Community Outreach Coordinator who will help Kristin Alexander with special events, public relations and the creation of a friends group to support our efforts at the Preserve. Ann will bring a contagious enthusiasm and energy to the project.

PVAS Goes to Alaska

Kristin Alexander (PVAS) and Georgia Jeppesen (NCTC) presented at the annual conference of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) in October. The topic of the presentation was the collaborative teacher training offered to local teachers last summer (2002) by PVAS, NCTC, and Shepherd College's Institute for Environmental Studies.

NOAA Grant Received

Congratulations! A second year of the Watershed Education Initiative has been funded for \$13,945, this time by NOAA's Chesapeake B-Wet program. The program will be similar to last year's, with a few changes based on feedback from last year's teachers, students, and interns.

United Way and Combined Federal Campaign

The campaigns are underway! Don't forget that you can designate PVAS to be the recipient of your donation to the United Way or the Combined Federal Campaign. All contributions to these organizations designated to PVAS will go directly to support the programs of the Yankauer Nature Preserve. This is a great and easy way to support our efforts.

DECEMBER MEETING LOCATION

Please make note that there is a different location for our Annual Pot Luck Dinner and Silent Auction. We will meet at the regular time but at the St. John's Lutheran Church, 101 W. Martin St., in downtown Martinsburg. As a landmark, look for the tall tower of the church on the corner of Martin and Queen Streets. There is a parking lot adjacent to Luther Hall where we will hold our meeting. Once again the church has graciously allowed the use of their spacious church hall.

Please help make this auction/fund raiser a success by participating. Bring any items (baked goods, old books, art work, etc.) before the meeting so they can be priced. A call ahead of time to let me know of items you will donate will be helpful. You may also bring these items to the Nov. meeting to give to me ahead of time.

Remember to bring a dish to share and your own plates, napkins and utensils so we can be environmental. Drinks and cups will be provided. Call Susan Brookreson at (304) 263- 2823 for more info. Hope to see lots of you there!

Jefferson County Residents

If you are a Jefferson County resident and your mailing address has been changed or updated for the 911 Emergency Reporting System, please let PVAS know what your new mailing address will be. You'll avoid interruptions to delivery of Valley Views and you'll save PVAS money on returned postage.

For best results, e-mail your change to the Membership Board Member at marysue@citlink.net You can also cut out the mailing label on this newsletter and paste it to a post card with your new address. Send post cards to:

Potomac Valley Audubon Society
P O Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443



Volunteer Help Wanted

Help David Miller with Valley Views

Anyone willing to assist David Miller with publishing tasks for the newsletter can contact Diana Mullis at (304) 267-3482 or dianamullis@aol.com. You'll be doing a great service and get the benefit of feeling good about your contribution to our fine organization.

The work is easy and the company you'll be keeping is terrific, so sign up today!!

TAKE BACK AUDUBON GROUP SEEKS PROXIES

As many Auduboners are aware, the National Audubon Society has made changes in its relationship with local Chapters that have significantly impacted Chapter finances, and the role of the Audubon grassroots in our organization.

In 2000, the NAS Board of Directors changed the long-standing policy of sharing membership dues with Chapters. Under the new policy that will be fully implemented next year, the dues share will drop to near zero for most Chapters. This loss of revenue has forced Chapters to cut back on newsletters and to reduce their conservation and education activities—the most effective activism in all of Audubon. In addition, NAS has started to omit all references to chapters in public relations material. Instead, the Audubon Centers and State Offices are stressed. In West Virginia, as in about 25 other states, there is no State Office, nor Audubon Center.

In response to these “anti-chapter” actions by NAS, a grassroots organization, ‘Take Back Audubon’ (TBA) has sprung up, whose mission is “to restore a true partnership between the independent Chapters and the National Audubon Society through a real voice in the NAS organization and in all decisions that affect Chapters”. To date, 41 Audubon Chapters and over 120 Chapter leaders have endorsed Take Back Audubon, (including PVAS).

Presently, TBA is engaged in an effort to elect an alternate slate of candidates to the NAS Board of Directors at this year’s Annual Meeting on Dec. 6, 2003. They are seeking proxies from Audubon members to bring to the meeting to vote for this slate, and to support resolutions that will be presented to democratize Audubon and to restore the Chapter dues share.

