

Presidents Message

Hello everyone!

The show season is upon us I just returned home from the Twin Tier show. Numbers were up to 1104 birds. As always our club members did well, there were 7 birds on champion row from our members (no thanks to George), just kidding. I was proud to win super grand champion of show that was dedicated to a good friend that past away last year Bill Whitney. He was a true fancier and a great man. Even though the weather was not the best everyone had a good time. Many people said that for an early show the birds were of high quality.

We also had our lawn show at Mr. and Mrs. Ziehms house last month. We had a lot of fun but the turn out was very disappointing, we might reconsider having more of them because of the amount of work that goes into putting one on and the participation doesn't seem to average out! In any case the big winner was George Beyer on a light brown leghorn pullet and reserve was Bill Ziehms Rhode Island Red cockerel. Both birds were super!!! Mark Camerii from Canada did the judging and everyone was happy with the results and he explained his placing at the end which turned out to be a learning tool. Thanks again to the Ziehms for hosting the event.

Hope we have a good turn out at this month's meeting, we have alot to go over and a few members suggested some changes in our club, so join us to have your input!

Rick Hare

Vice Presidents Message

Hi everyone,

Hard to believe the fair is over and the fall shows are upon us. This has been one dry summer, my pond is down over seven feet, I've only seen it that low once before. I also believe the dry weather contributing to my success in raising so many Calls this year. I didn't hatch as many as last year but only four ducks didn't make it to adulthood (out of 140). Last year I hatched almost 200 but had major losses battling cocci among other issues. Those of us keeping waterfowl know they can make a mess anywhere there is water so dry conditions are a great help keeping things clean.

I hatched out a few decent gray and magpie Calls but got some real nice snowy's this year. One little snowy female in particular turned out as nice as a good gray (in my eyes), we'll see how she does at the fall shows especially at Lucasville in October. Speaking of Lucasville, I hope everyone can make it being the APA National show so close to home. I hate to miss Mumford being one of my favorite shows but the national isn't close to us very often.

My wild waterfowl did ok through the summer, I did hatch around 30 wood ducks, some Mandarins and Bahama Pintails. Everything else is still young and not ready to produce yet. The one big difference between domestic and wild: domestics almost always reproduce their first year of life while wild waterfowl can take up to four years which is why they cost more.

Funny short story- I purchased a pair of Cacklers (miniature Canada geese) three years ago and they finally laid this year. The female had been setting on five eggs for about two weeks when I noticed more eggs in her nest. I thought maybe a duck was dump nesting but the eggs were way too big to come from anything I have. Another week went by and the other Cackler starting setting, then it dawned on me: I have two females and of course, nine clear eggs – DOH!

Sincerely,
Chris Choate

Secretary's Message

Secretary's Report
Fall, 2007

Welcome back to regular meetings beginning September 25th. We are always looking forward to any type of program should anyone wish to take on that task. It doesn't have to be long, but informative. Think about it, please.

I was unable to make the July meeting, due to being out-of-town and once again, I was unable to make the Lawn Show for the same reason. I've been away a lot this summer with judging shows and fairs. A few more and then we're into the regular show season once again.

Our Erie County Fair was a good one again, largely due to the efforts of Barb Clarkson and Rick Hare. They did a fine job with the setup and various displays, making an attractive building for the fairgoers. Congratulations to all who helped in that endeavor!

My own birds are doing well, although the breeders are all in various stages of molting. This is the time of the year when each time you visit the yard, another youngster takes your attention and turns your head. Yes! There will be some good ones out there! It has been so hot and dry here, but the vegetable garden has produced in spite of that. The chickens have been getting lots of treats from its bounty: zucchini and yellow squash, lettuce, etc. Now, there are the usual clumps of chickweed coming up in the garden and I feed that, too. I wonder about where that name came from, as the chickens sure do love it!

Hope to see you all on the 25th!
Paul

Q & A from The Poultry Connection

Q: I just can't get over the fact as to how the exhibition show there (NY state fair) has gone down hill. Am I missing something here? All entries were down. Pigeon section has been moved down to the poultry section with pigeon names on bantams, and bantam names on pigeons. Is there a health reason not many are showing? I know the hobby is not what it used to be but, are all states in this shape? I would like to hear from breeders in New York as to what I can do. If anything.

A: I just talked to one of the judges. The numbers are up 300 over last year to 1200+. He said the pigeons were moved downstairs because of handicap accessibility regulations. Things are tagged OK but the pigeon classes are scattered among the poultry classes, which he thought strange. He said the quality of birds shown is about what it always is for State Fair....pretty good to junk. This is generally the case for this fair due to the fact that the birds are there for **13 days** & most breeders aren't going to risk the loss of their best stock to theft or death. Many bring in their best on judging day (yesterday & today) & rotate them back out for the remainder of the fair.

