

**AU MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Midvale, Utah**  
**July 8, 2023**



Attendees: Bob McKenna, Ronnie Shumaker, John Hundrup, Joyce Steirlin, Karen Clifton, Steve Lawler, Jeff Life, Gary Heindel, Dave Wilson, Robbie Whaley, Al Christeleit, Toni Wiaderski, CL Gage

President Bob McKenna welcomed board members and guests to the meeting.

Guests in Attendance: Alven Givens, Leon Jensen, Doug Burnett, Ryan Jones, Joanie Christeleit, Paul Kaufman, Dick Fassio, and Bill Slay

President McKenna asked all in attendance to join in the flag salute and called for a moment of silence in remembrance of fanciers recently passed.

Al asked if the previous meeting minutes were going to be read and a financial report presented. It was pointed out that the minutes are emailed to the board for review, edits and approval and are then posted to the AU website. Steve Lawler also noted that reading of minutes was suspended years ago because the minutes can be 30 or more pages and time-consuming to read. He added that board meetings used to last until 10:00 p.m. or even later and since they are distributed to board members for approval, suspending reading the minutes helped with time efficiency.

Ronnie Shumaker asked Al if reading of the minutes could be suspended if too time-consuming.

Al/Gage - motion that minutes be read for the two annual meetings. Approved.

Following board training ensued with Sandler (professional board training firm in Utah). The focus was on communication, coming to the board meetings prepared and with no personal agendas so that the sport be better served, promoted and preserved.

After the session concluded, President McKenna offered that knowing what zone directors are responsible for would assist them serving members. Zone Director responsibilities include: assisting new members getting started in the sport, assisting clubs (when appropriate) with conflict resolution, representing the board with "team" in mind, reaching out to members to encourage promotion, and hosting zone meetings.

Ronnie Shumaker indicated he has held two zone meetings and members have been very receptive.

McKenna asked the board to be aware when responding to members' inquiries. Specifically, a race rule issue should be deferred to the National Race Secretary, By-laws inquiries should be referred to the Constitution & Bylaws (CBL) advisor, etc.

### **Review of Pending BAR's**

**SE-046** Update Bylaw 2.10 to require AU dues be based on a calendar year (January 1 - December 31) and not a fiscal year (start date when dues are paid and expiring 12 months later).

Ronnie said that some clubs come together in January and some later in the year. He said he feels that if a member pays during the last quarter of the year, they should get the next year.

John Hundrup said making this change would be asking clubs to meet in December. Dave Wilson asked which clubs would be flying that late and who would benefit. Robbie asked if it can be pro-rated in any way. Karen said that would add a lot of extra entry and admin work.

Wiaderski said he has IF and AU members and he tells the IF members if they want to belong to the club, they have to belong to the AU as well.

Ronnie made motion to accept. Failed for lack of second.

**Lakes - 033** Amend Champion Loft to a more equitable calculation.

Gary Heindel said he doesn't think it is possible to level the calculation and that it would only benefit a few.

Dave Wilson said he didn't think it could be more fair and that this BAR was discussed extensively in October 2022.

Jeff Life said if a person flies 14 races and picks best 4, someone else may only fly 7 so they are flying more races and have an advantage and suggested seeking other award categories to compete in.

Ronnie said different clubs have different numbers of races.

Steve said he didn't think it would be fair. AI agreed with Steve.

Ronnie said awards are based on different criteria. Joyce said that is by design. Ronnie asked if there is a "small club category" for champion loft. Joyce said there is not. Gary Heindel said you can't please everyone.

John Hundrup - motion to accept. Failed for lack of second.

Board entered executive session to discuss pending infraction. AI/Dave to accept recommendation of infractions committee.

Al said there was no advise and consent for Lawler. Jeff Life told Al that an email was sent to the board asking for approval. Al said he didn't receive it. Jeff reminded Al that he did respond to the email.

Robbie said he had wanted to wait to discuss appointments. Joyce stated that everything had been delayed because of the election and that appointments needed to be moved on.

CL asked if infraction investigators were approved. Al said no.

Ronnie said he has asked people with talent to serve on the sport promotion committee and asked if they needed to be approved. He has asked for at least one person in each zone to be recommended for the committee. He talked with Peters, David Stephenson, Steve Zurcher and Terry Finnerty. Finnerty declined.

Steve Lawler said that Bylaw 6.05 takes precedent regarding committee approval. Guest, Paul Kaufman, read Bylaw 9.01 pertaining to the investigators on committee. CL/Dave to accept Al;s investigators (Joanie Christeleit, Paul Kaufman, John Vance, Terry Finnerty,Lisa Schutta).

