

Helmet Happenings

From the Editor

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I apologize for this issue being later than usual. I received the mailing labels at the end of May. This was just in time for my company to announce that the next 3 Fridays were mandatory overtime. We normally work four 10 hr shifts Mon-Thu. To mail the newsletters I drive to Sombra, take the ferry to Marine City Michigan and mail from the post office there. A \$50 mailing there would cost \$110 in Canada. This saves the club a lot of money in postage so I waited until June 27th to mail this issue.

I think it is important to keep our money reserve as high as possible. Attendance at shows has been dropping. Apparently California now requires a vet certificate for pigeons entering or leaving the state. I heard that Florida did this also. If these states enforce this, it will cost breeders to get their vet certifications. I believe this and higher airfare to ship pigeons may drop show attendance even further with the corresponding loss of income to the club.

I have saved one article received from Myron Berger for the next issue. That is all I currently have. Could I please get some district reports or other articles as soon as possible so I can get the next issue out sooner. I know it is hard this time of year to come up with something. Why don't some of you just let me know how your breeding season is going so far, how is the quality of your young ones etc. How is the cost of feed in your area affecting you? Just drop me an email at paul.mcrae@navistar.com It would be interesting to see how everyone is doing. I will also look on the Helmet Site to see what I can pull off there.

New Member

Ray Kolinski
215 Mexico St
Boswell Pa. 15531
Ph: 814 289-7036

Email: Rays-AnimalParadise@yahoo.com

Medium Faced as Parents

By Myron Berger

I maybe wrong. I believe the inability of the MF crested to adequately feed their young began many years ago when the price of a good helmet soared. (The demand for good helmets exceeded the supply.) Many breeders began to pump their pairs to achieve maximum numbers of young.

By doing this the MF crested have lost their parenting ability as they were not required to raise any young - just produce fertile eggs. Without the stimulus of setting and raising young the desire to reproduce has diminished. Failure to select for reproduction as well as for looks has been a steep price to pay for the MF crested and the Helmet breed.

Many MF plain head and short face crested can and do feed and will feed their own young or for a short face they will feed any medium to long beak young.

One of our top breeders is trying to produce MF that will raise their own young by crossing plain head MF to his crested birds. Hopefully this will work and again make the MF a good producing Helmet. Only time will tell.

Each breeder can do their part by selection of quality Helmets that also will raise their own young.

I don't believe the MF are too inbred because of all the crossing done in the past. This should have increased hybrid vigor, but I have my doubts because of the selection for certain traits such as bigger, better crest.

Reflections on Judging

By Bob Bollinger

This past fall I had the opportunity to judge at several helmet shows. I found this to be a very interesting experience. I judged MFP's at the NYBS, then the Western Sectional at San Bernardino, and the CHC National meet at Woodstock, ON.

The first thing that was striking at these shows was the excitement and camaraderie of all the helmet fanciers. I saw nice crowds at all places and people seemed to really enjoy one another. In the Mid-West and Northeast we have seen dwindling attendance at shows over the last few years. Our core group of fanciers routinely attends, but the crowds have been less. Seeing nice groups at other places really gives me hope for the club. In all clubs there is a certain ebb and flow of members over time. It is refreshing to see different areas pick up when other areas go down. This gives me a feeling of optimism and balance.

I saw a lot of really nice birds at all the shows I judged. I think that the overall quality of our helmets continues to improve. There were high quality birds shown by many different breeders from different areas. I also noticed large classes of high quality colors. Specifically, the number and quality of yellow and blue MFCs was outstanding. The colored birds were in the hunt for top positions at most shows. I think the days of reds and blacks being king are gone. In the past there had been rumblings of regional differences in our birds. I was pleased to notice that most of the birds I judged were comparable from region to region.

The judging areas at our shows continue to be very nice. We have banners, backgrounds, and sometimes lights and skirting. I even heard passers by making comments about how nice our judging areas looked. Extra credit needs to be given to Mike LaCom. For the Western Sectional, Mike built special lights and stands for the judging area. These put the birds at eye level with good light to view them nicely. He also added skirting and decorations to top everything off. Not only did Mike do the building work, he also hauled everything to the show and set it up. VERY IMPRESSIVE!

