

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors  
Conference Call Board Meeting  
Wednesday, April 27, 2016**

Minutes prepared by Liga Auzins, *Rec. Sec'y.*

**Board Members present:** David Quady, *Pres.*; Tom Blackman, *Vice Pres.*; Suzanne Carota, *Treas./Membership Sec'y*; Liga Auzins, *Rec. Sec'y*; Ed Pandolfino, *Past Pres.*; Jon Dunn, Daniel D. Gibson, Homer Hansen, Susan Kelly, Kurt Leuschner, Larry Modesitt, Frances Oliver, Diane Rose, Steve Rottenborn, Dave Shuford, Raymond VanBuskirk, Catherine Waters

**Guest:** Phil Unitt, Editor, *Western Birds*, (*WB*)

**MINUTES**

**1:00pm** Meeting called to order, welcome, roll call.

**Minutes from 27 January 2016 conference call passed unanimously via motion to approve by Dan and seconded by Tom.**

The next Board meeting is will be Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, 1pm PDT.

**1:06pm** **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Report:** We now have five different CDs with varying maturity dates, with two of them maturing on June 9<sup>th</sup> of this year. I want to roll over those two -- one for \$30,000 and one for \$10,000 into one new 36-month CD that will mature on June 9<sup>th</sup> 2019. We will then have \$40,000 in CDs maturing each of the next three years.

**Background:** Two-three years ago we decided to buy laddered CDs, each \$30,000 maturing 1 year, 2 yrs. and 3 yrs. out, with the idea that we would roll those over every year so long as we didn't need the funds for ongoing operations. Last year we decided to bump the total up \$10,000 for each one.

**Motion to roll over the two CDs which will mature on June 9<sup>th</sup> 2019 into a new 3 yr. CD made by Cat, seconded by Diane and passed unanimously.**

**Membership:**

**Report:** On the financial statements we are on a year-to-date basis significantly unfavorable to budget, a condition that is driven by membership and income. Membership is down compared to last year at this time. Although everybody has been contacted once by email or by mail, some people just continue to forget and put it off, and some people, for financial reasons, are declining to renew. Last year at this time we had contacted 100% of our remaining non-renewals by email or otherwise. We haven't done that yet.

Two things: 1) We need to split up the list of 140 people that have not been given their final notice based on Dave's recommendation and contact everybody. 2) I will contact anyone who does not have a phone number or address. We had about a 60% response to those emails that went out in the last couple of weeks. We need to send out emails to those 80 or so people that did not respond for 2016. Suzanne would like to take a look at any other reasons as to why they are not renewing. Personalized notes really help to spur people onto renewing. Dave Q. sent notes to 20 people and

over half of those said they were going to renew and thanked him for the nudge. Dave Q. would like for everyone to look at this list of 140 non-renewals, especially the ones (marked in yellow) that Robbie contacted via email, and identify the people they know well enough to send an email to or call and to tell Dave Q. who those people are by Friday night. After that he will take the list of folks remaining and divide it among the Board to contact either by email or phone. Suzanne will work with Phil to talk about the exchange volumes that we have with 15 organizations and see if it is appropriate to be continuing all of those.

Historically we have not had to take these steps but prompt membership renewal has gotten worse over the last few years. As our conferences grew larger many people simply joined to go to the conference and then didn't renew. Robbie and Dave Q. picked out names of folks they knew; many of the ones remaining on the non-renewal list may be folks who signed up to attend the most recent conference. Our membership went up, but now that it is renewal time, some of those people are maybe not interested because they do not want to go to our next conference. Last year we had a high total of 98 new members.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dave Q. will parcel these non-renewals out to the Board along with a form email letter, which might be adapted so that the Board member is comfortable with it, even if you are writing to someone whom you have never met.

Suzanne's practice is to send **WB** issue (1) to everyone, whether they have renewed or not. Going forward she is going to change that process if it is agreeable to the Board. Anyone who has been a member for only one or two years is not going to get a copy of **WB** issue (1) because she thinks we can save money on printing and distribution of more than 100 copies. Plus maybe not receiving **WB** issue (1) will remind them to renew. Mailing the issue out later costs more per unit but the total cost doing as she suggests will not even be close to offsetting the initial savings. It's a great idea that we ought to review going into 2017. We might allow those temporarily lapsed members access **WB** electronically until issue (2) comes out.

