mountain west region



VAN A. TRUAN and BRANDON K. PERCIVAL

ost of the Region was normal or above in both temperature and moisture. especially the w. portions of Nevada. Changes between "El Niño" and "La Niña" appear not to have drastically affected normal weather patterns in the Region during this season. The Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, published in Jan., provides a thorough resource on all breeding species in Colorado, including information on nesting habitats, estimated populations, and distributional maps. We extend our congratulations to Hugh Kingery (formerly editor of this Region), Mark Yaeger (Radeaux), and all the numerous volunteers who helped make this publication an outstanding reference.

Abbreviations: A.I.C. (Antelope Island Causeway, Great Salt Lake, Davis Co., UT); B.R.M.B.R. (Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, UT); C.V.C.G. (Crow Valley Campground, Weld Co., UT); F.C.R.P. (Fountain Creek Regional Park, El Paso Co., CO); G.S.L. (Great Salt Lake, Davis Co., UT); S.L.V. (San Luis Valley, CO); S.T.P. (Sewage Treatment Plant); W.R.G. (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, Jefferson Co., CO).

LOOMS THROUGH RAPTORS

Two Red-throated Loons visited Pueblo Res., Pueblo, CO, this fall; one Nov. 12–13 (BKP, JW, BBH) and one Nov. 24–25 (BKP, m. ob.). Up to 23 Pacific Loons were noted in Colorado this season; in Utah, one was in Tooele Oct. 22 (DG fide MS), one was at Quail Creek Res., Washington, Oct. 25 (SDS, PRS), and three were at Hyrum Res., near Logan, UT, Nov. 3 (MRC, FRK); and in Nevada, two were at Pyramid L., Washoe Nov. 28 (MM, GS). A Yellow-billed Loon was reported at Cherry Creek Res., Arapahoe, CO, Nov. 25 (JBH). A high count

of 21 Com. Loons was at Hyrum Res. Nov. 3 (MRC, FRK). In Colorado, single Rednecked Grebes were observed at Cherry Creek Res. Oct. 30-Nov. 12 (JBH, m. ob.) and Nov. 18-26 (BS, m. ob.), at Pueblo Res. Nov. 4 (BKP, KH), at Big Johnson Res., El Paso, Nov. 8 (BG), and at Lagerman Res., Boulder, Nov. 16 (BK). An immature was at Pyramid L, Washoe, NV, Nov. 13 (DSe). In Nevada, two Horned Grebes were at Pyramid L., NV, Sep. 26 (MM), with two there Nov. 14 (MM, GC), and two were at Walker L., Mineral, NV, Nov. 17 (RF, LN). An estimated 20,000+ Eared Grebes were at A.I.C. Sep. 9-22 (VAS, KE, JRe). On Sep. 22, eight albinotic grebes were observed within this body of grebes. Utah Wildlife Resources estimated that 30,000+ grebes died from an avian cholera outbreak on the south shore of the G.S.L. from late Sep. to late Oct. An additional 2000+ birds such as ducks and gulls also died (fide VAS). Great Egrets were reported nesting at Utah L., Utah, Aug. 30 (NH, fide MS) for the first time in Utah. Two imm. Little Blue Herons in Colorado included one at Lochbuie, Adams, Aug. 1 (TL, BKP, CLW) and one at Timnath Res., Larimer, Aug. 14-23 (TJ, m. ob.). A late Cattle Egret appeared in Penrose, Fremont, CO, in late Nov. to Dec. 1 (ph. J&RW). An ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was at Lower Queens Res., Kiowa, CO, Sep. 20 (BKP, MJ). Two very late White-faced Ibis were noted at San Luis L., Alamosa, CO, Nov. 26 (J&LR). Extremely rare in Nevada, a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck wandered n. into Floyd Lamb S.P., Clark, NV, Sep. 30 (CT). Two Greater White-fronted Goose X Canada Goose hybrids were at L. Cheraw, Otero, CO, Oct. 11 (MJ, BKP). A male Am. Black Duck was at Little Gaynor L., Boulder, CO, Oct. 20 (NK, m. ob.). Waterfowl counts within the Lahontan Valley, NV, Oct. 19, included Green-winged Teal (20,730); N. Pintail (17,790); N. Shoveler (20,850); Canvasback (19,500) (BH). At least four Oldsquaws were reported from A.I.C. Oct. 24-Nov. 27 (fide MS), an imm. male was at Panguitch L., Garfield, UT, Nov. 1 (SDS, PRS), a male was at Walker L, Mineral, NV, Nov. 20 (DSe), and only one was in Colorado this fall. Higher numbers of Black Scoter were in the Region, reports including an ad. male at Barr L., Adams, Oct. 18 (JK, DSc, RO, GR), two females at McLellan Res., Arapahoe, Oct. 20 (JBH), a female at Cherry