The common theme I noticed at all shows was the camaraderie and classiness of the helmet breeders. Everyone was cordial and appreciative to get the thoughts of the judge. There were a lot of questions and good discussions at all meets. I would like to especially note the hospitality of the CHC fanciers at Woodstock. They had a really nice show with a lot of really good people. If you have the chance to get up there for a show it will be well worth your trip.

Responding to Lost Bird Calls

By Bob Bollinger

I am starting to get more and more calls and emails regarding lost helmets. There is also a lot of discussion in the pigeon magazines regarding calls about lost birds. It seems that there are more and more organized efforts out there where "Good Samaritans" are trying to help lost pigeons find their homes. Much of this has been enabled by the web where people can quickly search for information and get contact numbers / email for bird's owners.

We all need to be very responsive and professional when contacted by these groups. Many times people are very concerned and worried about the birds. To them they are lost pets and they feel sadness much like when a child loses a puppy. If we appear callous or uncaring that looks very bad for the hobby. Worse yet, I have heard on occasions when some racing homer fanciers have told people to just kill the bird because it is a cull. Imagine how appalled someone would be if they thought they were doing a great deed of returning a lost pet to find out it is destined to be killed. We need to police ourselves and encourage each other to promptly respond to lost bird calls. If the bird is near by we should go pick it up in a timely manner. If we sold the bird, we should do our best to help contact the owner and see that it is picked up. We should always heartily thank the people for their efforts and care!

Sometimes the birds are found dead. People just want us to know what happened to our lost pets. Again we should express remorse and appreciation for their efforts to help us find closure for our loss.

In our discussions we should help the public understand appreciate our hobby. We can tell them about all the fun we have and how our birds are well cared for. After all, they are professional athletes and show animals. The people who go to the effort to find us already like animals. This is a great time to market ourselves. We need to make sure that we leave people with a POSITIVE impression and message.

HELMET ARTICLE

Sorry fella's for missing the latest bulletin dead-line. Working for someone else does not leave me a lot of free time. I leave the house for work at 7a.m., back in the house after Helmets are fed, around 7p.m., for dinner. Maybe read the paper or pigeon publication, to bed at 9 p.m. When I worked for myself I had time to write articles or at the least, make notes to use when I would get at 3 p.m....Is this excuse okay?!!

My breeding season is moving slow. Only one SF Helmet, two MF Helmets, 10 PH in young bird pen. The weather just doesn't seem to help with producing young. No spring hear yet. I believe Myron Berger is still shoveling snow from his driveway & from the back door to his loft! Vic Eshpeter says the mountain he lives on has broken records for snowfall. When I last talked with him, he had no young, and was shoveling snow off the roof of his loft.

James Jensen and I have been working on anniversary items for the 50th AHA birthday – hats, buttons, and T-shirts. These items will be available soon for purchase from Chuck-club secretary. All promotional items advertising our 50th Anniversary will be available at our fall helmet meets.

Myron Berger is working on the 50th Anniversary year book. Please help support this huge effort by sending pictures, advertisements & articles to Myron. A new committee has been formed, made up of Giulio Marcoccia, Dennis Manning, Myron Berger and Dennis Bray. This committee is working on proposing Spread Ash Red & Yellow as part of our color standard. This new color proposal is as follows:

Spread Ash Red – altered by spread which brings about a uniform ashy coloration to the plumage in our helmets. While this can vary in shades from a very soft pastel blue to almost lavender like appearance, the most color points should be awarded to birds with clear non-smutty lavender coloration and matching head and tail.

Spread Ash Yellow is the dilute description, being creamy yellow, uniform color matching head, tail.

There has been confusion in past shows as to what color class the spread ashes should be entered into, AOC or Ash Red. These spreads do not fall into either class. I'd like to get input from all on this proposal. Once we come to agreement on the description, it'll be put to a club vote for acceptance.

With the increasing costs of feed & fuel, how do you think our upcoming show season will be affected? I just bought 50 lbs of feed for \$25.99. Airfare to ship pigeons to the big shows out of state has doubled- \$150 one way now.

Let's do our best to support the shows this year. Good luck in the breeding pen....

As Ever, Dennis Bray

Secretary's Report

By Charles Dwight

Things have been very slow here. I have only heard from a couple of members. One has ended his breeding season with 60 banded. The other is having a very slow start.

Fiftieth anniversary promotional items have arrived, and look very nice. You can order them through the mail or buy them at the National Young Bird Show, AHA Sectional shows or at the AHA National show.