Although Ed agrees with the comment that some of our lapsed memberships are conference connected, he does believe we are truly down in membership. Our membership as of the end of April 2015 before the Montana conference was 1154, and a year later our membership is 1042. That suggests that we have truly lost 112 members. We ought to think about how to recruit new members and about giving gift memberships. Larry contacted all the Colorado people on that list. Homer has contacted all the scholarship people.

1:28pm **PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

***Western Birds (WB)***

**Report:** We have eight papers scheduled for 47 (2). Four of these have been sent to typesetting and the rest have been copy-edited, with the final draft sent to the authors. We are on track for publication for the first of June for 47(2). We have three papers scheduled for 47(3). So far in 2016 we have received eleven manuscripts; that compares to twelve by this date in 2015 and thirteen in 2014 and 2013. It's a slight decline but we had an alarming two-month lull in submissions from the 10<sup>th</sup> of February to the 11<sup>th</sup> of April. We want everyone to encourage his or her colleagues to contribute to **WB**. Cat sent out an email to the Board asking how do we involve our local professors in encouraging their students to publish. Typically, our rate of rejection has been fairly low but in the last 6 months it has been 6 out of 21. That is something we need to compensate for.

**ACTION ITEM:** All review Cat's email regarding this and pass along your thoughts to her.

**1:28pm Digital Object identifier (DOI)**

**Update:** We have been admitted into the DOI system as of 47(2). We will inaugurate those numbers in the footer for each article and start including DOI numbers where available in the bibliography. Phil tried submitting 47(1) as a test case and ran into glitches so he asked their support people for guidance and expects this will be resolved before the first of June. Tim Brittain is working on trying to format the electronic files for **WB** so that we are picked up by Google Scholar as well as up by regular Google. We found out what the guidelines for Google Scholar are. Google has its robots searching the internet so it's our obligation to be in a format that will be visible to those robots. We think we have done that correctly, but Google Scholar's guidelines say it might be months before they pick us up. The question is whether Tim should go ahead with others even though the test hasn't been verified to be successful yet. We are still waiting for him to give us an estimate on how much time that is going to take per issue or volume. We would want to have our entire history of 47 volumes of **WB** in there. This system is similar to SORA.

Patrick Randall at the Harvard Digital Library contacted Dave Q. about putting WFO into their database. Doing so would raise our exposure with no monies involved.

**ACTION ITEM:** Along with what Dave Q. sends out this weekend he will include a pdf of the email that he received from Patrick Randall and we will take up the issue of whether to participate after people have had a chance to digest this.

**1:37pm Avifaunal Change volume**

**Report:** Dave S. and Bob Gill currently have 28 manuscripts in play, after one was rejected and one was withdrawn. All have been reviewed and returned to authors for revision and we have gotten fourteen back. We are still on track to get this published by the end of the year. Right now we don't have a complete budget. Cat has been contacting some printers and she will report on that. We have an estimate on what it will cost to copy edit it. Dave S. will get some files to Tim Brittain so he can see what the layout will be.

This week Cat sent out the worksheet of our specifications to our potential printer. ABA does print on demand and they have been helpful in having Cat understand the process that would allow us to do that rather than printing and stockpiling copies. We are looking at the cost difference between having something laser printed versus something more traditional, e.g., Allen Press. The advantage to laser printing is that it works for print on demand. The next step is to decide what goes on the cover.

**The Birds of Montana:**

**Update: The Birds of Montana** by Jeff Marks, Paul Hendricks and Casey will be first available in Missoula, MT on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and Buteo Books is taking pre-publication orders. We had been in contact with Jeff on how WFO might be involved in its publication. Joyce Meyer served as a proofreader and Jeff is going to acknowledge her and WFO in the volume. Jeff chose 1889, when MT became a state, as a starting point as to what period of time this book would cover, i.e., history of ornithology and status and distribution of species. Unfortunately (in Dave Q.'s opinion), the book therefore won't include the Passenger Pigeon, which Lewis and Clark encountered in mid-July 1805, when they were portaging around Great Falls.

