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COMMENTARY

YEAR-END MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As usual, the highlight of our organization's year was the Annual Conference for 1987. We met in Boise, Idaho and if you missed it, you missed a lot. In addition to the regular meeting were two symposia. The first was a Workshop on Captive Propagation Techniques sponsored by The Peregrine Fund, Inc., and Boise State University, organized by Cal Sandford and Bill Burnham. There must have been more than 150 people participating in this symposium, alone. A broad range of topics, including genetics of captive populations, artificial insemination, incubation and rearing, were covered in an open forum. The second was a symposium and workshop on Western Raptor Management, sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation and organized locally by Mike Kochert. It covered a range of topics, including population status of various western raptors and ongoing techniques for mitigation. It was attended by over 300 people.

The 1987 RRF meetings themselves were opened with a keynote address by Governor Cecil Andrus who was instrumental in establishing the Snake River Birds of Prey Area. Following the keynote speaker was a full-day symposium, entitled Western Raptor Migration, sponsored by Boise State and the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Sixteen papers were presented on migration aspects of raptors in the western U.S., on topics ranging from movements of large numbers of raptors at the Golden Gate Bridge to metabolism of birds during migration. The scientific program, proper, began on day two. The 443 registrants at this year's meeting had the opportunity to listen to 74 presentations and view 18 poster presented papers.

The Local Committee provided numerous outlets for touring the Boise area, including the Snake River Canyon and the World Center for Birds of Prey. Prairie Falcons, Golden Eagles, Rough-Legged Hawks and Northern Harriers were seen in some quantity at Snake River while the Center tour astounded viewers with their modern facilities, Harpy Eagle pair, and row upon row of pairs of falcons from all over the world.

The banquet was well-attended, providing a mixture of raptor talk, RRF business and Halloween tomfoolery. The Local Committee, again, went above and beyond to provide an extraordinary evening for everyone. Tom Smylie of Albuquerque, New Mexico provided the evening's entertainment with his excellent slide show of the Peregrine migration occurring over the Dry Tortugas. The RRF extends its appreciation to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Tom Smylie's employer, for supporting Tom's participation in our meeting.

Several grants and awards were given at the banquet this year. The Tully Award, a \$500 research grant, given in memory of Steve Tully, was given to Kelly Hogan. The award was given for Kelly's proposal entitled: "Radio tracking of the foraging ecology of Prairie Falcon in the Trans Pecos region of the Chihuahuan Desert." Information about this research award is available from the Chairperson for this award committee, Ms. Lisa Langelier, % The Peregrine Fund, 5666 West Flying Hawk Lane, Boise, Idaho 83709.

The Andersen Award, a plaque for the best student paper was given to Thomas Hamer of Western Washington University for his presentation entitled: "Interspecific competition between Barred and Spotted owls in western Washington." Information about this award for next year's RRF meeting can be obtained

from Dr. Keith Bildstein, Chair, Andersen Award, Department of Biology, Winthrop College, Rock Hill, South Carolina 29733.

The Leslie Brown Memorial Award, a research grant of \$500 this year, was given to Geoff and Hilary Welch for a proposal to study the migration of raptors in Djibouti. They will be cinematographically documenting a recently discovered raptor migration of vast proportions in this north African country adjacent to the Red Sea. With any luck, and a few contributions, we will be able to double the award for 1988! Information about this award can be obtained by writing to me at Eco-Analysts, Inc., 4718 Dunn Drive, Sarasota, Florida 34233.

A special award was given by the Local Committee to Idaho Power Company for their pioneering efforts to implement procedures protecting raptors from electrocution on their powerline grids, installing nesting platforms on these towers and otherwise mitigating the effects of their powerline system on raptors. Much of this work was at the urging of Mr. Richard Thorsell, Environmental Program Manager for the Edison Electric Institute. He was honored and given an award for his continuing support.

It was quite a meeting and the 1988 conference in St. Paul, Minnesota promises to be just as good! The call for papers was included with the *Journal of Raptor Research*, Volume 21(3). If you are a student, please take note of the changes in the requirements for the submission of papers for the Andersen Award—it is easier now. Other opportunities for member involvement in this year's meeting include submission of nominees for the President's Award and competition for research funds through the Brown and Tully awards—now is not too early to be making some plans if you are interested.

This has been a particularly rewarding year to me, personally. I have had the pleasure of seeing the organization continue to mature and expand its services to both members and the resource. We have been able to contribute to some valuable research and increase communication among professionals throughout the world. This past year, of course, had a bittersweet end when my tenure as President came to a logical and planned end. Although I honestly did not know if I was going to be able to maintain my composure at the Annual Banquet, when the time came, I was filled with pride and appreciation for the support you, the Membership, have provided over the last six years.

But, enough of the Swan Song. Your new President, Gary Duke, has come forth with a lot of new and good ideas. Please give him and your professional organization the support you gave me. Tell Gary, your Board Members and Officers how we can provide better service. Encourage at least one colleague to join RRF this year and let people know what services and products RRF provides.

I look, optimistically, to the future under Gary's direction and hope to see you in St. Paul next fall.—

Jeffrey L. Lincer, Former President.