Creek Res., Arapahoe, Oct. 26-31 (JBH, m. ob.), a female at Walden Ponds, Boulder. Nov. 21-29 (S&BH, JT, M&SP, m. ob.), and an amazing nine females at Chatfield Res., Jefferson, CO, Nov. 26 (JBH). Also, at least three females were at A.I.C. Nov. 1-23 (fide MS). Twenty-two Surf Scoters were reported from e. Colorado Oct. 12-Nov. 29 and nine in Utah Oct 3-Nov. 16. Utah had three White-winged Scoters, Nevada two, and only four were reported in e. Colorado this fall. High counts of Barrow's Goldeneyes came in the inter-mountain areas of Colorado, with 22 at Blue Mesa Res., Gunnison, Nov. 12 (KP), 12 in the Rifle Area, Garfield, in Nov., and 110 at Avery S.W.A., near Meeker, Rio Blanco, Nov. 21 (KP). Seven Hooded Mergansers were reported in Clark, NV, Nov. 6-20 (fide RPS), and one was at Virginia L., Reno, Washoe, NV, Oct. 9 (fide GC). A late Osprey was at Lamer, Prowers. CO, Nov. 22 (BKW). An imm. White-tailed Kite was identified at C.V.C.G., CO, Sep. 11 (RK). The species is not on the C.B.R.C. official state list, but is included in this report since this species is being recorded more regularly away from core range. North of its normal Colorado range, two Mississippi Kites were at Black Forest, El Paso, Sep. 8 (BBH) and one in Greeley, Weld, Sep. 28 (DM). An ad. N. Goshawk was noted in Cottonwood Canyon, Baca, CO, Nov. 29 (DSv, TL). Colorado had two imm. Redshouldered Hawks this season, one at Chatfield Res., Jefferson, Sep. 25 (JK) and one at Valco Ponds, Pueblo, Oct. 24 (BKP, GR). Six Red-shouldereds were reported in Nevada from Aug. 1-Sep. 21. Rare in Utah, a Broad-winged Hawk was reported from Green Canyon, n. of Logan, Sep. 25 (MRC, FRK) and one at Green Mt. Falls, Teller, CO,

SA Three California Condors human tourists and "walked" into the Visitors' Center at Lands End, on the Grand Mesa of W. Colorado, Aug. 25–26. These radiocollared condors, some of the birds released in Arizona last year, are probably used to seeing throngs of visitors in the Grand Canyon area. The birds were back in Arizona several days later. Other reports of condors released in the Grand Canyon were reported as far n. as the Green River in Utah.

Oct. 4 (RB). A kettle of 10 imm. Golden Eagles circled over downtown Pueblo, CO, Sep. 22 (VAT).