**1:43pm MEETINGS COMMITTEE**

**41<sup>ST</sup> Annual WFO Conference, Fortuna CA, September 28 to October 2, 2016**

**Report:** We are squared away with the River Lodge Convention Center, which has all the equipment and things that we need, i.e., the rooms, and how to set them up for our needs. The motels are squared away and hopefully people are making their reservations. Nathan Pieplow will do the sound quiz and Ed Harper will do the photo quiz. We are still in contact with Mark Colwell, the keynote speaker. The timeline is that in the first week of May we are going to do a test registration with Regonline. We are going to go live on June 5<sup>th</sup>, Sunday noon, for the Patrons and Life Members and then go live for all the members a week later. The problem is that CFO members will not know about the conference until June 12<sup>th</sup> although they will get an idea of all the field trips so they can decide if they want to go to the conference.

**Note:** The Fortuna Best Western Hotel will charge credit cards 30 days before you show up and there is no change in that room whatsoever including no cancellations. They said that when they discounted blocks of rooms they have to make sure they receive their money. If you make a reservation within the 30 days you have to pay at the higher rate. They are having some other festivals in the fall and if they can get more money for a room they will do it. We might want to add something about this cancellation policy to our accommodations page on the web. Tom will look into this and decide if this is necessary.

**ACTION ITEM:** Tom will decide if we need to list this policy on our accommodations page.

**Pre-conference field trip for CFO members:** Diane has written up a terrific description of the fabulous trip that Jon has planned. The cost comes to \$1950, if we reduce the trip's add-on cost to \$600 instead of \$700, which means that CFO and WFO will each receive a \$300 contribution per attendee. The plan involves Jon meeting in Sacramento a week plus in advance to take CFO members on a field trip which will include a boat trip out of Ft. Bragg on the Tues. prior to the conference, bringing them to the conference to register on Wednesday, and then returning the participants to Sacramento on Monday morning. We had seven people interested before knowing the cost so if the Board agrees to \$600 to be split rather than the \$700 that will keep the cost to CFO members of the add-on trip to under \$2,000. Diane's plan for motels, etc., is excellent and we thank Jon for his generous contribution of leading the trip; to Larry for recruiting participants; to Diane for thinking through the mechanics and making arrangements; and to Karen Havlena for helping arrangements around Mendocino County. We are very confident that the CFO folks will have a great time and hopefully we can arrange a reciprocal agreement in Colorado in advance of our conference there next year. Larry will put a notice out right away about this tour with the plan that a \$500 deposit will be required. We will put a deadline such that if we don't get enough CFO members that it should be opened to WFO members. We need to have the trip description first on the CFO web page so CFO members have the first shot. We said we would keep five slots for CFO members and two slots for WFO members. The trip description will go up next on the WFO website so everybody will have a month's time to review what field trips they might be interested in. It will go up on the CFO page on the WFO website as well. As soon as this is done Ed P. can send a message to WFO members that although they cannot yet register, they can go to the website, download the document, and think about their plans before we open registration. When the field trip is posted Larry can then let the CFO people know and they can send their \$500 deposit to Suzanne. This is going to be a fabulous trip for CFO because there will be a tremendous number of new birds for them if they haven't been to the West Coast before.

**Papers for Science Sessions:** The call for papers has been sent out to a number of folks including all the Board members so they could distribute it as appropriate. We don't think it hurts for folks to get it more than once and from different angles. So if anyone knows of someone who might have something they want to present ask them to contact Steve. We sent out notifications to

Calbirds and any number of California listserves and most of the listserves in WFO's geographic area. Steve already has an abstract from a graduate student in New Mexico. He contacted a number of the Bird Observatories and Mark Colwell at Humboldt State where there are a lot of folks doing wildlife research. The call for papers has been distributed more widely than we did for the Billings Conference last year. Steve also sent it to a number of people who had already expressed an interest in presenting. Steve expects to get some good feedback and it wouldn't be a surprise if we get more interest than we have time for. C.J. Ralph will deliver a plenary presentation to open the Friday science session, but we are still waiting to hear back from him on his exact topic so then we can find somebody with a different topic to open the Saturday session. Steve will be presenting for the CBRC. The Nevada BRC expressed an interest in presenting; it has not yet done so at a WFO conference. We will send a note to the Hawaii BRC.