Al said James Stovall will be an advisor.

Al asked how Don Moore was compensated. John Hundrup told him he has not been compensated and that he volunteers his time.

Steve advised that per Bylaw 9.05, investigators can be compensated, however, with email, zoom, etc., travel expenses are unnecessary.

Joyce Stierlin asked Al what he feels qualifies them as investigators and that previous investigators have professional backgrounds conducting interviews, fact-finding and legal proceedings.

Al said that Paul is a small business owner (sporting goods), John Vance knows the by-laws and Joannie is thorough.

CL asked about having a transcriptionist for minutes. Al said we should have one.

Ronnie returned to the issue of committee members. He said we appoint committee chairs so should trust the chairs' decisions for their committee members.

CL/Dave to accept committee members as appointed by the committee chairs.  
Unanimous.

CL said he was appointed as the convention committee chair. He said he has talked to Sterling Leroy and asked if the convention host needed any assistance. He said the

group knows how to host conventions and should be ok. CL asked what else he was supposed to do as the committee chair.

President McKenna told him he should reach out to the 2024 and 2025 host and seek future convention hosts.

AI/CL get stenographer for the two bi-annual meetings. Ronnie asked for a cost estimate first.

Toni asked why the board should wait to vote. McKenna called for the vote. One abstention. No nays.

Joanie suggested the AU may have a member that is a stenographer and could be hired and the AU could pay for them to attend the convention.

### **President's Report**

President McKenna stated that the board needs to be prepared for the 2024 election and that the CB&L needs to be cleaned up and will be reviewed when the Constitution & Bylaws report is given.

With regard to the newly created Diversity Committee, he said he wants to make it easier for members of any ethnicity to read and understand the race rules. Bob said it is also important that all members feel welcome at the club level.

In terms of sport promotion, Bob said he would like to see more clubs involved in targeting all ages and ethnic groups. He suggested that clubs would have ambassadors that would welcome new fliers and make club racing fun and friendly.

President McKenna noted that we need to find a better way to reunite found pigeons with owners and getting membership more involved in the process.

Toni Wiaderski said the AU should find a way to penalize members that do not respond to finders of found birds.

NW Zone Director, Jeff Life, interjected saying that he had experienced difficulty with a vendor that doesn't always properly record band sales making it difficult to trace an owner. The vendor told Jeff that some people that buy bands don't want their contact information given out. Karen said she would contact that vendor.

CL said his wife has a beauty shop and a lady lives near by and finds a lot of birds. CL asks her to catch them.

McKenna said he would like to see the meetings run smoothly with board members taking turns to speak and not talking over others.

Bob reminded the board that we have a free clocking system for junior members.

McKenna continued and said he would like to see all reports to function and awards generated through EWINSPEED®. He said the more awards that are given, the more members will be encouraged to continue to participate.

He reminded board members that they should provide a positive article for AU publications to share the good things happening within the different zones.

### **President Ex-Officio**

President Ex-Officio, John Hundrup, indicated he still assists with EWINSPEED® calls and inquiries. He also receives calls pertaining to race rules. John said he refers those inquiries to the National Race Secretary, Jeff Life.

### **Executive Vice President**

Al Christeleit said that he was sworn in, he has been trying to figure out all it entails being Executive Vice President. Al said the CB&L notes that he is to carry out those responsibilities and duties assigned by the board. He said he has been spending time reading the C&BL and board meeting minutes. He said he is also the chair of the finance committee and has been in contact with Karen and sure he will be asking more questions.

### **Vice President**

Vice President, Robbie Whaley, said he has no report, he is learning. He said his schedule has been busy and challenging. He said he sees more future involvement serving on committees.

### **Drug Test Committee**

Whaley said he has no report. He has not received questions or complaints. Robbie said President Ex-Officio, John Hundrup, has brought him up to speed on prohibited substances.

Robbie said he has talked with Texas A&M. He said they won't tell you what they test for only if a test is positive. He said testing is \$80. Tests are taken from 5 gram samples. They test for the most commonly used drugs.

John Hundrup explained that there are 650 banned substances listed in our policy, which is on the AU website.

Whaley said it is important that members know we watch and that clubs have an opportunity to enforce the policy and take action as needed.

Dave Wilson said the tests are not expensive and it serves as a preventative.

Paul Kaufman asked if there is anything that triggers a test. Jeff Life told him there is nothing at the national level.

John Hundrup reminded the board that anyone testing has to have notified racers of testing or the AU will not back up the club decision. He added that very few test (mainly in Florida).

### **National Youth/Youth Clocking**

Committee chair, Ronnie Shumaker, explained that a clocking system was created for junior members. He said kids can countermark their birds and clock in their cell phones and then uploads can be made to their own section of the National Database (NDB). Ronnie said a club leader needs to be identified to set up the race in the system.