COOTS THROUGH OWLS

On Sep. 7, an estimated 200,000 Am. Coot were at Stillwater N.W.R., Churchill, NV (RSt). At Farmington Bay W.M.A., Davis, UT, two Com. Moorhens were reported Aug. 8 (fide MS), and on Sep. 6 an adult and three juveniles were there (J&KB). The fall Lahontan Valley, NV Shorebird Count was held Aug. 20-22, 1998. A total of 78,754 shorebirds of 22 species was tallied (fide GC), from Carson Sink (36,410), Carson L. (27,838), and Stillwater N.W.R. (14,376). High individual counts were Am. Avocet (24,451), Black-necked Stilt (7525), Longbilled Dowitcher (22,248), peep species (13,821), and phalarope species (9,441). An Am. Golden-Plover was at A.I.C. Sep. 6 (J&KB). Approximately 11,000 Am. Avocets were at Carson Sink, Churchill, NV, Oct. 9 (LN, MN). Two Solitary Sandpipers were at Dyer, Esmeralda, NV Sep. 6 (MM). A Ruddy Turnstone was at A.I.C. Sep. 8 (KE) and one at Jackson Res., Morgan, Sep. 11 (NE, JK, DS, RO, GR). Single Red Knots were noted in Kiowa, CO, Sep. 15 (BKP, DN, BD, DSi) and at Prewitt Res., Washington, CO, Sep. 18-20 (BKP, BBH, m. ob.). One to two Buffbreasted Sandpipers visited Prewitt Res. Sep. 12-19 (JV, m. ob.). Colorado's shorebird of the season was a juv. female Ruff at L. Cheraw, Otero, Oct. 28 (VAT). There is one previous documented Colorado record from 1977. Three Semipalmated Sandpipers were at Carson L., Churchill, NV, Aug. 6 (RF), one at Henderson Bird Preserve, Clark, NV, Aug. 14 (RPS), and a juvenile at Soda L., Churchill, NV, Aug. 21 (GC, DH). The largest single flock (22) of Baird's Sandpipers was observed in Lahontan Valley at Stillwater N.W.R., NV, Aug. 21 (GC, DH). Four Stilt Sandpipers were at Swede L., Utah, UT, Aug. 23 (J&KB). The Region had higher-than-normal totals of Short-billed Dowitcher this fall. These included one at Carson L., Churchill, NV, Aug. 6 (RF), six from Utah Aug. 28-Sep. 18 (fide MS, VAS), two in Stillwater N.W.R., NV, Sep. 7 (RSt), and in Colorado, singles at Lower Latham Res., Weld, Aug. 25-27 (TL, m. ob.), at Upper Queens Res., Kiowa, Sep. 7 (MJ, BD), at the Rocky Ford S.T.P., Otero, Sep.13 (TL, PG), at Prewitt Res. Sep. 20 (NK, DL), and where they are very rare, one at San Luis L., S.L.V., Alamosa, Nov. 26 (J&LR). At Soda L., Churchill, NV, one or two Red Phalaropes were reported Sep. 17-18 (MM, GS, DSe) and one Nov. 28 (DSe, JW).

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Nevada had two jaegers this fall: one unidentified bird at Carson Sink, Churchill, Aug. 21 (BH) and a Parasitic Jaeger at Pyramid L., Washoe, Sep. 18 (MM, GS). Also, four jaegers were reported in Colorado: an imm. Pomarine Jaeger in s.e. Pueblo Aug. 30 (DSi, DJ), an imm. light-morph Parasitic Jaeger at Big Johnson Res., El Paso, Sep. 12 (RB), an ad. light-morph jaeger, "possibly" a Parasitic, at Chatfield Res., Jefferson/Douglas, Sep. 22 (JBH), and another unidentified jaeger at Prewitt Res., Washington, Sep. 17 (TD). In Colorado, Laughing Gull reports included an immature at Lower Latham Res., Weld, Aug. 23 (JV), a bird in 2nd-basic plumage at L. Cheraw, Otero, Sep. 13 (BKP, MJ), a first-basic bird at the Rocky Ford S.T.P., Otero, Sep. 26-Oct. 28 (BKP, m. ob.), and an adult at Pueblo Res., Pueblo, Nov. 12-14 (BKP, JWe, BBH, m. ob.). In the Region, single Little Gulls sightings included a juvenile at Prewitt Res., Washington, CO Sep. 8-19 (JK, NE, DS, RO, GR, ph. EBE, m. ob.), and an immature at Barr L., Adams, CO, Nov. 8 (TL, SB). A first-basic Mew Gull was seen at Pueblo Res., Pueblo, CO, Nov. 24 (BKP). A first-basic Glaucous-winged Gull at Pueblo Res., CO, Nov. 11-12 (BKP, m. ob.) provided a 3rd s.e. Colorado record. Great Black-backed Gulls were reported from Cherry Creek Res., Arapahoe, CO, Aug. 23-Sep. 30 (BHo, JRo, BB, m. ob.; probably the adult that has been reported the last 5 years) and a first-basic individual at Pueblo Res., Pueblo, CO, Oct. 12 (BKP). An unexpected ad. Yellow-footed Gull B.R.M.B.R. Oct. 4 (ph. KE et al.) provided the first Utah record. Colorado's first Sep. Black-legged Kittiwake was observed at L. Meredith, Crowley Sep. 12 (BBH, SC). An extraordinarily high count of 40+ Sabine's Gulls was reported from e. Colorado reservoirs, 11 this fall in Utah Sep. 14-Oct. 12 (fide MS), nine in Nevada (MM, GS, fide RPS), and one in Wyoming. E. Colorado had six Caspian Terns Aug. 22-Oct. 9 and one at Jackson L., near Jackson, WY, Sep. 24 (KD fide BRa). An Arctic Tern at Ash Meadows N.W.R., Nye, Sep. 24 (ST, GHR) furnished Nevada's 2nd state record. Three Eurasian Collared-Doves remained e. of Cheyenne, WY, Oct. 9 (RD), and a new high count of 26, including young of the year, was made at Rocky Ford, Otero, CO. Others included two at Lamar, Prowers, CO, Sep. 6 (NK) and two at Springfield, Baca, CO, Sep. 23 (DSv). An ad. White-winged Dove was reported in Rocky Ford Aug. 21-Oct. 31 (BKP, BD, m. ob.), and two juveniles with one adult were observed Sep. 20. This sighting appears to have confirmed the first

