

2011 Annual Board Meeting Minutes  
November 28 – December 3, 2011  
Phoenix, Arizona

November 28, 2011

Attendees: Freddie Rivera, Bill Barger, Karen Clifton, Bill Mitiu, Steve Lawler, Herb Cartmell, Jim Greelis, Brad Hoggan, Ron Pairan, Alan Porter, Tom Coletti, Al Hassler, Mike Tobin, John McSweeney, Jay Holder, Lance Hoggan, Deone Roberts. Bill Desmarais joined the group in the afternoon.

The meeting was opened at 8:20 a.m. There were no public comments.

Guest: Lance Hoggan

Motion to accept July 2011 meeting minutes as published. Barger/Lawler. Passed.

**PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS – Rivera**

Following the flag salute and moment of silence, President Rivera expressed that we are demonstrating that the AU cares in our intercommunications. When alerted that there had been no recent zone meetings, Rivera attended functions and represented the AU to appreciative members. Members were impressed that not just the President attended the meetings, but also Zone Directors. It was a good example of the positive results of getting out mingling and providing updates. Updates at that time included National Database, the Youth Program, Mentoring Program, Show Program and AU Speakers Program. Many members are still not aware of these benefits of membership. His goal was to get out to these members, and it worked.

The discussion that followed included:

Holder – Rather than print copies of the latest race results, race secretaries can save reports to WordPad and email them, which goes a long way in member relations within clubs. Many still don't know the reports are available. The AU is outstanding in recognition certificates.

Porter – He reiterated that communication is vital in all forms, not just in person, but email, etc.

Rivera – He clarified what awards are actually received, to groups in Puerto Rico that had been misled by other organization promises. He opened the table to hear experiences.

Hoggan – It is appreciated when speakers and show judges show up.

Holder – The office can provide a list of contacts for clubs in each zone and also for Help-A-Beginner.

Lawler – The state organization currently has a challenge with communication. Members are not getting information, though it is presented in publications and on-line.

**TREASURER - McSweeney**

McSweeney explained that we started with a standard budget and compared it to the actual expense in 2011, which results in a revision of methods. Band sales revenue was

mixed; membership has about the same count and renewals are accurate; diploma inventory will require year-end inventory this year.

Savings reserves are 10,000. According to the Treasurer's final report in 2008, each year we are to take out 10,000 for the rainy day fund. It was budgeted, but has not occurred but once. This will be rectified this year out of the general cash fund.

#### EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT – Mitiu

Mitiu echoes President Rivera's comments to get out among members. He provided an update on the GHC situation, which appears to be the result of weak club by-laws. He provided an update on the Chicago issue, which is in a state of flux. Mitiu commented that a monetary contribution and the departure of the mayor and alderman are promising in the Chicago area.

He indicated that only a few folks are causing the problems. He believes we are too soft on members that create the problems and we end up losing 30 good members because we are too easy on 1 bad one.

#### VICE PRESIDENT – Holder

Most of his activities have been associated with award committee work and software development. He judged 2 shows in central Florida and stayed in tune to the GHC situation. He stated that people that need to be right spoil the sport. No one involved in disruptive disagreements has the good of the sport in mind. He shared also that Trinidad is interested in custom awards.

Hoggan inserted a lost bird suggestion to simplify owner responsibility issues. In his situation, Animal Control brings the birds to him and he provides a carrying case. That way the birds are returned to a representative that will communicate to other members.

#### PRESIDENT EX-OFFICIO – Lawler

Lawler thanked each person for their sacrifice in going to board meetings. He shared that he drove to Vancouver and met with Bill and Tom at the Oregon Trail Combine. Their race course is two directions. Their combine consists of various ethnicities that mix well. Tom ran the zone meeting, which had great response because there was no awareness of materials from the AU. Comparing the California region to the Washington region, there was a great exchange of information. Don Moore put on a show event.

Lawler expressed that we are woefully lacking in recognizing what we do in competition on a national level. We don't recognize our own convention winner. In 2010, the first bird through the trap happened to be Dave Byer. Lawler wrote an article about him. He will try to run articles on other top spots. If we don't, we're missing the boat. One idea is for each Zone Director to make contact with award winners to retrieve information for Beverly to report regularly in the Update.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### RIGHT TO RACE – Clifton

No significant update. One member reported being stopped when attempting to release/train from a wildlife preserve area. No other similar reports have been received. No outbreaks or threats at this time.