**ACTION ITEM:** If anyone on the Board wishes to help Steve with the science sessions, please step forward as he will welcome some help.

**Soliciting donations for silent auction (Cat):** We will email notices to members for them to bring books and other things they want to donate, monies from which support our scholarship fund. We will send the notice in one of the first email and in one of the last Fortuna-related email messages to members. It has already been included in the Newsletter that Cat wrote.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dan and Cat, who are organizing the silent auction, will contact Rob Fowler about distribution of leftover books from the silent auction.

**T-shirts:** Kurt has been working with Gary Bloomfield on the t-shirt design of the Gray Jay and it is almost finalized using the coastal sub-species. The color of the t-shirt will probably be blue. We will get a mock-up in the Regonline document soon.

**Regonline registration program:** Regonline is ready for testing. In the email that Dave Q. will send out this weekend he will include a primer to testing Regonline which Susan prepared and the URL which each of you may use to access the registration documents. Susan has done a great job, Frances has run some tests in the last few days, and Regonline looks to be in very good shape but it can use more testing. Only six slots on each field trip and workshop will be available during the period that only Patrons and Life Members can register; all twelve slots will become available once regular members can register.

**ACTION ITEM:** All Board members to test Regonline by conjuring up scenarios that you want to test on the program and make sure everything works according to your needs. The more this is done the more likely we will be able to identify any glitches, typos, etc. Dave Q. will include this information in the email that will go out this weekend.

**Youth field trip/workshop:** Scholarship recipients should be invited and not required to attend this combination field trip/workshop event. Subsequent discussion was on how to handle applicants for scholarship who didn't receive one and how to handle other youths who sign up for the conference but didn't apply for a scholarship for other reasons, e.g., a youth who won a San Diego scholarship so now couldn't apply again. We concluded that likely there wouldn't be any slots available for any adults other than parents of scholarship recipients and other adults in order to handle carpools. We decided not to list the event on Regonline but rather, with Susan and Homer working together, for invitations to attend being sent out individually to scholarship recipients, etc., and leaving it to the organizer, Homer, to arrange enough adults to drive youths on the Saturday morning of the event. The nature of the event will require some iteration back and forth among involved folks but we think

it will be workable. For the workshop Raymond is doing the lecture part on how to do research, etc., and Cat is going to help in presenting methods as to how research may lead to publication.

**Workshops:** All the workshops are in order except for the skins workshop and making sure there is a map on how to get to the parking spaces at Humboldt State University for this workshop. The bios that go along with the workshops are currently listed on Regonline. We do not have an abstract or bio on C.J. Ralph. Colwell's bio needs some work as well. For the two quizzes, Nathan Pieplow is ready but Ed Harper is not. Checking through old publications they did not have the quizzes on the pdf, but they were included in the science program.

**Awards:** We will present the volunteer award to Ed Harper, the Craig Award for exceptional service to WFO over a long period of time to Tim Manolis, and the second Swarth Award to Peter Pyle. Dave Q. has notified Tim and Peter, but not Ed because he is going to be at the conference. Dave Q. asked Board members not to tell others outside of our group of these awards. Peter was very pleased and honored, and he spent considerable time expressing the high regard in which he held Swarth and Swarth's work. Tim was genuinely moved. They will both be there with spouses or significant others. The items awarded will be: Andy Birch's prints for the Service Award and the Craig Award; these have been in for framing for some weeks. Jon needs to be sure that Tom Schultz's painting is ready for reproduction by July for the Swarth Award.

**Note:** We got a very nice photograph of Bob Dickerman from the Museum of Southwest Biology at their spring open house this year. The Swarth Award plaque is on the wall of the lab and above it is a framed photo of Bob himself. In the foreground they laid out some study skins, beautiful preparations of some of the birds that Bob had studied over the years.

Dave Q. has posted on the WFO website commentaries about the honors received by recipients over the last year or so, with the exception of Kathy Molina; Dan is helping him with that commentary. We will also post mention of Bob Dickerman's award on the website.