breeding record for Colorado (BKP, MJ) An **Inca Dove** was found in Colorado Springs, *El Paso*, CO, Sep. 22 (AV) and one at L Holbrook, *Otero*, CO, Sep. 24–26 (BKP, GR), also two were at Corn Creek, *Clark*, NV, Aug. 14–Nov. 29 (RPS) and five there on Oct. 8 (SDS). Two Yellow-billed Cuckoos were at Jordanelle Dam, *Wasatch*, UT, Aug 29 (*fide* MS). A "Mexican" Spotted Owl was heard in the Wet Mts., *Pueblo*, CO, Sep 13 (BKP, MJ). Colorado's 2nd **Barred Owl** was killed by a freight train near Wray, *Yuma*, CO, Nov. 17.

SWIFTS THROUGH WARBLERS

Rarely reported on the plains in e. Colorado, two Black Swifts were reported from Big Johnson Res., El Paso, Aug. 24 (AV), three at F.C.R.P. Sep. 7 (RB), and two in Colorado Springs, El Paso, Aug. 30 (JWe). A female Blue-throated Hummingbird at Middle Creek Canyon, Salt Lake, Aug. 28 (fide MS) provided the 2nd Utah record. An Anna's Hummingbird in Salt Lake City Oct 26-Nov. 9 was the 4th for the county (fide MS). Rare in the inter-mountains of Colorado, a Red-headed Woodpecker was at Westcliffe, Custer, Aug. 10 (JP). A female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was reported at Numana Fish Hatchery, Washoe, NV, Sep 26 (MM, GS), and an early one in Fremont, CO, Sep. 29 (BBH, BHa). A Red-breasted Sapsucker was found in Little Ranch, Washington, UT, Oct. 6 (fide MS). There are fewer than 10 records of the species for Utah. A female Nuttall's Woodpecker was at Circle L Ranch, near Dyer, Esmeralda, NV, Sep. 21-28 (MSM, GMcC, JLD), the 2nd state record, A singing E. Wood-Pewee in Boulder, CO, stayed to Sep. 9 (v.o.), and another was at the W.R.G., CO, Aug. 26-28 (DS). An E. Phoebe was at Corn Creek, Clark, NV, Oct. 18 (J&MC). At Hamilton Res., Larimer, CO, Oct. 3, an imm. male Vermilion Flycatcher was quite a surprise (SK). An imm. Scissor- tailed Flycatcher was in Ft. Collins, CO, Aug. 8 (RK), and two were together in e. Colorado Springs, CO, Oct. 2-16 (ph. BBH, SL, SCr, m. ob) Nevada had four E. Kingbirds: one at Timber L., Churchill, Sep. 4 (GA, RF), two at Tonopah, Nye, Sep. 5 (MM), and one at Corn Creek, Clark, Oct. 18 (J&MC). Very rare in e. Colorado, two female Purple Martins were at Lamar, *Prowers*, Sep. 6 (NK) and one female near Colorado City, Pueblo, Sep. 13 (BKP, MJ). A Juniper Titmouse was reported from Dyer, Esmeralda, NV, Sep 24 (ST, GHR), and two were at Floyd Lamb S.P., Clark, NV, Sep. 20 (CT). Single Carolina Wrens were found at Lamar,

NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS

Prowers, CO, Sep. 6 (DAL) and in the W. R.G., CO, Oct. 1 (BS). A Bewick's Wren reported to be "red-colored" was observed in Pueblo, CO, Oct. 22 (BD). Rarely reported in fall, a Veery was in Fort Collins Sep. 22–23 (fide WPL). In Torey, Wayne, UT, a Brown Thrasher was observed Oct. 14–20 (fide MS). A **Sprague's Pipit** was seen in a field in Sedgwick, CO, Oct. 18 (JV, TL). Forty Bohemian Waxwing were reported from Aspen, Pitkin, CO, Nov. 18 (KPo).