Voting on the revised Constitution is over. The results are as follows:

26 votes cast. 13 by email. 13 by snail mail

25 yes votes and 1 no vote.

Therefore the revisions have passed.

Treasurer's Report

March / April 2008

By Charles Dwight

Income

Dues	\$135.00
Bands	\$77.00
Band Postage	\$8.00
Total	\$220.00

Expenses

Postage	\$11.144
½ 2009 bands	\$450.00
50 year promo items	\$400.00
Supplies	\$9.85
Stamps	\$82.00
Total	\$952.99

Totals

March Starting Balance	\$3379.97
Income	\$220.00
	Balance \$3599.97
Expenses	\$952.99

April Ending Balance \$2646.98

2007 GENERAL MEETING

Meeting was called to order by President Dennis Bray on January 26, 2008 at 10:00am.

Members in Attendance:

Betty Flinn	Dist. 6
Tony Patti	Dist. 12
Paul McRae	Dist. 10
Giulio Marcoccia	Dist. 10
Steve Petitto	Dist. 5
Raul Delgado	Dist. 12
Mike Crawford	Dist. 7
Harold Strawniak	Dist. 7
Bob Bollinger	Dist. 7
Vic Eshpeter	Dist. 2
Hank Ebbelaar	Dist. 2
Dennis Bray	Dist. 2
Shane Aherns	Dist. 3
Charles Dwight	Dist. 6

Officer Report:

Reports were given by all officers present. Some Districts had good shows, others were down or had no shows due to lack of members.

Secretary's report was read, motion to accept by Bob Bollinger, seconded by Raul Delgado.

Treasurer's report was passed out and discussed. Motion to accept by Mike Crawford, seconded by Steve Petitto.

Old Business:

Constitution:

Revised constitution has been approved by the Board of Directors, and has been printed in the latest bulletin. It will be printed again in the next bulletin, then will be voted on by the membership. Votes will be taken by mail or e-mail.

If passed by the membership the constitution will be on the AHA web site. Hard copies will be printed 8 1/2" by 11". Hard copies will only be sent to new members or by request. Motion by Hank Ebbelaar, second by Vic Eshpeter.

Muffed Helmet Standard:

Harold Strawniak questioned if the muffed standard had ever been voted on. Secretary reported that it has been voted on and accepted, but no Master Breeder Points schedule has been part of the standard.

New Business:

Band Postage:

Secretary reported that the price of postage to mail 100 bands has risen to \$1.30 plus the cost of the envelope.

Secretary also reported that a few members do not send money for postage when ordering bands. Board of Directors instructed secretary not to send bands until postage is paid.

Motion to raise band postage to \$2.00 made by Hank Ebbelaar, second by Tony Patti.

Band Order:

Secretary reported that 330 2007 bands were not sold. Orders for 2008 bands are lower than previous years up until now. Motion to lower 2009 band order to 3000 bands made by Betty Flinn, second by Tony Patti.

50 Year Anniversary:

President Dennis Bray reminded everyone that 2008 is the 50th anniversary of the American Helmet Association. He asked for suggestions on how to celebrate this anniversary. Also would like to see someone volunteer to put together a 50th anniversary year book.

National Champion Pins:

This show used the last of the pins for National Champions. Minimum order for pins is 100. We will check prices. Vic Eshpeter mover to buy 100 pins at the lowest price available, seconded by Betty Flinn.

AHA medals

Secretary has 75 AHA medals. Suggested that they be given as color class awards at future national shows.

2008 Election:

Nominations and voting ballots have a very poor response for the last couple of elections. People who have been nominated do not want to hold offices. Secretary had to beg people to accept nominations. Secretary requested that people contact who they are going to nominate to see if they would accept the nomination before nominating them.

Breeder of the year:

We have not had a Breeder of the year since 2005. It is the responsibility to apply for this by sending their Master Breeder points for young birds only to the secretary. Breeder of the year is available for all varieties.

Hall of Fame Birds:

We have not had a Hall of Fame Bird since 1992. Requirements are too high and need to be reviewed and changed.

Order Sheets in Bulletin:

Order sheets have not been in the last two bulletins, need to be there. Nation pins and medals should be removed from order sheet.

Web Sites:

After discussion about have two web sites Hank Ebbelaar moved to pay for both web sites, second by Giulio Marcoccia.