A: That's one issue. Most serious exhibitors are not going to leave their quality birds unattended for so long, even at fairs which do care for the birds, leaving us to trust that whatever free or cheap help they can hire will be capable enough to see that things get done right. Then there's the huge crowds of the not so well informed public, maybe with an occasional animal rights nut mixed in. Even the best fair staff can't watch every row of cages at every minute. It's often a chore just to get to your birds if you want to check on them yourself, often having to pay outrageous parking and/or entry fees, fighting traffic, parking a mile away, etc.

Fairs vary greatly, but often in my part of the country they're entered by either stringmen or the average backyarder who has no idea what a show bird should even look like, and doesn't really care. He just wants the excitement of entering at the fair and thinks it's a big deal when his one entry in his variety brings home a blue ribbon. The stringmen are all but gone, and much fewer of the general public keep chickens any more, so there are fewer who feel like tolerating all that they need to put up with to enter at the big fairs.

IMO, it's not only the length of time that the birds need to be cooped that is the problem. It's when it gets combined with the other issues that surround the big fairs that discourage people. I thought that the time frame at Indy was perfect, and judging by the number of entries, I'd say that a lot of others did too. Often at other shows, there's barely time to get your birds settled, look around the show, attend meetings, and visit with all whom you'd like. At Indy, IMO, there was plenty of time to do all of that, and just to relax too.

Q: Does your poultry attract alot of snakes? I've only had poultry about 3 years now and this year has been the worst for snakes. I have alot more birds this year as compared to last year and the snakes have been unreal! My poultry addiction just may have an end in sight! I've removed 4 bull snakes from inside the coop getting eggs and moved 2 from near the pen, and killed 2 rattlesnakes near the pen. And the pen is close to our garage & house. I'm thinking either the more birds I have, the more snakes; or it's just an unlucky year for snakes! The bull snakes I can tolerate, but to see a rattlesnake heading inside our garage makes me think twice about having so many birds! Last year I had 14 (geese,ducks,ckns) and now I have 51. What do you think? The more birds, the more snakes – This person lives in Colorado.

A: I can probably beat you hands down on snakes!!! LOL. I think there might be a missing piece of the puzzle. The chicken feed helps attract rodents which help attract snakes. I have a regiment of barn cats to help with rodent control but still this year there have been a lot of snakes due to heavier than normal rains. The floods have brought out the copperheads and cottonmouths in droves. Personally, I'd rather deal with rattlesnakes than the copperheads and cottonmouths. I'm originally from West Texas and at least rattlesnakes will give you a warning. Copperheads just lie there blending in to the scenery until you step on them. I can deal with them better than the cottonmouths though. Cottonmouths can get really aggressive. The bull snakes are actually not that bad to have around as they could deter the rattlesnakes. Bull snakes can scare the dickens out of you if you provoke them!!! LOL. Another snake that I have that is basically good to have around for rodent control is our Texas Rat Snake. For the most part they mind their own business looking for rodents but they will eat eggs and small bantams if given the opportunity. Most I see are in the 5-6 foot range. I couple of years ago I had problems with one that I never saw but knew it was around because it had a taste for African goose eggs!!!! I looked high and low for it. I found the skin and figured out I probably wouldn't really want to find it anyway!!! LOL. The Rat Snakes are harmless but a 6 footer can scare the dickens out of you when they fall out of the rafters on top of you.....trust me! LOL. Texas

A: Check your rodent population. It is more likely that spilled feed/available feeders are making the area a mouse heaven and the snakes are there to eat the rodents. IMO your best bet is to try to stop feeding the rodents. The snakes will clean out the few that are left and then leave, looking for better hunting elsewhere. NC

A few Quotes from Will Rogers

Never slap a man chewing tobacco.

Never kick a cow chip on a hot day.

There are two theories to arguing with a woman... neither works.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

Always drink upstream from the herd.

If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

Good judgment comes from experience and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

If you're riding ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure they're still there.

Lettin' the cat outta the back is a whole lot easier than putting it back in.

There are two kinds of men: The ones that learn by reading and the ones that learn by observation. The rest have to pee on the electric fence and find out for them.

Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf.

2007 Fall Meeting Schedule:

All meetings are held on last Tuesday of the month at the Moose in Lancaster, 8pm. I will send reminders out a week before meetings.

The following dates are scheduled:

September 25th

October 30th

November 27th

December TBA- Last Tuesday is Christmas

For Sale / Wanted

I have some 2007 hatch birds available right now including:

- Calls in Magpie & Snowy (pet quality \$25/pair and breeder quality \$50/pair).
- White Calls in pet quality \$25/pair.
- Silver Appleyard ducks \$20/pair
- Toulouse geese \$50 each
- Wood ducks \$45/pair

Anyone interested can reach me (Chris Choate) at cchoate@excite.com or 585-815-7654.

You can see this or any other past news letter at our website:

www.freewebs.com/wnypoultryclub

Buffalo & WNY Poultry Association Fall 2007

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Reminder for 1st meeting of the fall – September 25, 8pm at the Moose in Lancaster.