Rivera commented that he was approached by Fred Perez in Orlando who still wants to address the hawk issue. Perez' concerns were regarding the international treaty, the AU is not doing anything, the AU is not talking to the attorney and there are no guidelines set. He was thanked for his efforts previously and advised that his suggestions (to assess members to assist, etc.) were given to our lobbyist and if warranted, he will be in touch with Fred.

### TRANSPORTATION – Lawler

Lawler reviewed that this issue developed from public, non-board comments. The board began work on the right to race, leadership and retention, national youth coordinator and historian. We are slowly integrating all this in. By 2020, we will have all this in place.

Regarding right to race, we still do not have blanket permission to race. This has to be dealt with locally. He said Washington gets into California with no restrictions; however, it ebbs and flows. Periodically liberators are stopped at weigh stations. At this time, there are no restrictions but liberators need to call ahead.

Regarding leadership and retention, the workers are not at AU convention. When Lawler was out on the road talking to clubs, the audience could select from topics. If a club has a bad seed, why are they not getting rid of him? Possibly direct instruction is what we need to look at – zone meetings – breakout sessions. No one wants to go to them, but everyone has to deal with members. We need to go to the clubs.

Young people are bringing kids with them. We can visualize them carrying on.

Cartmell commented that lots of Romanians and Russians are in his area. They are very family oriented and network together. If you get one, you get another, which is a positive for the sport.

Rivera commented that Hispanics have the same qualities.

### NATIONAL YOUTH/SCHOOL COORDINATOR - Pairan

Pairan opened the floor for comments and suggestions.

Greelis commented that we could have Shumaker speak at national conventions. His club is doing separate categories for youth: show, homers & fancies, plaques and ribbons. It's slow to take off and he doesn't know if the club will continue. Their group gives birds away and speaks to groups. He has seen improvement in the 4-H group.

Cartmell commented that some areas are difficult to start a 4-H group. He recommended starting a junior club, then approaching 4-H for individual membership with requests to make pigeons their projects. They learn leadership in workshops. Officers are required to go to help train the kids. We could replicate this at our zone meetings – bring it to the members. He also noted that when you have youth, they've run into kids having trouble getting birds trained. Timing is wrong with the hawks. They likely won't have adults and kids flying the same schedule.

#### HISTORIAN – Greelis

He completed video interviews of Pigeoneers, past AU Presidents, and legends of the sport. Clips have been posted on YouTube and a DVD has been created with Pigeoneer information. Still planned interviews are with Steve Lawler and sport legend Bobby Gonzalez of Tampa.

He started an inventory and catalog of all the AU historical items and anticipates completion by 2012 mid-year meeting.

He has noticed fewer lost bird calls.

Discussion followed regarding the AU historical display at the WOW Museum. Shelving will be needed to organize storage of memorabilia.

#### JUDGE'S PANEL – Barger

Barger reported picking up 2 new judges: 1 in the west and 1 central. They currently have no more needs. Two shows are scheduled. He is inclined to eliminate the show element of AU for lack of use; however, general consensus was to leave it alone for now.

#### MEMBERSHIP DRIVE – Cartmell

Cartmell shared documents used by the Lions organization as examples for bequeathing funds to an organization. Other examples were for youth and awareness, including a USDA biosecurity brochure, a coloring book, a youth workbook, CDs. Lions are looking for youth and women. Their tools may be helpful in AU's drive. One idea to encourage participation is to provide a little pin for all officers, with each office printed on the pin. He believes this action would encourage members to serve on a board.

#### COMPETITION STANDARDS/INITIAL REVIEW – Coletti

#### COMPETITION STANDARDS/INITIAL REVIEW – Coletti

As chair, he addressed a variety of issues in the past few months. He believes the membership demonstrates a lack of responsibility in lost bird retrieval.

#### REVIEW OF PENDING ASSIGNMENTS/PROJECTS

- (1) – Video/CD production to capture historical interviews (pigeoneers, past presidents, etc.). The video/DVD is completed.
- (2) - Circo vaccine development. A proposal was presented.

Motion to table circo vaccine proposal issue until mid-year meeting 2012.  
Barger/Lawler. Passed.

- (3) – Create specific procedure for basketing/knock-off/race release guidelines. A suggestion was to change language from “should” to “shall” for enforcement. Because it resides in policy, it should be in the rules. We remain an animal responsible organization. A BAR is submitted to include in the rules.

#### NATIONAL OFFICE - Clifton

Clifton distributed graphs reflecting membership by zone, as well as a list of clubs and/or individuals that had ordered bands but not yet paid for them. Bands will not be distributed until payment is received. By year-end membership should be the same as last year.