**ACTION ITEM:** Ken Able, Chairman of the Awards Committee, will ensure that in due time somebody other than Dave Q. writes up website notices for Peter Pyle's, Ed Harper's and Tim Manolis's awards.

For closure it would be nice to have someone say some words about Bob Dickerman at the conference. It needs a delicate touch because we do not want to upstage Peter Pyle's presentation. Andy Johnson wrote a beautiful eulogy on Bob for the AOU. Andy has no objection if we provided a link or reproduced it with an attribution, but the AOU has not responded as yet.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dan and Dave Q. will write something about Bob Dickerman for the website.

**Field Trips:** Dave Q. noted that more than 500 registered for Godwit Days in Humboldt two weekends back. We have additional capacity, but not for 500. We have some extra capacity on the field trips as we have 12 field trips each day for 12 people. We will monitor the registration and decide when we should add more trips that will be going to the same areas but going the opposite way from the first field trip. We should have plenty of capacity in the workshops as they are being held in very large rooms.

**Publicity:** Regarding publicity for both the WFO event and the scholarship event we parceled them out to a number of people and the Outreach Committee. We were able to utilize a lot of electronic websites including listserves for western states. Frances and Cat have an idea of which vendors we will be approaching for our conference.

2:38pm 2017 CONFERENCE IN COLORADO

**Report:** We have good interest for holding the WFO conference in Colorado next year. Larry had a session with Ted Floyd, Bill Kaempfer and Doug Faulkner. We had talked in our prior Board meeting about doing it in late August, possibly early September. Ted Floyd was strongly supporting the latter part of September. Actually all of those times would work, because the fall migration is fairly spread out. The best site is either Fort Collins or Pueblo. Fort Collins is on the north side, closer to Boulder where we had our WFO conference in 2006, but Pueblo won out since the birding is better as you get desert birds, mountain birds and eastern plains warblers. In late August the hummingbirds, flycatchers and the shore migration would be better. All the warbler traps are open and not private. You need a full day trip because you are going further east, near the CO border. There are many reservoirs around there, including Pueblo Reservoir, a state park that does well for water birds. There is wonderful habitat just on the downstream side of the reservoir. There is a very nice Courtyard by Marriott and Convention Center that could handle 300 people with ease. The Convention Center is attached to the Marriott, or very close to it. Across the street is Spring Hill Suites, also owned by Marriott; between the two of them there would be enough rooms to support our convention. Pueblo has many other hotels for people who want to save a few dollars. Although Colorado Springs is 30 minutes away from Pueblo it is also 30 more minutes away from birding, as more of the birding would be centered around Pueblo than around Colorado Springs. Larry spoke with the folks at Pueblo and the only weekend to avoid totally would be September 22<sup>nd</sup> because that is the date of their Chile & Frijoles Festival. Costs go up from \$119 to \$189 per room for that weekend. Those are the charges for this year and we did not try to negotiate any terms for 2017.

The hardest part of traveling to Colorado is to decide which airport to use as we have Denver International (DIA), the one big airport, and many little ones like Grand Junction or Colorado Springs. There is no airport in Fort Collins. It's less than 2 hrs. from Denver to Pueblo, about 130 miles. You can fly into DIA and then take an irregular shuttle from there. You can fly into Colorado Springs but that would mean transferring a plane, as it is a small airport. Flights aren't that much more to Colorado Springs and that's halfway to Pueblo. It might behoove us to look at a car rental agency and ask them for some kind of a deal coming out of DIA. Cat would be happy to work on this with Larry. Within a week, a light rail line is opening up from DIA into Denver, so in one year the car rental rates are going to change quite a bit because people will then have the option of going to rental agencies away from the airport.

The field trip drives are reasonable. There are nice mountain locations nearby and also a nice reservoir about an hour south of Pueblo, and that would include mountain type birds and pinon-juniper type birds. There are many potential field trip leaders there are many available in Pueblo; it is the center of birding in the county birding. Colorado is filled with amazing birders and they share their time and leadership. CFO will work on getting all the field trip leaders. We would be happy to have WFO folks work as co-leaders, too. CFO will help with defining the field trips that would be good and the leaders that will secure them.