In Colorado, reports of Blue-headed Vireos included singles at C.V.C.G. Aug. 28 (JH) and Sep. 11 (RK), one in Pueblo Sep. 11 (BKP), one at Nee Noshe Res., Kiowa, Sep. 15 (BKP, DSi, BD, DN), and one at Prewitt Res, Washington, Oct. 3 (BKP). Cassin's Vireos were widely reported throughout e. Colorado this fall, and one was at Oak Grove Campground, Pine Valley Mts., Washington, UT, Sep. 12 (SDS, PRS, et al.). A Yellow-throated Vireo, a very rare fall migrant in Colorado, was in Pueblo Sep. 27 (BKP et al.). Three Philadelphia Vireos were reported: one at Lamar, Prowers, Sep. 5 (MJ) and two near Pueblo Oct. 1 (DSi, BKP, BD). Two imm. Virginia's Warblers were banded along the Lower Truckee R., Washoe, NV, Aug. 28 (EA, ML), which confirmed the first records for the lower Truckee R. (fide GC). A female Northern Parula at Willard Bay S.P., Box Elder Nov. 7-Dec. 2 (fide MS) provided the 3rd sighting for Utah. An imm. or female N. Parula was at Dyer, Esmeralda, NV, Sep. 6 (MM, GS), and another was reported from Indian Springs, Clark, NV, Sep. 24 (ST, GHR). In Nevada, a Chestnutsided Warbler was at Corn Creek, Clark, Sep. 24 (ST, GHR), and the first Lahontan Valley record of Magnolia Warbler was at Timber L., Churchill, Sep. 5 (LN, RF). Blackthroated Blue Warblers were found at several localities, with a male window-kill in Cheyenne, WY, Sep. 19 (ph. JWa fide JD), a first-year female banded along the lower Truckee R., Washoe, NV Sep. 22 (RN), and a male at Corn Creek, Clark, NV, Oct. 8 (SDS). North of its normal haunts, a Blackthroated Gray Warbler was at Jackson Hole, WY, Sep. 11 (BBu, fide BRa). The Lahontan Valley had its 2nd and 3rd Hermit Warblers, one at Timber L., Churchill, NV, Sep. 5 (RF, LN) and one at Carson R. Diversion Dam, Churchill, NV, Sep. 9 (RSt). Also, two were in Washington, UT, Sep. 12 (fide MS). Rarely reported in Nevada, an imm. male Blackburnian Warbler was at Circle L Ranch, near Dyer, Esmeralda, Sep. 21 (MSM, GMcC, JLD), and three were in Colorado: one at Pueblo Sep. 1-2 (BKP, m. ob), one at Nee Noshe Res. Sep. 1 (DN), and

one at Ft. Lyon Sep. 2 (VAT). A male Pine Warbler was at F.C.R.P. Aug. 21 (PG). Nevada's first Prairie Warbler was at L. Mead, Clark, Oct.16-27 (RBa, CT), and four stopped in Colorado this fall: one at Barr L., Adams, Aug. 21 (GG, TL), one at F.C.R.P. Aug. 23-Sep. 7 (GB, KP, m. ob.), one in the W.R.G. Sep. 2 (DS, NE, JRo), and another at Barr L. Sep. 22 (GG, TL). A Palm Warbler at Timber L., Churchill, NV, Sep. 24 (GA, DW) provided the 2nd Lahontan Valley record, and a hypochrysea Palm visited Chatfield Res., Jefferson/Douglas, CO, Nov. 21 (JK). A Bay-breasted Warbler was at C.V.C.G. Sep. 5 (SJD). A Black-and-white Warbler was at Dyer Valley, Nye, NV, Sep. 24 (ST, GHR). Nevada had four Am. Redstarts this fall, two in Clark, one in Churchill (the 2nd for the Lahontan Valley), and one in Washoe. Also in Nevada, two Prothonotary Warblers were noted, a male at Lida, Esmeralda, NV, Sep. 1 (GS) and Sep. 6 (MM, GS), while a male was photographed from Pyramid L., Washoe, NV, Sep. 25-26 (ph. MM), the 3rd record for N. Nevada. Three Prothonotary Warblers also blessed Colorado this season, one at Nee Noshe Res., Kiowa, Aug. 26 (DN), one at F.C.R.P. Aug. 30 (BBH, m. ob.), and one in Ft. Collins, Larimer, Sep. 12-13 (ph. DAL). Colorado's rarest warbler of the season was a male Canada Warbler at Two Buttes Res., Baca, CO, Sep. 4-7 (BKP, MJ).