The AU participates in an annual survey of similar membership organizations. In prior reports, national average membership was approximately 6500. The AU has always exceeded that number. Even in a slow economy when the national average has decreased to 5500, the AU’s membership is still above that.

Karen reported that the office has been busy preparing for year-end activities (band inventory/distribution, secretary packet mailout, etc. Bands to be distributed by 12/23.

Clifton updated the board on the Speakers’ Bureau reporting that Ronnie Shumaker of Mississippi has been added to the list. Ronnie will be a great addition to the bureau.

Jakob Miller has indicated he would like to make a brief presentation to the board regarding web-based database on Tuesday.

Lou Coletta has also asked for time with the board on Saturday morning to discuss museum needs.

Karen advised that AU lobbyist, Greg Smith, will arrive on Friday evening and will meet with the board on Saturday morning before addressing general membership.

July 2012 meetings were discussed and it was decided that the board would travel on July 20, and meet the 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>, returning on July 23.

#### SPORT DEVELOPMENT - Roberts

Roberts provided a list of press and event activities that members did since mid-year meeting. The information will appear in the January Update newsletter, along with information received after the annual meeting report deadline. She pointed out that loft idea requests and 4-H project booklet requests were still coming in at a positive rate. She also pointed out that the AU’s Youth Ambassador, Whitney Sabrowsky had successfully connected with the Royal Pigeon Racing Association to create a chat room confined to AU and RPRA youth, with Whitney as moderator.

## VETERANS AFFAIRS - Desmarais

Bill indicated he receives weekly calls or correspondence from members regarding the Veterans Affairs committee. Callers request information on how to do a presentation to share the sport with others in their area. Others call to share the results. Bill added that he felt we could more to help members to showcase the birds' military service.

Desmarais has also been busy connecting with veterans' organizations and community organizations and promotes the pigeons' service to this country. As a result, several veterans have contacted him to join the sport

He has also been providing instruction and assistance to military personnel on holding and releasing birds so he does not need to be present at a ceremony.

Greelis commented that a video of Desmarais showing how to make a presentation would be helpful to share with members for helpful instruction. Greelis will plan to film him when he is scheduled for something such as a civic club meeting.

## ZONE DIRECTOR REPORTS

### Northwest – Coletti

The Western Open was canceled because of bad weather and some issues with the race. Tom did a show for Gary Braden and a Seattle group, accompanied by Rivera and Barger. They used kids as proctors to assist with birds, which provided good interaction. He noted one young girl taking notes as she was watching the auction birds. An additional youth auction allowed the kids to do what is normally an adult activity.

### Pacific – Barger

The zone was quiet with exception of two ordinance issues. The Young Bird race season went very well. He judged a show with Coletti prior to convention and will judge a show in Canada after convention. Work on the 2012 AU Convention is going as planned.

### Southwest – McSweeney

He and Bill Barger attended the Texas Center Convention after the mid-year meeting. The trip was helpful in public relations. He was able to resolve several different issues while attending the convention. An ordinance issue came up in Louisiana as the result of a couple "barnyard" situations. Both properties cleaned up their act; however, it is still on the books and can be applied in the future. The transition from the traditional "Center" status is going well.

### Plains – Porter

Porter conducted a zone meeting in Illinois, sharing AU updates with members and fielding questions. He listed some issues that he was dealing with in the zone, such as clock issues and personal difference issues. An upcoming Minnesota seminar would be another zone meeting opportunity. He expressed interest in a review of the 20/20 plan.

### Lakes – Pairan

Pairan was involved in a large promotion bird release with a Cabela's sporting goods store in West Virginia. Ed Verkleeren orchestrated the event. Ron and his club participated in the Lancaster Festival Farm Days at the county fairgrounds and a bird release at the Carroll Old Timer's Festival in a tribute to fallen servicemen. He and his wife did a white bird release at a church in a September 11 tribute. He and his club also released birds at a breast cancer survivors event.

#### Southeast - Hassler

Hassler shared that he conducted a zone meeting in Tampa. The Tampa Combine has their own website with all the release information. The Dixie Southern will be in northern Atlanta in 2012. He has not heard any complaints about the NDB. Al made a goal of attending four different VFW units and plans to use a CD presentation and information from Bill Desmarais as Veterans Affairs Chairman. Al fielded several lost bird calls.

#### Mountain – Hoggan

Hoggan judged three shows and fielded calls on race submissions, hawk trapping, and false advertising.