Shumaker said that it was decided that EWINSPEED® will be given to youth groups at no cost. The children do need to be AU members with their own AU ID number. Ronnie said he doesn't recommend it for kids at the club level, rather groups such as 4H or FFA. Ronnie added that no groups have requested to use it.

Ronnie did say that a member, Mike Parrish in Indiana, is going to have a booth at an event and hopes to get a youth program started.

Shumaker said there are a couple of FFA leaders in South Carolina that he has been working with. One found a bird and started a loft. He said he wants to see a loft established at each school to get kids involved. He commented about the positive publicity to be gained through FFA shows.

### **Right to Race**

Karen Clifton said we received information from AU lobbyist, Greg Smith, that the USDA has provided pigeon fanciers an exemption for regulation through the Animal Welfare Act. She reiterated that had we not received that exemption, the government would have had inspectors at pigeon lofts telling members how to care for their birds.

Karen said that the office has fielded about 8 calls from members so far this year that have been faced with ordinance challenges. She mentioned those problems usually arise when neighbors feud over something unrelated and then the birds are targeted.

Clifton mentioned that Gary had said he had ideas how to work with state vets to seek exemption from restriction in the event of future virus outbreaks so deferred to Gary and Robbie Whaley.

### **Constitution & Bylaws**

Committee chair, Steve Lawler, said that his committee (Drew Lesofski, Don Lowe, Jim Greelis, Herb Cartmell and Ronnie Shumaker) have reviewed the C&BL and have made several suggestions (specifically regarding 5.06, 5.07 and 5.08). Board Action Requests (BAR's) have been submitted and Steve said they would be reviewed tomorrow.

Steve also discussed there are discrepancies that are a result of having various authors throughout the years. Steve provided an example of the use of the word "Centers"

throughout the bylaws. The AU no longer has Centers and so those changes need to be made.

Lawler repeated that the BAR's will be reviewed tomorrow and that we need to be clear on the election process. He said there were two additional items to be cleaned up specifically regarding the different types of memberships.

Steve discussed active participants. He noted that one loft racing has become very popular and commented on what can be done to gain and retain one loft participants. He suggested a possibility was to create awards for one loft races.

Dave asked what would appeal to one loft participants.

CL said you can't tell one loft race organizers to do something.

Robbie said he would talk to a few of the managers of one loft races to see what they think the AU might offer them.

Paul Kaufman said he was just getting started in one loft races and asked if awards could be given. If so, he said he thinks that will entice participants.

Whaley said he thinks the AU can offer promotion for one loft races. Guest, Paul Kaufman, noted that may help eliminate bad one loft races. Steve agreed and said perhaps that would make models of those one loft races that are run properly.

### **Competition Standards**

National Race Secretary, Jeff Life, said he receives quite a few calls and he reminds those inquiring that race rules are not guidelines, rather rules. He also stated that there is no home rule. Jeff said he fields about 300 to 400 calls per year.

### **Promotion**

Chair, Ronnie Shumaker, suggested a way to promote might be to provide a certificate to finders that help with birds. He noted that finders can and do get involved in the sport.

Shumaker again asked board members to provide names of members with promotion talent to be on the committee.

He continued that we are still communicating with Poultry Press and will confirm with Deone as to status.

Ronnie also mentioned gaining members from other animal hobbyist groups.

He mentioned advertising through Facebook and Facebook ads. He asked if perhaps the AU should hire someone just to manage social media.

Karen Clifton praised the work of out-going Sport Development Manager, Deone Roberts. Karen shared that when Facebook and other social media became popular, Deone took it upon herself to give the AU presence on those platforms. Deone learned what is required and stays on top of the constantly changing requirements and restrictions of social media outlets.

Karen said that hiring someone to do only social media may cost more than \$50,000 annually and that Deone has taken this (almost full-time task) on in addition to the other services she provides the AU.

Committee chair, Shumaker, went on to remind the board that Jim Jenner videos are freely accessible to members on our website.

Ronnie has talked to the producer of a film, Patrick Graham. A club in Arizona (Bob French) has been working with them. The film is to be presented on YouTube.

Dave Wilson said a race with birds over the Grand Canyon would provide great video.

Al said Amazon is looking at producing sequels and that it will be good publicity.

Ronnie said he would get the link for the videos to the office.

Wilson asked about Jenner videos. He said people don't go to the website. He asked how we tell members that the videos are available. He suggested putting a small ad in the Digest. He went on to say that he talks to club members to see what they are doing to promote. Dave said that if the sport is not promoted at the club level, the sport will die.

