

# The Wildfowler

MAY / JUNE 2008

## FROM THE DIRECTOR



Tom Beatty

As you noticed when you opened your newsletter, the 2008 Fall Raffle tickets

were enclosed. Our first two annual raffles were successful and provided the Museum with some much needed funds. This year I'm asking you to once again purchase or sell the tickets and return the stubs with a check to the Museum. You get the six tickets for \$15. The first prize is a beautiful Long-billed Curlew carved and painted by Donna Wasson, second prize is the always sought after miniature bronze Dudley Canvasback by Turner Sculpture and third prize is a commemorative brick paver to be placed near the Museum wildfowl sculpture. So please be generous and purchase AT LEAST six tickets. If you need more than six, call me and I will get them to you promptly.

After having a chance to review a portion of the City of Virginia Beach's upcoming budget our Museum is listed among the areas to be reduced in funding. The cur-

rent proposal is for a 6% reduction. This cut in funding comes at a time when the Museum is in need of every dollar we can get and from every source no matter how big or small. That's why we need your help at this critical time. I think our financial situation can only improve with additional funding from the City and continued support from our membership.

The aforementioned raffle is one such effort designed to raise funds at our level, so please be generous. Also remember you can make a donation to the museum any time during the year. Your gifts are tax deductible and 100% of your gift goes directly to support the Museum. Of course monetary contributions are always welcome, but there are other ways you can help the Museum. When you and your family visit the oceanfront make it a point to visit the Museum and stop in the gift shop and make a purchase, remember you get a 10% discount for being a Guild member. We can always use volunteers in the gift shop, especially on Monday (am & pm), Tuesday (pm), Wednesday (pm), Thursday (am & pm), Friday (pm), Saturday (am & pm), and Sunday (pm). If you are interested in volunteering

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- May 5  
General Guild meeting, AWHM, 6pm social, 7pm meeting/program-speaker: Bruce Freske, Manager of Mattamuskeet NWR
- May 12  
Board of Directors meeting, 7pm, AWHM
- May 16-18  
VSO annual meeting in conjunction with Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival
- May 19  
Fundraising dinner at Lucky Oyster (reservation required by calling AWHM)
- May 26  
Memorial Day
- June 2  
Last General Guild meeting of summer, AWHM, 6pm social, 7pm meeting/program-speaker: Lillie Gilbert- Owner of Wildriver Outfitters

(Continued on page 3)



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Back Bay Wildfowl Guild  
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## BACK BAY BIRDING CLUB

any of these days, call me and I will give you specific information. One sure-fire way to support the Museum is to attend and/or help with the Museum and Guild sponsored events. We have some events coming up soon and others planned throughout the year. Help us wherever and whenever you can so we can remain a special attraction to out of town visitors as well as locals.

In another effort to cut our expenses, we are going to revamp our newsletter. It will come out bi-monthly in a true letter format. You will still receive all the information as in previous newsletters but in what we hope will be a more reader friendly format. Additionally, we will begin to send newsletters via the internet to those who wish to receive it and have provided us with an e-mail address. We will continue to send paper copies to those who wish to receive the newsletter in that form.

This year the State of Virginia held its 75th Historic Garden Tour in April. This year the focus was on historic homes and once again the de Witt Cottage was on the tour and received special mention in the Virginia Beach section of the tour booklet.

We have a lot to offer anyone who visits the Museum. I once again invite you to stop by any day of the week to spend some time with fellow Guild members and I especially invite you to our monthly Guild meeting which includes an invited speaker. I hope to see you at the Museum and the Guild meetings.

—Tom

In February nine members of the BBBC joined up with the VSO for their annual Outer Banks weekend. We went to Bodie Lighthouse, Oregon Inlet and Pea Island in very COLD weather. Most noteworthy birds seen were: White Ibis, Canvasback ducks, American Avocets and a Clapper Rail. We later split from the VSO and made our way into Lake Mattamuskeet. Refuge manager, Bruce Freske took us to places we had never seen on the refuge and beautiful sights of, Tundra Swan, Pintail, Snow Geese, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle and Great-horned Owl were seen to name a FEW. In all we identified 93 species of birds!

The March winds blew the BBBC into Stumpy Lake Golf Course for a very nice birdwalk. Our large group of 22 people split into two groups and began birding around the clubhouse, entrance road and trail through the woods. Spring migrants had not arrived yet, however we witnessed spring-time behavior. Ole "eagle-eye" Tom spotted a Wood Duck couple flying overhead and followed them to where they landed in a tree at the edge of the wooded trail. Sure enough Momma Wood Duck went into her nest hole in the tree top and proud Papa stood guard at the end of the limb of the tree near the nest. Later we spotted two immature Bald Eagles interacting with flashing talons. Other signs of spring were the Pine Warblers singing and the woodpeckers drumming on trees. We identified 36 species of birds that day.

If you are interested in reading the

entire trip report and full listing of species seen go to the Museum website ([www.awhm.org](http://www.awhm.org)) and click on the bird club button and the date of the walks.

Our April birdwalk will be in Merchants Millpond State Park with our favorite Ranger, Floyd Williams. Several spring/summer birdwalks are available with the VSO as listed in their newsletter on their website ([www.virgini-abirds.net](http://www.virgini-abirds.net)).

Finally we would like to welcome the following new members to our bird club: Marshall & Suzy Feldman, Carol Ferrara, Cindy Meier and Frank & Jayne Munoz. We look forward to birding with you!

—Karen

## DONATIONS

Pungo Realty  
Tommy Deary  
Al Brandtner (Redhead – paint)  
Don Ewell (in memory of Lucille Ewell & Sheba)  
Tom Costello

## MEMBERSHIPS

Frank & Clair Lane  
Carol Ferrara  
Timothy & Susan Wenzel  
Richard L. Rhodes  
Marshall & Suzy Feldman  
Cindy Meier

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Under the auspices of:  
The Back Bay Wildfowl Guild, Inc.  
(A not for profit organization)

*"Witch of Pungo", Belinda Nash was our guest speaker at the April Guild meeting.*



*Group picture of the people that attended the Stumpy lake birdwalk.*



*Ed Morrison at March's Guild meeting.*



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Herb Verhaagen

Our speaker for the May guild meeting will be Bruce Freske, manager of Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge. Bruce is an informative speaker and the birding club enjoyed his expertise the day we spent with him.

There are a number of issues we will be discussing at the meeting, including budget concerns. The city has proposed a 6% cut in the funds they give us annually. This would be difficult enough in any ordinary year; however, we need an additional \$24,100 to be able to keep the museum running as we know it. I had the opportunity to speak

to the city council twice in April concerning the proposed city budget and our request for additional funding. We will discuss the outcome at the May 5th meeting.

We do rely on the funding from the city, but it is our responsibility to also provide revenue for the running of the museum. We must be proactive in raising funds and we will be hosting events to help provide more money to support our museum. We are counting on all of you to be involved in this worthy endeavor. You are the key to our success.

Our first fundraising event will be a dinner at the Lucky Oyster Restaurant on May 19th. Please call the museum to make your reservations. It is going to be a fun evening and we look forward to seeing you there.

—Herb

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR (continued)

June 7  
VSO birdwalk at Piney Grove  
June 17  
Museum Management Committee meeting, 1:30, AWHM  
June 18  
Host Surfrider Foundation, 5-10pm, AWHM  
June 20  
Bus tour  
June 27-29  
VSO birdwalk, High Knob  
July 4  
Independence Day  
July 14  
Board of Directors meeting, AWHM, 7pm