

Rockingham Bird Club Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: 4/13/2023

- RBC President Mike Donaldson: Call to Order: The in person April meeting of RBC will please come to order, using a gavel. (Time: 7:02 pm) at the Park View Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall.

First, Mike said to greet those people around him and meet someone new. After a few minutes of meet and greet, he asked for a motion to dispense with the reading of last meeting minutes with no objections. Mike mentioned that there is a copy of the meeting minutes always available on the RBC website.

Any new members/visitors?

Yes, Vicki is from Harrisonburg and she also bought a friend. Kitre just moved to Harrisonburg. Diane introduced Edmund, who she met taking pictures of goldfinches at Lake Shenandoah recently.

- **Old Business:** None
- **Recent Bird Sightings**

-Stephani Moore: She and her fiancé spotted a Ruby Crowned Kinglet and a Yellow Bellied Sapsucker in the JMU Arboretum when walking around there last weekend.

-Martha Faw: She saw an albino female Northern Cardinal in her yard.

-Paul Cook: He saw a large Double Crested Cormorant at Fulks Run

-Judith: At Silver Lake in Dayton, she spotted a Red Breasted Merganser.

- **Reports from Executive Committee**

Mike Donaldson (President):

He began on a somber note with the extreme misfortune of having three RBC club members pass away in recent weeks. First of all, on March 25th, Ron Kingston passed away. He lived in Charlottesville and he was a founder of the Piedmont Bird Club in addition to participating in the Virginia Bluebird Society. Ron also invented a baffle on nest boxes that deters predators like snakes and raccoons. A memorial will be held in the near future.

The next member was Charles “Zig” Ziegenfus, a founding member of the Rockingham Bird Club. Vice president Diane will say more about a recent award he won before his death. A Celebration of Zig’s life will happen sometime this summer.

Finally on April 7th: Tom Lord passed away, who was an avid bird watcher and RBC club member. He also participated in the Raptor and Waterfowl Count. The service will be held this Saturday April 15th. For more details, check out the Kyger Funeral Home website.

Mike emphasized that the RBC was privileged to have them as members. The club will make a \$50 donation to Massanutten Regional Library in memory of each person. Mike offered sincere condolences for the loss of these three members. The club observed a moment of silence to honor their lives and contributions to the club.

After that moment of silence, Mike talked about the upcoming May election, which will be advertised in the next newsletter. Debbie Harrison is chairing the nominating committee and she has most of the slate filled out. However, we still need a new Member at Large. This position serves a two-year term and they also

may serve one following term. More information can be found in the RBC Club Bylaws, located on the club website. Please contact Debbie or Mike if you are interested in filling that position.

Kathy Byers (Vice President of Programs): She is out of town this week.

Diane Lepkowski (Vice President of Field Trips):

Diane wanted to share a few words about Charles “Zig” Ziegenfus. She sees many faces, who did know him and were blessed by him. Zig was a JMU professor in the 1960s teaching mathematics and ornithology classes. He taught both subjects for the rest of his academic career. Thousands of students took his classes with many of them moving on to conservation careers in addition to becoming serious birders. Robyn Puffenbarger took his class. In the early 1970s, Kathleen Finnegan got him interested in banding, which Zig continued until he could no longer get around. He was a character and we will miss him.

Zig also worked with Clair with banding Saw Whet Owls at the Highland Retreat Camp. He personally monitored a trail of Eastern Bluebird boxes numbering about sixty boxes. Right before his death, Zig received the 2023 Mitchell A. Byrd Award for exceptional academic achievement in ornithology by the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO). Diane felt very privileged to present that award to Zig along with Clair less than two weeks before he passed away. Zig was blown away and so proud of that award telling everyone he could about it even before the VSO had formally announced it. Zig also worked the Bird Seed sale for many years in addition to serving as RBC President and Treasurer. He wrote the RBC newsletter for quite a while. Diane asked for people to send remembrances to her and she will do a tribute.

After her moving tribute to Zig, Diane then mentioned two upcoming field trips. The first one is at Hillandale Park on next Wednesday April 19th at 8:30am. Also, Greg Moyers will be leading a field trip to Madison Run Fire Road on Saturday April 15th at 8:30am. Contact him if you would want to attend it and his contact information is in the April RBC newsletter.

Audrey Shenk (Treasurer):

The book has sold out! However, there are some available copies through the Massanutten Regional Library, Robyn commented that the book has been placed on hold list quite frequently at the Bridgewater branch. Many people asked about another round of books printed. Linda suggested that we could put them on the downtown Harrisonburg Oasis Gallery. More discussion on this topic will be held during the Executive Committee Meeting in early May.

Art Fovargue (Club Historian):

Art mentioned that he and Kathy just delivered part 2 to the JMU Special Collection. The documents included old newsletters, which filled some holes through 1978. He thanked Clair Mellinger for his help in filling these holes. Currently, he is only missing one newsletter copy and he is not even sure if a newsletter was published that month. Other publications included a newsletter known as “Changing Seasons.” Dave Wendelken passed it along to Art along with Clair. He has publications of it from the late 1970s until the late 1980s. It contains detailed bird sightings done quarterly: spring, summer, fall, winter. Also, this publication was written by Kathleen Finnegan, a RBC charter member. It is a fascinating read and also a good source for the first edition of the Birds of Rockingham County book. Art emphasized that it was more than just numbers but valuable anecdotes as well. He cited a few examples including with Cliff Swallows, Ospreys, and Great Blue Herons.

Art plans on delivering part three and maybe part 4 over to the JMU Collections on a later date. Also, he noted that he and Kathy spotted a Bald Eagle flying over their driveway when they returned home from the Archives.

Bill Benish (Christmas Bird Count Coordinator):

He shared a story involving Tom Lord, who often led one of the sectors. It involved him cursing over trying to spot a Snow Bunting and found it funny that Tom didn't wash out his mouth with soap during that incident.

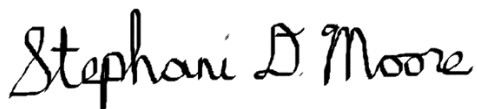
- **New Business:** None noted
- **Announcements?**

Bill and Martha Faw will not be continuing to do the name tags as they are moving away from the area. The tags are already made for the members. They would be happy to get you started on it in terms of setting them out and organizing them between meetings. Ideally, they would like to find someone new before the next club year in September.

- Our next in person meeting is May 11th at 7:00pm;
- Anything else to come before the meeting? No
- Adjourn (If there is no objection and no further business to come before the meeting tonight, the meeting will be adjourned.)
- Meeting Adjourned @ 7:26 pm

Mike Donaldson introduced our Speaker for this meeting: Richard Rowe presenting "Birding in Florida."

Total Participants: 48



Stephani D. Moore
April 15, 2023