Al said zoom meetings will help and that members should be plugged in.

Dave said that we can generate more publicity and one loft race organizers can fund it.

He suggested that everyone in the room should come up with ideas for promotion.

Steve Lawler said promotion accomplishments should be listed via letters to the editor and articles.

Al said we should advertise in the Digest every month.

President McKenna said he is aware of a video being produced in Don Moore's area. It pertains to a fancier with cancer and a girl that took his champion bird.

Al mentioned a show in Grand Junction and that they got grandparents and their grandchildren involved.



Wilson said we should all be on the same page and get the AU out there by advertising at the club and national level.

### **Diversity**

Al Christeleit, committee chair, asked what is wanted from the Diversity Committee. Al said he has names of people to assist but wants to know what President McKenna wants from the committee.

Al asked for race rules to be sent to him in English. Karen told him the rules are already translated to Spanish on our site and will appear again in the yearbook. Karen will send a word document to Al.

Al said he would have his committee members translate to other languages.

CL said Andy Rodriguez should be allowed back in the AU. Dave asked if there is a process in place for bringing an expelled member back in. Steve Lawler advised there is a process and rules should be followed.

Ronnie Shumaker said he has been working with a member in Baton Rouge, Mark Pursival. Mark spends a lot of time in Mexico and has helped with translation many times. Ronnie said Eric Alvarez wants to help with the committee.

Paul Kaufman read 24.14 pertaining to probation, suspension and expulsion.

Al/Dave to approve review of BAR's received late. Unanimous.

Joyce/CL to adjourn. Unanimous.

## **AU Mid-Year Board Meetings July 2, 2023 Midvale, UT**

President McKenna welcomed the board and guests.

**Attendees:** Bob McKenna, John Hundrup, Steve Lawler, Karen Clifton, Joyce Stierlin, Ronnie Shumaker, Jeff Life, Gary Heindel, Robbie Whaley, Toni Wiaderski, Dave Wilson, Al Christeleit, CL Gage

**Guests:** Paul Kaufman, Joanie Christeleit, Deb Wilson, Doug Burnett

Paul Kaufman commented that after he left the meetings yesterday, he reviewed prior meeting minutes and asked if they could be distributed prior to the meeting because some are very lengthy.

Karen said the minutes are sent to the board members via email and then when approved, are posted on the AU website. They are already being distributed to the board prior to the subsequent meeting.

The board agreed to continue to receive them on line.

AI/CL to continue receiving prior to the meetings as is currently the practice.  
Unanimous.

Paul Kaufman asked if the board meeting agenda is online for members.

Ronnie Shumaker said board members should reply when sent by email.

Joanie Christeleit asked if the BAR's are open to general membership.

Steve Lawler questioned how to anticipate how many copies to print.

Karen Clifton will print extra copies of BAR's for guests sitting in future meetings.

Paul Kaufman asked if time for guest comments could be later in the meetings. The board agreed that is an easy adjustment and can be made. Guests then can observe and then ask questions.

Robbie Whaley commented that if guests have opportunity to ask questions at the beginning of the meetings, then the board will know what is of interest to members and can address and discuss those topics.

Ronnie Shumaker said we should consider limiting time for comments.

Paul Kaufman thanked the board for allowing member participation. Paul said at the club level, people don't always want to be involved. He said he wants to be involved at the national level. He said he owns Timberline Sporting Goods and a discount is offered.

President McKenna brought the meeting back to order and to agenda.

### **National Office**

Karen Clifton reported membership numbers by zone and handed out charts reflecting same. Membership remains fluid as some don't fly both seasons and we have some memberships that expire while new or returning members join. As of July 5, membership was 6809. We gain members this time of year because of young bird flying.

Robbie Whaley asked if old members are listed on the site. Joyce Stierlin advised that members are listed so to allow club secretaries to bring them over to current status.

Joyce asked Robbie to send her specific information if an issue so she can view, troubleshoot and correct if need be.

Toni Wiaderski said he has both IF and AU members and some don't want to join the AU or only fly one season. He tells his members they have to pay dues.

Steve Lawler noted that membership is up in the NE Zone. Wiaderski said it is up because he collects dues for the AU.

CL asked if membership numbers can be broken down by membership category (adult, junior, patron, sponsor, etc.). Karen said that could be done.

Karen shared that more club secretaries utilized the automated roster, band and diploma orders this year, which allowed the office to be current on the data entry and distributing ID cards. Members have reported some bugs, which our programmer corrects quickly.

Clifton continued saying approximately 800,000 bands were ordered for 2024. Al said a new revenue source is needed. The cost of bands was discussed.

