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North American Bird Bander

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Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

President's Message

A survey form was enclosed with your dues notices in late December 1986. This survey, the results of which were revealed at the annual meeting, is designed to get to the bottom of the NABB matter. As explained to Council, we (the Council) can postulate until we are blue in the face, but without a survey we cannot accurately assess how the Association as a whole feels about NABB. Many people have asked me to break off from NABB, but equally as many have asked to keep it going.

Whatever the outcome of the survey, Council will abide by its outcome if it is in the interest of the Association to do so. NABB is very expensive and the joint publishing effort has not been without problems. The question before us is really whether a letter-quality journal with papers and notes by authors from around the country is desired; or, whether our members would be better served by articles from our own region in a comprehensive journal. This is a most difficult problem.

My personal feelings are to keep NABB going. There is a definite advantage to publishing jointly with IBBA and WBBA. A joint publishing effort lends one strong voice to problems common to all banders in the United States. But we also cannot ignore the wishes of our membership, particularly when these wishes are expressed by telltale signs such as an unstable membership. Lately we've had about 150 fewer members than in the earlier years of NABB. There could also be other reasons for this shift in membership. Many of our members are getting on in years and there are fewer younger banders perhaps. It should also be noted that not all licensed banders are necessarily members of one of the associations.

The EBBA Publication Committee, consisting of Jeff Spendelow and our Editor, Bob Pantle, are looking into ways to resolve the NABB publishing difficulties. These are quite apart from the above. Our production staff, the Eagle Foundation headed by Terrance Ingram, has expressed the desire to be relieved of this responsibility. We owe them a great deal of thanks for getting the journal back on a timely publication schedule, but the question is, "Where do we go from here?" It is easy to find typesetters and printers; it is not easy to find services that are cost effective when dealing with a gradually declining membership. It is very difficult to find a long-term solution to a coordinator to oversee production.

With the aid of computers, the typesetter can be cut out of the process thereby lowering costs. Some people have expressed a desire to have a 'super editor' instead of a production manager, but these two functions are not the same. After listening to the advice of various people on Council, I am no longer convinced that a 'super editor' is the answer and neither is doing away with a production staff.

We will have to struggle with these related problems and it may be necessary to call a special council meeting later in 1987. The matter of choosing a new production team **must** be resolved by October 1987, which is about the time that the first issue for 1988 goes into production.

If our members have any suggestions, I ask that you communicate with me directly. Thank you.

Fred S. Schaeffer
President