#### Northeast – Desmarais

Desmarais has been visiting several clubs, conducting seminars and making presentations. He continues to have weekly activity in the Veterans Outreach Program. He feels we can do more to assist members in utilizing the pigeons' combat service to promote the sport. He is still working on several items for that effort. With their club's new hauler/trailer built by Jerry Smith in Arkansas, they have gotten several inquiries and have been able to send business to Jerry. Bill is under the impression that clear days can present navigation challenges and with the latest he has learned, he feels we should look further into release weather considerations. Bill would also like to see a separate account set up for Veterans Affairs for funding materials to help members make presentations to veterans. Further, he would like to see the ability of the Zone Director to appoint Zone Liaisons to assist with dissemination of information to members and also back to Zone Directors. Issuing a certificate of appointment would be helpful, with a term equal to the Zone Director's that appointed them. Bill shared the success of the Fisher House auction to assist in providing housing for veterans in need. The AU was highlighted at the event and Bill served as the official representative to present awards and citations. He attended the Greenwich show, discussed AU matters and assisted with judging and an auction. Bill submitted a BAR to frame the World of Wing prints to send out to events.

#### WinSpeed©/NDB/PROGRAMMING – Tobin/Lance Hoggan

Rewrite of WinSpeed is based upon an anticipated lifespan of 3 years. Then it needs to shift to web-based. To that end, what has been completed is the recreation of the database, clock downloads with exception of Victory, successful backup and restore of old and new WinSpeed© for toggling between the two, and the weekly race report and UPR weekly race report functions. Remaining tasks include merging, awards, diploma printing and NDB uploading. Other issues will be fee issues, tech support, anti-piracy and maintenance.

#### AWARDS – Holder

139 Registered Champion applications were processed, along with questions about awards and monitoring of the NDB results. The annual awards booklet was compiled and available at convention. Adjustments were made to the National Champion Loft formula. The awards committee is open to suggestions concerning the awards, being mindful of budget. The committee will continue to study the awards results and explore ways to encourage more participation. A future development of WinSpeed© as a web based program will allow for automatic uploads for no effort from club race secretaries.

Lawler reiterated that the NDB is one step of the 20/20 plan.

Executive Session. Lawler/Mitiu. Approve final recommendations pertaining to infractions as determined by board. Passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

November 29, 2011

Attendees: Freddie Rivera, Karen Clifton, Bill Mitiu, Steve Lawler, Herb Cartmell, Jim Greelis, Brad Hoggan, Ron Pairan, Alan Porter, Tom Coletti, Al Hassler, Mike Tobin, John McSweeney, Jay Holder, Lance Hoggan, Bill Desmarais, Bill Barger, Deone Roberts.

#### REVIEW OF NEW BOARD ACTION REQUESTS

##### SE-033

7.31 One Loft Futurity Races. One Loft Futurity races shall not be released with or within 30 minutes or 35 miles of any AU race. Holder/Coletti. Five in favor. Five opposed. One abstain. Rivera broke tie with approval.

##### NW-125

7.32 The minimum distance for any AU race is 75 miles calculated by either Bowen or GPS measurements from the release point to the loft. Any loft that fails to meet the 75 mile rule shall be disqualified. Birds not meeting the 75 mile minimum distance rule shall not be basketed and / or entered into an official AU race and shall not be released with race birds. Coletti/Holder. Passed unanimously.

##### NW-126

AU Race Rule Policy AU 330 included as (19.00) at end of race rules for the convenience of members looking of release guidelines. Coletti/Lawler. Passed unanimously.

##### NW-127

Creates a line item budget for software support and development such as eWinSpeed development, Computer based WinSpeed© language updates, and other related expenses

to maintain and develop present and future Computer and Web based technology and office databases. Starting Budget set at \$5500.00. Barger/Lawler. Passed.

#### NW-128

Save money that is presently spent on standing committee members' travel, lodging, and meals; this change will save the AU considerable money without jeopardizing the AU Board's effectiveness. Committees should be chaired by Board members, and short-term committees may be chaired by AU members at the discretion of the President. Change to take place by January 1, 2013. Braden. Failed no motion.

#### NW-129

Past President position be eliminated by January 1, 2014. The Past President position was necessary when the president was the center of all AU business. The HQ has assumed the major role in managing the organization. The Executive Director and staff now have the business memory for the organization; therefore this position is no longer necessary. Braden. Failed no motion.