CL said he bred 100 birds and received bands from China and then others started ordering illegal bands.

Karen advised that the NDB detects illegal bands via the band validation table in the system.

Al said members should buy 50 bands and be given 50 bands free. He believes thousands of members would be gained.

Ronnie asked about other band related expenses, such as customs and shipping and distribution. He said he didn't see that giving out free bands would gain new members.

Al said the cost doesn't bother him, but it does others. He said vendors should not sell our bands. Al said we should give away free bands.

Dave Wilson said clubs upcharge bands to raise revenue for the clubs just as the AU does, both need revenue.

Al suggested putting on shows to raise money. Dave said that would upset members as many don't want to work. Al said he thought it would still bring in members.

Joyce said some members come and go. Ronnie commented that there are price breaks depending upon quantity ordered. He said that vendors have been great support for the AU and members and that they should sell AU bands.

Toni said 50 free bands should be given to members.

Al said that Bob French's club in Arizona didn't know to purchase bands by the deadline (3/31 each year) and they don't use the computer so they switched to the IF.

Karen continued with the office report and told the board that Deone's final promotion report was sent with the meeting materials board members received. Karen said she was hopeful the board read it to see the variety of events and presentations she has assisted with. Also important in the report is the analytics noted from the various social media advertising efforts the AU makes.

Clifton then shared the progression of open races and that years ago the AU board approved sanctioning those open races that follow race rules and certain criteria. The board also approved providing a trophy for the overall winner (up to \$75). Karen said that there was a recent request asking the AU to provide trophies for different sections.

CL said plaques are better than trophies.

Karen shared that 19 scholarship applications have been received and that all but one sent all the required information. The applications are under review and the winners will be notified and featured in the 2023 *Yearbook*.

Karen confirmed dates of travel and meetings to be held during the 2023 convention. Board should plan to travel on 10/30. Meetings will take place on 10/31 & 11/1 and the general membership meeting will be on 11/4. Return travel 11/5.

## **Zone Director Reports**

### **Northwest Zone**

Zone director, Jeff Life, reported that it has been quiet in the NW Zone and they struggle to keep members because they are so spread out. He noted there is less conflict as a result.

Jeff reported that he attends two shows with 50 - 100 members in attendance. He said that at both events, members enjoy participation and get along well.

Jeff concluded saying he does not receive a lot of calls from NW Zone members.

Steve Lawler thanked the office for advertising the events. The AU sends a post card out to members in the zone advising members of the event and the zone meetings.

### **Pacific Mountain Zone**

Joyce Stierlin, Pacific Mountain Zone Director, shared information about the protest (against pigeons), which was held in Sacramento. Joyce explained that she attended and that the San Francisco club sent a private investigator. She said they had 7 pigeons on display and only a few attendees were there. She asked questions of the organizers, they gave few answers and complained that fanciers don't want birds back.

Al said PETA has been against racing for years. He said we should put info on the back of videos to show who we are and show our true mission.

Dave Wilson commented that we have to educate our members on the appropriate response and behavior with finders.

### **Southwest Zone**

CL Gage said there is not much going on in his zone and that he mails members every two weeks and doesn't get any input from them.

He reported that the Texas Center convention was well planned and hosted by the Denton Invitational. He said they received 458 birds, the race was handled by 6 lofts and they had races on two days. He said they had seminars (Chad Lytle and a round table discussion with Bobby Brown and John Timmerman). He reported that Raf Herbots was there and that the women had plenty of activities (games, shopping, casino, Alpaca far tour and cookie decorating).

He added they had good food and entertainment and the ladies raised money for their scholarship program.

Al mentioned that there were some duplicate bands and the manufacturer needed to be notified. Karen explained the manufacturer was notified and that the AU got ahead of the situation by notifying members and asking duplicates to be returned. There were just a few isolated cases and the band validation table will identify duplicates in the NDB.

### **Plains Zone**

Plains Zone Director, Gary Heindel, said his zone has been quiet with the exception of a few threats of infractions. He has fielded calls from members in Illinois and Michigan. Gary noted that the Midwest Racing Pigeon Association hasn't had meetings in years and that members don't attend meetings. In spite of that, Gary, said all runs well and that the Midwest race from Topeka goes smoothly. He thanked Joyce for programming efforts. Joyce thanked Gary for setting it up. He said EWINSPEED® was flawless. President McKenna asked Gary about Avian Influenza. Gary said he will be in touch with Robbie Whaley in the event of another outbreak.

### **Southeast Zone**

Zone Director, Ronnie Shumaker, said that many clubs in the southeast are gaining a few new members. He said the Chattanooga club was able to host their Winter Warm Up with Dr. Whaley as the guest speaker. Ronnie said that John Stephens of the GHC was able to host the Tony Melucci 600 Mile Open.