TANAGERS THROUGH ORIOLES

A female or imm. Scarlet Tanager was reported from the Rocky Mt. Arsenal, Adams, CO, Sep. 13 (HK, UK). A Rosebreasted Grosbeak was noted Las Vegas, Clark, NV, Sep. 22 (CT) and an E. Towhee at Prewitt Res., Washington, CO, Oct. 2-3 (BKP et al.). Somewhat w. of normal was a Clay-colored Sparrow at Red Rock Canyon S.P., Clark, NV, Nov. 1 (RS). Sixteen Field Sparrows were reported in e. Colorado from 12 counties this fall and along with one in Cheyenne, WY, indicated a wider dispersal on the e. plains of the Region than normal. A Black-throated Sparrow was at Lamar, CO, Sep. 27 (DAL). Becoming somewhat regular in e. Colorado, a Le Conte's Sparrow was discovered at Big Johnson Res., El Paso, Oct. 25 (RB). White-throated Sparrows were very common throughout Colorado and stretched west into Utah and Nevada this fall. An imm. Golden-crowned **Sparrow** was banded s.e. of Dubois, Fremont Oct. 16-22 (R&MM), Wyoming's 2nd record. In Colorado, one was detected in Mesa Oct. 17 (RL) and another at Barr L., Adams, Oct. 19-Nov. 21 (GG, TD, TL, m. ob.). An Eastern Meadowlark was singing at Red Lion S.W.A., Logan, CO, Sep. 20 (JV). Unusual in Nevada, a female Baltimore Oriole was reported from Indian Springs, Clark, NV, Sep. 24 (ST, GHR).

Cited Observers: Gene Albanese, Elisabeth Ammon, Ron Batie (RBa), Joel & Kathy Beyer (J&KB), Sue Bonfield, Bob Brown, Richard Bunn, Greg Butcher, Bob Buttery (BBu), Sherry Chapman, Graham Chisolm, Mark R. Collie, Susan Craig (SCr), Jim & Marian Cressman (J&MC), Denver Field Ornithologists' (DFO), Bob Dickson, Todd Dilley, Stephen J. Dinsmore, Jane Dorn, Robert Dorn, Katy Duffy, Jon L. Dunn, Norm Erthal, Keith Evans, Robert Flores, Bob Foley, Peter Gaede, Glenn Giroir, Bob Goycoolea, Dana Green, Glenn Hageman, B.B. Hahn, Bob Hahn, Stan & Betty Harwood (S&BH), J.B. Hayes, Bill Henry, Ned Hill, Joe Himmel, Ken Hollinga, DavidHolway (DH), Bill Howe (BHo), Mark Janos, Dave Johnson, Tina Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Sue Kamal, Joey Kellner, Hugh Kingery, Urling Kingery, Florence R. Knoll, Rachel Kolokoff, Nick Komar, David Laliberte, David A. Leatherman, Tony Leukering, Rich Levad, William P. Lisowsky, Stephen Long, Marsha Lytle, Guy McCaskie (GMcC), Dick Maxfield, Martin Meyers (MM), Ralph & Marlene Moldenhauer (R&MM), Larry Neel, Martha Neel, Duane Nelson, Ray Nelson, Ric Olson (RO), Ken Pals, Jane Pederson, Brandon K. Percival, Myron & Suzi Plooster (M&SP), Kim Potter (KPo), John & Lisa Rawinski (J&LR), Bert Raynes (BRa), Jack Rensel (JRe), Joe Roller (JRo), Gary H. Rosenberg (GHR), Gene Rutherford, IraSanders, Mike San Miguel (MSM), Rick P. Saval, Rita Schlageter, Dick Schottler, Greg Scyphers, Dennis Serdehelely (DSe), David Silverman (DSi), V. A. Smith (VAS), Bob Spencer, Mark Stackhouse (MS), Rich Stallcup (RSt), Priscilla R. Summers, Steven D. Summers, Dan Svingen (DSv), Scott Terrill, Carolyn Titus, Van A. Truan, Jim Tumasonis, John Vanderpoel, Alan Versaw, John Waggener (JWa), Jack Walters, Jim & Rosie Watts (J&RW), Jeff Webster (JWe), Brian K. Wheeler, Diane Wong, Christopher L. Wood.

Van A. Truan, 1901 Court St., Pueblo, CO 81003, and **Brandon K. Percival**, 835 Harmony Dr., Pueblo West, CO 81007 (e-mail: flammowl@juno.com)