#### PLAINS-041

Improve the GI Joe award by improving some of the deficiencies. Motion to refer to Awards Committee. Barger/Lawler. Referred to Awards Committee. Committee chair, Holder, to report in July 2012.

#### Plains-042

Clarify race rule 11.00. 11.01 should be amended so that the last line reads:

The toss must be performed in the presence of no more than 2 additional club or combine members, one (1) of which is a race committee member.

The first line in 11.03 should be amended to read:

If requested, within 3 days of clocking, the race bird shall be tossed at the loft, after notification to the flyer and in presence of the flyer, at the loft in full daylight ONLY and no later than 3 hours before sundown.

11.04 should be amended to read:

A tossed bird must return to the race entrant's loft and enter within 3 hours and be verified by the race committee member, or it will be disqualified. If the race committee member or flyer has doubt about the fairness of the toss, another toss may be performed.

Porter/Mitiu. Passed unanimously.

#### LAKES-029

Data from 2009 – 2011 race seasons be reviewed to determine where the formula for Champion Loft should be revised. If data warrants, we should drop the penalty for shipping less than five birds and use all races shipped to determine AU Champion Loft,

with a minimum requirement of ten races. Would also raise the middle distance minimum to five. Motion to refer to awards committee. Barger/McSweeney. Referred to Awards Committee. Committee to provide data to full board in July 2012 to review in order to determine if change is warranted.

#### PAC-055

Stops AU Awards programming for one year. Nothing to do with Software development and support budget. Barger/Holder. Passed unanimously.

#### LAKES-030

Prohibit AU members from being removed by a club changing boundaries. Motion to delete. Withdrawn. Covered in By-Laws AU 190.

#### NW-130

Reduce the number of signatures (from 50 to 10) for candidates running for AU elections. Pairan/Lawler. Died for lack of motion.

#### SE-34

Establish a budget for the Veteran's Committee: \$1200 to cover any and all expense involved in veterans presentations, consisting of mostly travel and shipping materials, plus some creation of new materials. Rivera/Lawler. Passed with ne opposed.

#### NW-131

Require clubs and AU organizations that have not submitted a C&BL as required in our AU 100 & AU 110 policies, with their yearly dues & band order, that our (AU190 C&BL) be what they use. Further a notice be included in the secretary kit and a box be included along with race rule compliance to be checked and return with the order for bands and diplomas.

Most organizations that have clubs or offices, require them to use the C&BL that the parent organization uses (4-H, Scouts, Big Brother, United Way, etc.) This provides a standard for all. This will minimize the number of complaints and abuses of rules.

Coletti/Hoggan. Passed unanimously.

#### NW-132

Add language to 7.05 to prohibit one loft race birds from being entered in regular club races. Coletti/Holder. Failed. Add language clarifying 7.05. Five in favor. Six opposed. Failed.

#### NW-133

The board asked the National Race Secretary and Chair of the Committee for a recommendation. The Board vote to remove any conflicting rules of failed clocks and refer all issues with failed clocks to AU Race Rule (16.19) tweaked to include all clocks not just electronic clocks.

16.19 In the event of clock failures, the following procedure may be used.

The loft must notify the Club Race Secretary and the Race Committee that the clock has failed as soon as possible.

A participant (loft) shall bring to the Club: (1) the birds that were entered in the race, (2) the print out of officially basketed birds for the race, and (3) the failed clock to the clubs official knock-off.

The birds shall be given a race return time based on the official knock-off time. The official knock-off time shall be considered that knock-off time when the clubs (competing lofts) have gathered to read the first clock (or if the committee can convene at an earlier time).

1. The club, as always, shall follow existing race rules to perform an official knock-off.
2. The Club Race Secretary and at least two other members of the Race committee shall verify the clock failed.
3. The loft copy of the officially basketed birds shall be compared and verified with the Race Secretary's official copy of the lofts basketed birds (race sheet).
4. This procedure shall only be performed at the club where the birds were basketed.

Note: All clubs wishing to exercise Race Rule (16.19) shall have an official elected Race Secretary and at least two other competing lofts as an appointed Race Committee BEFORE the race series starts. Failure to follow this requirement disqualifies the club from using Race Rule 16.19. No clock shall be used in training mode or any other unsecured mode. Electronic band/chip rings shall not be placed in counter-mark clocks.

Holder/Hoggan. Passed unanimously.

