

Presidents Message

Hello everyone!

The show season is over for 2007 and once again our members did very well in all parts of the country. The first show in 2008 is Springfield Mass.; this show is very good and is only about 6 hrs away from Buffalo (in good weather). I have been showing there for many years and have never had to cancel because of weather, usually when you get past Batavia you have it made. Many of us are making the trip, hopefully we will make the club proud once again.

It's time to start thinking about the 2008 hatching season, I have about 40 chicks out this week. Many people think it is difficult raising chicks in the winter but I have better luck with the colder weather raising young birds than when it's warm. Depending on your barn you can get away with one or two heat lamps. I usually run two that way if one goes out you have a back up. Most of the breeders in the country start out early (especially large fowl). They get a chance to develop for the early fall shows and most of the shows are in Sept and Oct.

On a sad note, the hobby lost one of the best breeders and a good friend Shelby Harrington. Anyone that knew Shelby knows how special the man was. I will miss him!

I hope everyone has a great Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year!!!!

Until then,
Rick Hare

Vice Presidents Message

Hi everyone,

Well, the fall shows are behind us and as usual many of our members put birds on champion row at most of them. This years APA national was hosted by the Southern Ohio Poultry Association in Lucasville. With over 4,000 birds there was plenty to do and see. It was also very hot (upper 80's), especially for October, so the birds needed extra care to make sure they didn't over heat. The show was also held national meets for many breed clubs including The Call Duck Breeders. The little snowy pullet I mentioned in the last newsletter took national champion of the variety.

The Columbus show in November had almost 4,400 entries and well over 1,000 sale birds. Quite a few of our members attended but it was one of those rare years where we didn't put much on champion row. I'm sure next year our birds will be back up there were they belong. I know the Ohio shows have a fair amount of politics but I still enjoy them. It's just great to see that many birds and most of the countries top breeders all in one place. I also sell the majority of my extra stock at Columbus and make a decent buck doing it.

Two of my favorite things to do are building structures and of course, raising waterfowl and poultry. The two tie right into each other as there is always something to build, fix or improve. This past year I finished construction on a second aviary with a natural pond and a winter building for some of my waterfowl that are sensitive to the cold. I've started enclosing another of my duck pens so I can leave them outside day and night with very little worry from predators. Right now everything gets locked up at night in buildings where I have never had any predator problems. I've also run water lines and electric to pretty much everything to cut down on hard labor chores – can't remember the last time I dragged a bucket of water to my birds.

I just bought an enclosed trailer for hauling birds to and from shows, auctions, etc. It sure beats cramming birds, cages, boxes, feed and carts into my mini-van. Most times I'd have to leave things home because I just didn't have the room. Now I can bring everything needed and even start showing some larger birds like my Toulouse and slate turkeys. Don and I go to most shows together and between his guineas and my calls trying to out do each-other in the back, you can't hear anything else (plus the mess they make). Now they can carry on all they want in the trailer. My first show with it will be a good test, Springfield, Mass in January. Hopefully the weather won't be too horrible.

Sincerely,
Chris Choate

Secretary's Message

Hello, everyone! Our Buffalo & Western New York Club has been well represented at many of the fall shows around the country. Rick Hare and I judged the Sea Side Poultry Fanciers show in California in October and really enjoyed a whirlwind trip out west. Our club members have exhibited at the APA National in Lucasville, Ohio and at the ABA National in Harrington Delaware, sponsored by the Delmarva Club. Many significant awards were won with birds from western New York State. They always know we're there!

At this time of year we all begin to wonder why we keep chickens, having to tend them with daily chores. I couldn't keep chickens in the winter if I didn't use the sheet metal drums with a 15-watt bulb underneath for the water jugs to sit on. A quick glance tells me that the bulb is lit and the water will be unfrozen in the morning. I clean my water cups and the water jugs once a week by bringing them in and washing them with dish detergent. It is surprising how dirty they get even in the winter! I cut the bottom out of a gallon jug and place it over the top of the water jug. This keeps the chickens from jumping up there and/or roosting on it and their droppings from fouling the water. Try it; it works very well!

Many of us are looking forward to the Northeastern Poultry Congress show in West Springfield, Massachusetts the 12th and 13th of January. This is a great show with the birds in prime condition. After all, it is before breeding season and their plumage is in fully to protect them from the weather. Any of you who have never attended this show, really should strive to do so. You will be amazed at the wonderful people you meet and the different birds you see. Each area of the country affords the possibility of seeing birds we don't have around here. Making new friends is also a huge part of the poultry fancy.

Our Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for my house on the 29th of January, 2008. It is this meeting that we decide what will change and what will remain constant at our next shows. We also decide on which judges to contact for the 2009 show. Our 2008 judges are Lewis Cunningham and Gary Overton, from Ohio. If you have a favorite judge, be sure to inform one of our directors or officers so that their name is suggested.

Many thanks to all members who attend the meetings regularly and to those who bring snacks. We hope to have a new meeting place beginning in March of 2008 when our meetings resume. Dues will be collected at that meeting. Send them to me if you cannot attend.

I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year to you all!