Ronnie added that he tried helping a member with a zoning issue in Springhill, FL, but had very short notice. He said the veteran flyers in the area try to warn new people in the area about zoning issues in Hernando County.

Shumaker said he spent a good deal of time working with the new club in the Mobile-Pensacola area adding they are fortunate to have many new members. He added that with inexperience comes other issues with understanding voting rights with race rules.

He said he was looking forward to the 2024 convention, which will be held there. Shumaker asked CL if he will be reaching out to the 2024 convention host.

Ronnie mentioned having diplomas or certificates for finders. He suggested that we send those out to thank them and include some educational pamphlets. He also said we should keep track of the number of certificates sent out.

Shumaker/AI unanimous.

AI said Chris Melucci orders trophies for the Tony Melucci Open race and suggested that a certificate of appreciation be sent to her.

President McKenna asked AI to submit an award nomination for Chris.

Ronnie said many areas in the SE have clubs that are far apart, which makes forming combines difficult.

He said that clubs in Georgia have reached out to him about allowing the Deep South Concourse Race from St. Louis, Missouri to become an Open race they can participate in.

### **Northeast Zone**

Toni Wiaderski said he likes to talk to members and he hasn't received complaints or input from members. He said he does presentations for public groups. Wiaderski said he gets calls regarding lost birds and drives all over to retrieve them.

AI said that he has a list of questions he asks finders before going to pick birds up.

Bob McKenna said that the IF lost bird contact said he gets hundreds of calls and some are for AU birds. He said the IF refers to us if AU banded birds and asked if we could do same. Karen said that we have the IF contact info on our site.

### **Lakes Zone**

Director, Dave Wilson, said the weather has been good and that old bird racing went smoothly. He said there is a lack of interest in old bird flying and suggested having old bird seminars to generate interest. He said members don't know how to motivate old birds.

Dave said the 2022 convention ended well and they were able to purchase a new truck and get club repairs done.

He said that older members are stepping down and newer younger members are getting involved.

Bob McKenna asked how they pay for old bird flying suggesting having members pay for both seasons unless new flyers.

CL asked about transporting birds through areas where there are outbreaks. He asked how pigeons are classified.

Gary Heindel said the state vets can and do shut you down and at times you have to drive around those areas.

Robbie Whaley said that state vets differ in opinion, some are lenient and understanding and some are not.

Heindel said that in 2015, the state vets (in areas of virus outbreak) wanted a manifest of all the birds on the truck.

Constitution & Bylaws Advisor, Steve Lawler, said that they print a manifest for the flyers and driver.

Gary Heindel said loft certification also goes a long way with the state vets.

### **Convention Committee Update**

CL said the 2023 convention is on track and well planned.

Steve asked him about number of birds, registration and participants.

CL said the 2 sections don't get along and there is a difference of opinion with the one-loft guys. CL also said some hotels are not pet-friendly, making it difficult to secure convention hotels.

CL then asked what are the duties of the convention committee chair. The chair is to stay in touch with the current and confirmed future convention hosts, as well as actively seek groups to host future conventions.

CL asked if the convention groups are responsible for the yearbooks and advertising.

Karen indicated that the AU is responsible for the AU book and it is distributed during the convention week. She welcomed advertising and suggested board members identify potential advertisers.

CL asked about the 2016 convention and if the man not making full payouts did it intentionally. No one knows. It appeared the host was in debt because of trying to put too many activities together that were too costly. Steve advised that it would be a civil suit and ultimately the court found it to be mismanagement not intentional.

CL said someone should write an article to advise members.

Guest, Joannie Christeleit, asked if the AU received funds from the AU convention races. Karen advised that the AU has not received money from convention hosts since about 2007 or so. Joannie said the conventions should be held in different places.

Ronnie said when he was in Nashville, he asked if they would be interested in hosting. He suggested zone directors should take initiative to reach out to members.

CL said as convention chair, he and his wife will tell hosts they need to have activities for spouses.

Paul Kaufman encouraged the races to be bonded, which is already being done. Joyce Stierlin suggested advertising that the races are bonded to encourage participation.

Gary Heindel asked if the programmer gave log in access to programming to Karen, which he has.

Robbie Whaley asked how many people don't use the NDB. Joyce said nearly all of AU clubs do. Robbie asked if you can still apply for awards via paper submission. Joyce said no, it is automated now.

Gary asked about distance. He fielded a question from a member in Florida. Joyce said changing that would require a BAR. We would need to get a cost estimate for the programming required. She said we currently have a maintenance and enhancement contract with the programmer.