NW-134

Clarification of AU Race Rule (4.02) by referencing AU race Rule (4.05)

4.02 Club Participation A minimum of three (3) competing members from three (3) separate physical loft addresses are required to assemble and ship the race; however, as stated in section 4.01 five (5) competing members must be entered in the race for it to be recognized as an official AU club race. Clubs that enjoy combine, or similar affiliation, may ship a race for awards at the combine level provided the club has assembled a "minimum-presence" of three (3) competing members from three (3) separate physical loft addresses. In such cases, the three (3) competing members from three (3) separate physical loft addresses must be present to complete the shipping process at the Club.  
(7/10)

Important: See AU Race Rule (4.05) paragraph 3 as well as "NOTE" in (4.05)

Coletti/Lawler. Passed unanimously.

Guest, Jacob Miller, joined the meeting.

McSweeney shared the revised budget report that included new approved expenditures discussed during board meetings. It was unanimously approved that any money that may be donated to the veterans' affairs committee would be used prior to using the \$1200 provided in the veterans' affairs budget.

Executive Session. Revised Budget approved. McSweeney/Rivera. Passed unanimously.

Jacob Miller presented information on his web site [www.iflypigeons.com](http://www.iflypigeons.com) suggesting it would host web based national database. Rivera requested a written submission to the national office.

Lawler presented a handout and information about the self-studies: (1) the study paid for in 1997 and (2) the self-administered study in 2003. In that, visions for the future of the organization were laid out, such as electronic youth magazine, monthly electronic membership newsletter and more ideas that were presented in the 20/20 proposal.

Cartmell provided a handout of Tom Rory's original self-study recommendations. The suggestion was to redirect a committee for plan presentation in Fall River.

The meeting was adjourned.

2011 AU General Membership Meeting  
December 3, 2011  
Phoenix, AZ

Meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. and attendees welcomed. The current AU Board of Directors and committee members were introduced.

Salute and moment of silence.

President Rivera asked for a motion to approve the 2010 AU General Membership Meeting minutes. Mitiu/Braden. Passed unanimously.

President Rivera introduced Bill Desmarais and asked that he provide an update on the Speakers' Bureau. Bill advised members that this was one of several programs available to AU members. He encouraged members to participate and take advantage of the knowledge the speakers are anxious to share.

Desmarais was also asked by President Rivera to provide an update on the Veterans Affairs committee. He relayed examples of the work he has been doing in MA (to include ceremonial releases, final salutes to fallen soldiers, and work with Fisher House to name a few).

Bill encouraged members to reach out to veterans and the numerous veteran organizations. He shared that the veterans look for and need something to do and that the birds offer them an activity. He also encouraged members to stress the military service of the birds and to refer to their birds as American Racing Homing Pigeons.

Desmarais told attendees he would like to assist with their efforts working with veterans and that he is available by phone or email.

President Rivera asked Bill Barger to provide an update on the Judges' Panel and the 2012 AU convention, which will be held in LaMirada, CA. Barger explained that the Judges' Panel has grown and judges are willing to work with clubs judging shows. He explained that it is a cost-share program and that an organization would be reimbursed up to \$400 for a judge (from within that specific zone).

Al Hassler was asked to provide information pertaining to the GHC's bid to host the 2013 AU convention. He said it would be held in Tampa. Laurie McConnell is serving as chair. AU Executive Vice President, Bill Mitiu, is involved as well and will be co-chairing. Entrants will have the opportunity to enter their birds in the Gulfcoast Classic as well. They will host guest activities, seminars and auctions. Braden made the motion to accept the proposal. Desmarais seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

President Rivera then introduced the AU Lobbyist, Greg Smith. Greg greeted membership and thanked them for the opportunity to attend the convention. He expressed appreciation for meeting and visiting with members.

Greg shared with attendees that it has been a quiet year in terms of no shipping problems, no outbreaks or legislation that is having a negative impact on the sport. He added that though it has been quiet, he has still worked with the office on several issues and continues to monitor legislation to ensure our needs are met.

He recapped several efforts that he has worked on for the AU since 2003 (shipping protection, posting comments to the federal register regarding quarantines during outbreaks, various bills in different stages in legislation and work toward not being regulated by the federal government).

With regard to the Animal Welfare Act, Greg explained that the government has indicated they will not regulate us and that is a direct result of his work and that of the AU national office and board members.

Smith encouraged members to continue with loft certification as this is a strong tool against government regulation and is helpful when members are faced with ordinance challenges.

In closing, Greg also encouraged members to be positive when dealing with public and to remain good ambassadors for the sport.

Hassler/Hoggan to adjourn. Unanimous.