Cost of Awards:

Cost of awards gets higher every year. Rebate from shows does not cover the cost of the awards. We will not buy reserve awards in the future unless numbers increase.

Bulletin:

Paul McRae asked if we could go to a quarterly bulleting instead of bi-monthly. Member agreed we need to stay bi-monthly.

Cooping Birds:

Discussion was held on cooping birds by the exhibitor instead of by color. This will be done at future shows.

Motion to adjourn by Vic Eshpeter, second by Tony Patti.

2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Meeting was called to order by President Dennis Bray on January 24, 2008 at 7:00 pm.

Members in attendance :

Dennis Bray	President-West. V. Pres.
Hank Ebbelaar	Dist. 2
Steve Petitto	Dist. 5
Bob Bollinger	Dist. 7
Vic Eshpeter	Dist 2
Charles Dwight	Dist. 6-Sec/Tres.

Minutes of the 2006 meeting were read. Motion to accept by Hank Ebbelaar, second by Steve Petitto.

Officers Reports:

Some districts had good shows, others were down or had no shows due to lack of members.

Old Business:

Secretary reported that the revised constitution has been accepted by the Board of Directors, and the first printing is in the latest bulletin.

The Board recommended that if the constitution is accepted by the membership that it be printed on 8 1/2 " by 11". Copies will only be sent to new members or by request. Constitution will be on the AHA website.

New Business:

Band Postage:

Cost of postage to mail bands was discussed. Price to mail 100 bands is \$1.30 plus cost of envelope. Recommendation to raise cost of postage to \$2.00.

Band Order:

330 2007 bands were not sold. Secretary suggested reducing 2009 band order to 3000 bands.

50 year anniversary:

2008 is the 50th anniversary of the AHA. Several ways to celebrate this were discussed. Will be discussed more at the general meeting.

National Champion Pins:

Secretary reported that we have just enough pins for this show. Secretary had 2 quotes for new pins, but they were very high. Vic Eshpeter will check other prices.

Medals:

We have about 75 medals. Secretary reported that for \$1.00 a plate for Best of Color could be made, and they could be used for color classes at national shows.

2008 Election:

Secretary reported that response to nomination and election ballots was very poor. We need to get more response. Also reported that most nominees refused to run when contacted. We need to check with who we are nominating before we nominate them.

Breeder of the Year:

We have not had a Breeder of the Year since 2005. No one is turning in their points.

Hall of Fame Birds:

We have not had a Hall of Fame bird since 1992. Does something need to be changed?

Order Sheets in Bulletins:

The order sheet has not been in the last 2 bulletins. Needs to be put back in.

Web Sites:

Web sites were discussed. Bob Bollinger stated that he did not think that we should pay for Pavel' site.

All of this will be brought up at the general meeting. There were not enough directors present for a quorum so nothing could be voted on .

Re-Inventing Ourselves By Bob Bollinger

Several of us have been watching the club and our breed for a while. We seem to have a number of common observations and concerns. I think Chuck summed them up in a previous bulletin. Let's face it, our helmets don't feed like they used to and newcomers routinely get frustrated. Our club membership has been dropping for years and the number of helmets shown also continues to decrease. We even have difficulty getting more than a hand full of members to nominate and vote on club issues.

On the good news front; we have a lot of really devoted and die hard helmet breeders that support shows all across the country. At shows people often gravitate to the helmet section to enjoy the fun and fellowship of our good group of people. Our birds are equally likeable and people show great interest in them. We also have a very well organized club with a long legacy. We are entering our 50th anniversary year and many of our members have been there for much of our history.

We have seen many individuals coming forward to help the club. Mike LaCom and Victor Cline have taken the initiative in districts 1 & 14 to coordinate many nice shows. Vic Cardillo offered to judge the NYBS so others could show. Dennis Manning has authored nice articles for the Purebred Pigeon that showcase our birds in a very good light. CHC members have even stepped up to help our club and the breed. For the last few years we have seen significant numbers of birds shown at AHA meets by our friends from the North. Most importantly Paul McRae even stepped up to be our bulletin editor in our time of need.

So where does this leave us? We have many great attributes and people but we find ourselves declining. Vic Cardillo brought this up at our Board of Directors meeting in Detroit and I know he is planning to author an article with his observations. It seems clear that the "same old way" of doing things is no longer working. I think we all need to brainstorm what we can do to re-invent ourselves and our breed. We also need to find ways to reward those individuals who step forward for the common good.