Heindel asked if we are charged every time he talks to the programmer. Joyce told him no.

Ronnie Shumaker asked if it is possible to get the Florida club to change the station and that he was amazed at how people manipulate awards.

Al said Belgium flyers go with 12 to 15 birds and that fewer birds means more control.

CL said he wants to figure out the awards. Joyce suggested he look at the NDB and look at the awards criteria on our website.

Dave Wilson said that CL's ideas is the best, picking only 20 birds but shipping as many as they wanted.

CL said we need to make it fair for big and small flyers.

Joyce said CL should figure out the changes or recommendations he wants, write it up, get member input and present it to the board. Heindel will write a BAR.



## **EWINSPEED®/NDB/Office Admin Database Update**

Joyce shared statistics. From November 2022 through June 2023, there is an average of 341 users per month, 149,182 uses per month and 3346 uploads per month. She has fielded 371 calls during this period.

She also provided information regarding programming added this period:

1. On each AU Award main page list the number of birds that participated in the season.
2. Add a birdage category 800+ and change the next lower birdage category to 426 - 799 for AU Award Ace Pigeon.
3. Automate AU Award Registered Champion, Elite Champion and American Champion Long Distance/All Distance 5 year awards.
4. Record hierarchal associations of club/combine/concourse/federation for each season so historical combine/concourse/federation reports use the associations active at the time.
5. Speed up processing for local reports like Average Speed where multiple choices can be made. Add a reload report button to click after choices are selected.
6. Add to each AU awards page Show/Hide Requirements a statement, "10 National Awards will be given out in this category after the February 1st closing date of this season."
7. For birds that clock during Dead Time, determine the order in which they are listed on the Race Report by calculating their speed without excluding dead time. Do not list the adjusted speed; just use it for their order on the report. Show all dead time birds with the same speed (the speed of the best dead time bird, excluding dead time from elapsed time on the wing).
8. Provide activity information such as actions/users/uploads on how EWINSPEED® is being received by our members: Build a more comprehensive statistics page that compares different weeks, months, years, etc. Expand capture of error messages, etc.
9. Add an AU Board Report of Active Flyers to list all dues-paying clubs and the percentage of their dues-paying members who participated in at least one race during the calendar year.
10. For organizations that race with a higher level organization (e.g. club/combine) and therefore use the race headers from the higher level organization, allow use of the lower level organization's station definitions for Short/Medium/Long races on selection criteria for Local Reports like Average Speed.

Joyce then shared proposed enhancements and ideas for the NDB EWINSPEED® and Roster Systems. These should add to the ease of use for users, especially on mobile, which now accounts for the majority of NDB users (60%). These enhancements will also include adding a club secretary page to the NDB with relevant features and link to the Roster Update. and improve Roster System transaction recording. They will also add transparency to NDB award detail pages to include calculations and formulas and upgrade legacy of the NDB site tech to 2023 standards.

Stierlin also said these enhancements will make the NDB/EWINSPEED® race results shareable by linking all races and awards. Additionally adding NDB admin/Expand page showing activity logs similar to EWINSPEED®.

The enhancements include:

Directly linking to NDB and EWINSPEED® races and awards, Updating NDB Design and visual background, NDB Award Transparency, Roster improvements, adding an edit to the Online Roster that requires an email address for each person identified as a Race Secretary.

Dave/Robbie to proceed with enhancements. Unanimous.

AI said we should find a programmer in our membership.

### **Review of New Board Action Requests**

**NW-195** Amend and update Bylaws 5.06 through 5.08 for clarification of the election process. Currently, there are conflicting directives in the Bylaws.

AI said instead of making changes, we should wait and have a lawyer review. AI asked when the Bylaws changed. Karen explained they didn't change, rather the ballots were sent out per 5.06 since positions are typically uncontested. When they are contested, ballots are sent to a CPA. Karen said this saved membership approximately \$90,000 over the last 20+ years.

AI said words like "shall" and "must" need to be removed and we should have a lawyer go through the Bylaws.

CL said members don't understand legal terms and the Bylaws should be made easier to understand. CL said no lawyer.

Wiaderski said older members are slow and not computer literate.

John Hundrup noted that the proposed changes allow for either electronic or regular mailing and the proposed changes are not forcing electronic voting.

AI said electronic ballots are bad and wants to have his lawyer review the Bylaws.

Paul Kaufman commented that he is involved in falconry and when they join that organization, they make a choice to receive ballots electronically or by mail.

Dave said having the option is good. He said the Bylaws should be simplified and in the Yearbook.

Steve Lawler pointed out that the proposed changes allow for future options should the board want to include electronic voting.