Thanks to Larry, Ted, Bill, and Doug who were able to work on this and get us as far as we are at the moment. By our meeting in July, or well before that, we should decide on hotels and the convention center and figure out how they do their business and how they bill its users. Once we can agree on those details it leaves only the negotiation with a hotel or two outstanding at the end of that meeting. Tom and Larry and Dave Q. should get together to figure out what help will be needed to bring us to that point for the July meeting. Ed P.'s great outline with how to put a conference together is a great place to start. According to this timeline, we try to have the location selected 15 months before we start negotiating and have a contract finalized at least a full year

before the conference. We are on time but we need to decide the location and have the negotiation this summer. Three of the names that have come up have kids that have to be back in school and ready to go at the end of August, so we need to take that into consideration as well. The 2017 AOU meeting is in July. We have the possibility of doing two out of state conference's back to back as we have an offer of assistance if we wanted to have the meeting in Alaska the following year, 2018.

**ACTION ITEM: Tom, Larry, and Dave Q. work to advance our knowledge of the Pueblo Convention Center and associated hotels, as outlined above, before July 20.**

### **3:00pm FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE**

**Cuba Trip 2016: Report:** Jon said it was the best trip he has been on there. When he has time, he will write a report and get photos in. Jon worked with Luis again, the herpetologist at the museum. Gary Markowsky made sure that we did not lose any of our hotel reservations around Havana. The Gillilands, two participants on Jon's trip, very publically and with incredible enthusiasm talked about their amazing trip to Cuba. On the survey results seven said excellent so Jon got a perfect score.

Jon would be willing to do another tour maybe October or early November in 2017 if the board approves. In terms of balancing books these donor trips help with that, especially with membership down we need these trips to make up the difference of what the dues bring in and what we spend. We can do at least one Cuba trip a year, as we seem to be able to fill them no matter what. The Board should know that Jon will be doing two Cuba trips next year for Wings and for those he gets paid; obviously he doesn't get paid for the WFO ones. He has told Wings that he will be doing these Cuba trips for WFO on a periodic basis. We thank Jon for his generosity. Jon would work with Gary Markowsky from Cuban Conservation Trust and Kurt in early May on the dates for the trip.

**Central Sierra Trip, June 20-28, 2016:** The planning is really going well. The trip is full. All the money is in (except that we are missing one payment from one participant; Ed will re-contact that person) and all the arrangements are made. We are ready to go.

**Potential Future trips:** Raymond and Kurt have been talking about doing the Rosy-Finch weekend in January 2017. Raymond and Dave Krueper are working out their schedules to find time to do it. Given Raymond's heavy workload, he was hoping to have somebody from the Board help him put the trip together. He will contact Dave K. again this week, otherwise he will have to find someone else who is willing and able to help in order for him to make that happen. Kurt will help on that and see if the trip can happen. In January of 2017 we have a few things. Jon already mentioned the Cuba trip at the end of 2017 and Phil has talked about something in June 2017, maybe at the top of the Palm Springs tramway. We also talked about an October 2017 four-day trip to the Salton Sea. Otherwise we are open to ideas and hope that some other people may step up and lead a trip somewhere. Please feel free to contact Kurt.

### **3:09pm NOMINATING COMMITTEE:**

**Report:** The committee had a conference call about a month and a half ago and we will soon have another conference call. We have a collection of names of people who we had contacted; some have shown interest and some hesitated. We are working on getting some serious contenders and get their CVs in and put together a slate for everybody to consider at the September Board Meeting. For the three slots available, we are going to have five candidates to present. The Nominating Committee members, Jon, Cat, Raymond and Bob will have some great candidates for you to consider. If you folks have anybody you think could be a great Board member with

leadership and potential officer abilities, please send their name to Tom and he will make arrangements to contact them. Board members will have material on the candidates to review well before the election at the Annual Board Meeting on Thursday, September 29. We will invite the folks whom the Nominating Committee has come up with to attend the Board meeting so that if they get elected, they get a leg up on what is going on in the Board and what is coming up in the next year.

**3:15pm    Motion to adjourn made by Cat and seconded by Kurt and passed unanimously.**