Paul Kroll

Some News and Notes

Elections were held at the November meeting and our Officers and directors are the following:

Officers

President – Rick Hare

Vice President – Chris Choate

Secretary – Paul Kroll

Treasurer – Bill Ziehm

Directors

George Beyer – 1 year

Bruce Robinson – 1 year

Steve Wojtkowiak – 2 years

Ed Thomson – 2 years

Don Perrin – 3 years

-For anyone who missed it, check out page 29 in December's Poultry Press, there is a nice article on the APA honoring Paul Kroll. It gives some great insight on the many contributions Paul has made over the years.

-We will be holding our board of directors meeting at Paul's house (Two Rod Rd) on Tuesday, January 29th at 7:30pm.

For Sale / Wanted

I have some 2007 hatch birds available right now including:

--Wood ducks \$40/pair, extra females \$20 each

--Standard Barred Rocks \$40/pair, Guy Roy bloodline.

--3 Canada geese, 2007 hatch, pinioned, 2 females & 1 male. Very nice birds. \$25each

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

Q & A from The Poultry Connection

Q: I was reading the posts on how to give your ducks water in the winter. This has always been a trial for me. For a few winter's I attempted to keep a waterer in the coop for the chickens & Ducks(calls). The calls just made an absolute disaster of it. Water everywhere, no matter what I did.

I had a heated pad that I sat a waterer on; I even elevated it and built steps up to it. Those darn ducks still climbed up there and played in the water all day.

The past 2 winter's I have kept water outside for them by filling up the small rubber pans 2 xs per day. I lock them in the coop during the night without water; and let them out all day. I even do this in the summer, and I haven't had any problems with sick birds.

I guess my main question is- "Why do they need to have water all night?" Chickens sleep all night, and while I know the ducks are more active at night; is it detrimental to them to not have water access during the night? I also don't give any heat to my ducks; they have heavy bedding in their coop; and are able to go in/out of their run all day. Even in cold weather they'll sit outside on top of the snow. My chickens are normally okay except when we have biting cold spells like last winter. I did have to get a heat lamp for my chickens when it got exceptionally cold. No problems with my calls.

A: Here in Canada the weather drops pretty cold.

We have found heated water bowls used outside to the savior on our farm! They never freeze and yet are big enough for all the ducks to enjoy. The only thing we find is you need to make sure there is water in them at all times...even though the heating element will turn off automatically we don't want them to burn out if you know what I mean.

Also, all water is given outside...years back we had all water bowls inside and then when we built the new big runs ALL water was moved outside and to the far end...thus ensuring that that the inside would remain dry and it sure does!

We have also used crushed stones and patio stones for the birds to walk on and this also ensures great drainage!!

Calls are very hardy...but they hate drafts (don't we all) we also have used straw bales placed around the barn and in runs to cut down drafts...we have found that on windy days they will dart and hide behind the bales...we also wrap the bottom of the runs in plastic.

Q: What do people use to help their birds stay warm, metabolically, in the cold weather?

A: you might want to include some cat food. It is high in fat, and also in protein. You could also feed the birds some of their regular diet mixed with hot water and include some source of fat like lard, butter, vegetable oil, or some other kind of fat (whatever is cheapest). Mix this together till it's the consistency of ketchup, and they will soon learn to love it.

A: I give my birds some scratch (whole grains) in the morning and evening on cold days. It's supposed to keep them warm, as the digestion process generates heat.

A: Spanish peanuts or sunflower are good sources of fat. I always give my birds whole corn in very cold weather. I would guess corn is mainly carbs. I'd watch the fat in winter if their not working for a living.

Q: Does anybody have any advice on how to prevent frostbite on the rooster's comb and also what to do if it happens? We live in Northern NY and have had quite a bit of single digit temps this month. One of my roosters, a Buff Orpington, looks like the top half of his comb got frozen. My Barred Rock has just a tiny dark spot on one of the tips. All the roosters with the rose combs look fine. I'm afraid of what will happen when we get our inevitable subzero temps for days at a time. They spend their nights in a hoop house that is covered with plastic, then a layer of blankets, then a tarp. The snow is piled pretty high on the sides and back. They spend most days outdoors no matter how cold it is. They only seem to stay in if it's snowing hard. The coop house is 8 x 12 and we have 46 chickens. It has about a foot of deep litter on the floor

A: The only way to keep them from freezing is to provide heat for the house. I live in South Dakota, and we sometimes get weeks when it stays below 0. The only ones whose combs don't freeze are those that are kept inside in a heated building. A frozen comb doesn't seem to hurt them though. They look painful, but soon fall off and the bird is back to normal. Some say that putting vaseline on the comb works, but I've never had luck with that. Of course, -25 is going to freeze most combs off any bird, even rose combs.

A: You coop may be collecting moisture through condensation. That's what causes frozen combs when the temps are above zero. Forty six birds in an 8 x 12 space is an awful lot & they're giving off a lot of body heat. I have only 4 chickens in a building that size & it's well ventilated under the eaves. No comb problems since we ripped all the heavy insulation out.

Buffalo & WNY Poultry Association winter 2008

Chris Choate
9524 Beaver Rd
Alexander, NY 14005

Reminder for board of directors meeting – Tuesday Jan 29th, 7:30 @ Paul's house