Al said members need options.

Joyce commented that the proposed change provide options.

Al said options are good but this is wrong.

Joyce suggested that someone make a motion to review again and bring back to the board.

Toni said a decision has to be made and repeated that some members can't use computers and that a paper ballot option is needed.

John/Joyce - motion to accept the proposed changes. 5 for 5 opposed. Failed for lack of 2/3 approval since a Bylaws change.

Ronnie asked if the election will be done by a firm.

CL/Al to mail first class using an outside firm. Unanimous.

Al said the CBL and policies should be reviewed by a lawyer and put in laymens terms.

He said CL has a friend, Richard Callahan, that will do it for free within 30 days.

Gary Heindel asked for the lawyer's name again. Al said we don't need to include the name. Gary said members will want to know.

CL/AL to have the CBL reviewed and return to Steve Lawler as CBL advisor and present again to the board. Unanimous.

**NW-196** Add breeder name column with bird to show on EWINSPEED® race report. Jeff/Joyce to amend: Adopt NW-196 by adding breeder report, which is a copy of the weekly race with additional field "breeder" under each bird's band number. Breeder information will be entered in the bird table by the club Race Secretary.

Discussion:

Gary asked if a young bird auction, will the secretary have to enter the information.

Joyce said yes. Steve Lawler suggested it would be entered in Benzing and the data is there.

Heindel said that is too much to put on the Race Secretary.

John Hundrup commented it is not automatic, the Race Secretary would need to enter the information.

Joyce said it can be added to the enhancements contract.

Robbie Whaley asked if it is automatically uploaded into Benzing the NDB won't show it. Joyce reiterated that it must be entered and that it will be in the breeder information.

Gary asked if it was worth it.

Joyce said it is up to the Race Secretary.

Dave Wilson suggested that down the road, that may generate revenue.

Gary said it caters to the one-loft races. Dave said if you don't want to do it, you don't have to.

Jeff/Joyce to add to enhancement project/contract. 8 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstained. Passed.

**NW-197** Any AU board member or officer that misses two consecutive meetings without extenuating circumstances shall be removed from the board and will then be replaced by a member in good standing with the appointment being made by the President with board approval.

John/Ronnie to table until the CBL review is complete Unanimous.

**NW-198** The AU board should have every other month zoom meetings to make it easier to attend and get more done.

Paul Kaufman (member submitting the BAR) said the meetings are easy to coordinate.

Steve Lawler pointed out that per our CBL, notice of meetings has to be provided members 30 days prior to the meetings.

AI/CL to hold zoom meetings every other month (evenings at 8:00 p.m. eastern). Unanimous.

President McKenna to check his work schedule to determine when the first (in September) will be held.

**SE-047** Edit the AU's CBL to conform with how the Union is to be referred to in both the CBL as described in 1 Objective.

John/Ronnie to table until review complete. Unanimous.

**SE-048** Safeguard the individual freedoms and right to political self-determination of members of the American Racing Pigeon Union (Union) without the imposition of persecution or negative consequences by the Union.

John/Ronnie to table until review complete. Unanimous.

**SE-049** Alphabetize the Board of Directors' states within their respective zones. AI/CL to alphabetize in the Yearbook and on the website. AI/CL Unanimous.

**SE-050** Update the American Racing Pigeon Union's CBL by removing references to CENTER striking Section 19.02 on 'COORDINATION WITH UNION CENTERS,' updating Section 17.03 on 'FILING OF OTHER CHARGE OR COMPLAINT,' and revising any other section(s) necessitating affiliation with or approval from a CENTER.

John/Ronnie to table until review complete. Unanimous.

**PLAINS-051** Amend 5.02 of the (American Racing Pigeon Union) ARPU constitution to ensure candidate transparency.

John/Ronnie to table until review complete. Unanimous.

### **Review of National Member Awards**

#### **Publicity Person of the Year**

Joyce/AL approve both candidates (Renee Nuegent and Charlie Klipsche). Unanimous.

#### **Member Hall of Fame**

Jeff/All approve all candidates (Fred Werner, Dave Shewmaker, Sterling Leroy and Don Lowe). Unanimous.

#### **Person of the Year**

AI/Ronnie to approve nominee (Greg Smith). Unanimous.

#### **Legends of the Sport**

Ronnie/Dave to approve nominee (Tim Jackson). Unanimous.

#### **Good of the Order**

CL said someone should write an article about the 2016 convention.

It was noted that the AU implemented many things to protect members should a convention host not operate correctly: races must be bonded, the convention agreement was changed and no AU directors will have involvement in hosting.

John Hundrup/Robbie Whaley to adjourn. Unanimous.