Our club is now 50 years old and it seems that we haven't fundamentally changed our structure and approach for a long time. Think about how dramatically our world has changed in the last 5, 10, or 20 years. It makes good sense for the club to change too.

At the Detroit national several of us witnessed a great example of how things have changed since we were kids. At our Board of Directors meeting we had a discussion about which and how many web sites the AHA should support. The next day during a meeting at the show hall I noticed two junior fanciers in the AHA area. One was connected with a PC to WiFi and was surfing the web. When asked, the other guy noted that of course he had a MySpace page. The days of young fanciers writing letters or riding their bikes down the road to the old pigeon men are gone. Today, young people research subjects and network with others almost exclusively on the web. We need to continue to improve our presence and market ourselves on the web, **which was not even invented 20 years ago!** This example shows how much we need to critique our thoughts and framework. The ways things were done in the past may or may not be the best way for the 21st century.

We need figure out what it will take to get our members to be more active in voting and club offices. We need to figure out how we can capture and RETAIN new members. We need to figure out a strategy for the future of our birds so we retain their charming qualities while improving their feeding capability. We have a lot of activity and fun at shows. How can we channel that energy into results for the club? How can we leverage all of our positives and create even more excitement and fun? It may even be a good idea for our President to charter an official committee to study us and make recommendations. Even more importantly I would like to encourage everyone to write articles with their observations. This will provide interesting reading in the bulletin and help us all to think about where our future lies.

50th Anniversary Promotional Items

50 th Anniversary Buttons	\$1.50 each
50 th Anniversary Embroidered Ball Caps	\$12 each
50 th Anniversary T Shirts	\$10 each
T-Shirt sizes are: M, L, XL, and 2XL	

Shipping costs

50 th Anniversary Buttons	\$2
50 th Anniversary Embroidered Ball Caps	\$4
50 th Anniversary T Shirt	\$4
50 th Anniversary Cap and T Shirt	\$7

These items will be for sale at the following shows:
National Young Bird Show, AHA Sectional shows or at the AHA National show.

Your Dues are Due

District 1- Brandy Ralston
District 2- Steve Gelhausen, Louis Fournier, Edward Verdugo
District 3- Aaron Lorton
District 6- Nelson Eylander, Patrick T Flynn
District 8- Guy Rainey, Terrell Stone, Brandy & Mindy Bingham
District 12- Harold Jones, Tony Patti, Pete Keppley, Walter Boroznoff, Vincent Pellegrino
District 13 – Mike Davis

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E-Mail: husker-helmets@msn.com

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Phone: 518-272-0413
E-Mail: crownlofts@aol.com

District 13 Director: OPEN

District 14 Director:

Victor Cline
375 Pangbon Blvd.
Hagerstown, MD, 21742
Ph: 301 733-1758

AHA Order Form

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State ZIP: _____
 Phone: _____
 email: _____

Send form to: Charles Dwight
 1093 St. Route 101 East
 Clyde, Ohio 43410
 419-547-8184

<u>Membership Dues</u>	<u>Official AHA Bands</u>	<u>Patches</u>						
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Adult</td> <td style="width: 15%;">\$15 /yr</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Juniors</td> <td>\$ 5 /yr</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Family</td> <td>\$20 /yr</td> </tr> </table> <p>Membership Cost \$ _____</p> <p>Number of Years x _____</p> <p>Total Enclosed \$ _____</p> <p>Please note that your membership begins the day you pay your dues. Your bulletin address label reflects your current membership term.</p>	Adult	\$15 /yr	Juniors	\$ 5 /yr	Family	\$20 /yr	<p style="text-align: center;">\$0.35 per band</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+ \$2.00 for postage per order</p> <p>Number of Bands _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">x \$0.35</p> <p>Cost of Bands \$ _____</p> <p>Plus Postage \$ _____</p> <p>Total Enclosed \$ _____</p> <p>If you want a certain numerical range, get your order in early and specify below the range you are requesting.</p> <p>Series Preferred: _____</p> <p>Alternative Series: _____</p>	<p>Patches -\$7.50</p> <p>Cost \$7.50</p> <p>Number x _____</p> <p>Total \$ _____</p>
Adult	\$15 /yr							
Juniors	\$ 5 /yr							
Family	\$20 /yr							