Eight TBA candidates have declared their candidacy for directors-at-large. They are: Chuck Bragg, Santa Monica Bay Audubon (CA), Marsha Cannon, Madison Audubon (WI); John Gallagher, Clark County Audubon (OH); Andrew Mason, Delaware-Otsego Audubon (NY); Cary Meister, Yuma Audubon (AZ); Pat Rasmussen, Leavenworth Audubon Adopt-a-Forest (WA); Darrel Whipple, Willapa Hills (WA/OR); and Jennifer Wilson-Pines, North Shore Audubon (NY). You may get biographies of the candidates, copies of the proposed resolutions, and background information on Take Back Audubon at www.smbas.org/tba/slate.htm Electronic copies of all proxy documents are at www.smbas.org/tba/proxy.htm

A ‘Take Back Audubon’ proxy form can be found below. To support this Audubon Chapter effort, complete the form and return to the address listed by **November 30, 2003**. Members are also asked to *not* return the NAS proxy that will be arriving in a few weeks.

[NOTE: You MUST be a National Audubon Society member in good standing in order to participate in this proxy!]

To Send Your Proxy
Read the instructions on the next page
Print the Proxy, fill it out, and mail it to:

John F. Gallagher
121 Larchmont Road
Springfield, OH 45503

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING PROXY

1. Insert date of signing.
2. Print name exactly as membership is carried and shown on your magazine label. You must be a National Audubon Soc. member in good standing, as of Oct. 17, 2003 in order to vote.
3. Proxy to be signed by person in whose name membership is carried. If carried in two names or as Mr. & Mrs., either party can sign.
4. Show current address and zip code.
5. SIGN ONLY ONE PROXY FORM. DO NOT SIGN ANY OTHER PROXY FORM YOU MIGHT RECEIVE. HOWEVER, IF YOU HAVE ALREADY SIGNED A PROXY FORM, THIS FORM WILL SUPERSEDE ANY EARLIER FORM.
6. Return signed proxy form by NOVEMBER 30 to: John F. Gallagher, 121 Larchmont Road, Springfield, Ohio 45503.

**John F. Gallagher
121 Larchmont Road
Springfield, OH 45503**

PROXY

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, the undersigned, a member of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC., do hereby constitute and appoint Marsha Cannon, John F. Gallagher, Andrew L. Mason, and Darrel K. Whipple, and each of them, with full power of substitution, my attorneys and agents for me and in my name, place and stead, to vote as my proxy the number of votes I should be able to cast if then personally present at the Annual Meeting of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC., to be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Saturday, December 6, 2003, or at such other place and time as said Annual Meeting may be held, and at any adjourned meeting thereof as follows:

- (a) For the election of directors for the terms expiring in 2006, or until their successors are elected; and
- (b) In their discretion, for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this _____ day of _____ Two Thousand and Three.

Signed _____
(must be signed to be valid)

Name _____
(please print name)

Address _____



Potomac Valley Audubon Society
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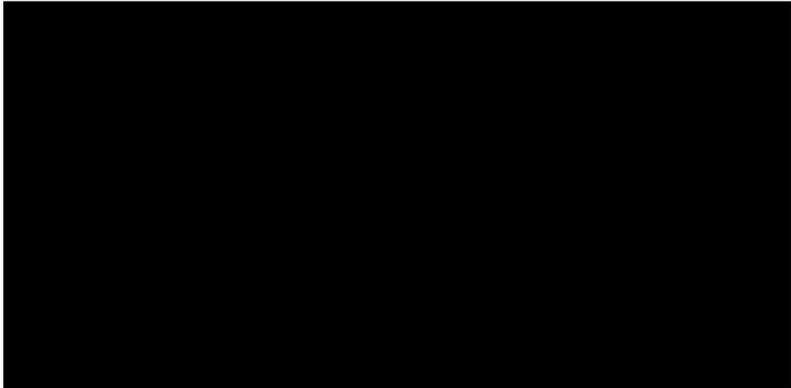
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