

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

2008 Annual Report



People and Wildlife Living in Harmony

 This report is dedicated to the hundreds of
Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy volunteers
who help us to pursue our vision
... People and Wildlife Living in Harmony.

Cover photos:

Top: Each summer, LWC holds a Summer Nature Camp
at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve for enthusiastic
children ages nine to 13.

Four small photos left to right: Jefferson Salamander,
American Lady butterfly, White-Crowned Sparrow, Wood Frog.
*Jefferson Salamander photo by Liam McGranaghan,
all other photos by Nicole Hamilton.*

Many Thanks to Our Dedicated Board of Directors

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Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy 2008 Annual Report



People and Wildlife Living in Harmony

President's Report

By Joe Coleman

In May 2008, when Nicole Hamilton completed her second two year term as the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy (LWC) president, I inherited an incredibly healthy organization that was booming with success. By continuing that already-begun momentum, 2008 turned out to be one of LWC's most successful years ever. As a result of continued growth in its membership, and the effectiveness with which it communicates with the community, LWC became an even stronger and more effective voice for wildlife in Loudoun County.

In 2008, in addition to our already excellent newsletter and monthly email announcement, we expanded the ways we communicate with our membership using our new blog, podcasting and twittering. And not only did we expand our scientific monitoring efforts into a more significant component of LWC's day-to-day activities, we also utilized the information we collected through our monitoring efforts to drive our actions. All of this resulted in an increasingly active membership with over 200 people regularly volunteering for one or more of the activities we sponsor.

Thanks to our volunteers and supporters — and to our ever expanding list of partnerships — LWC now offers more and accomplishes more on behalf of wildlife and their habitat than ever before — and we do it throughout the entire county.



LWC President, Joe Coleman.

This detailed report reveals the true essence of our mission, which is to bring about substantive results. We hope that all citizens of Loudoun County will discover the rich and rewarding experience that comes about when people and wildlife live in harmony.

Sincerely,



Our Mission

The mission of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is to promote the preservation and proliferation of healthy wildlife habitats throughout Loudoun County by fostering an understanding of the value of nature and providing opportunities for applying that knowledge to the betterment of the natural environment.

Restoring Wildlife Habitat

The Waterford Foundation's Phillips Farm has become a fine example of LWC's ongoing effort to restore wildlife habitat in Loudoun County. The Habitat Restoration Committee concentrates on planting riparian buffers as they are the single most effective way to protect water quality — trapping pollutants, regulating stream flow, and reducing sediment and erosion.

On the first day of March 2008, 46 volunteers showed up at the farm to plant over 400 shrubs and remove invasive alien plants along the banks of the South Fork of the Catoctin Creek in a project designed and planned by Jeff Wolinski, a local consulting ecologist. Thirty-six Gray Dogwoods in two-gallon pots along with about 400 live sapling stakes, comprised of Buttonbush, Silky Dogwood, and various Willow species, were planted in an area threatened by erosion caused by excessive storm-water runoff. Only shrubs were planted in the riparian buffer as the Waterford Foundation wants to preserve an agricultural landscape that has existed for almost three centuries on the historic Phillips Farm. LWC paid for the plants through a grant from Kimley-Horn's charitable foundation.

On Nov. 15, and in spite of a forecast of impending heavy rains, over 70 volunteers met at the Phillips Farm and planted 300 trees and shrubs and destroyed a significant amount of invasive alien vegetation. The volunteers who were removing invasive alien vegetation concentrated on multiflora rose, Japanese barberry, and several varieties of invasive vines. These volunteers included LWC members, residents of Waterford and neighboring areas, a contingent from Booz Allen Hamilton, several Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, and a lot of people who just wanted to make a difference.

Also, volunteers, who recently adopted a new stream monitoring site, did a hands-on evaluation of the stream's health near the Mill. Notable improvements have been documented in Limestone Branch at Temple Hall Farm north of Leesburg, a few years following a series of riparian tree planting projects to protect and stabilize the stream bank and floodplain there. LWC is hopeful it will see similar improvements at the Phillips Farm over time.



The ongoing habitat restoration project at Waterford Foundation's Phillips Farm is proof that volunteers for the environment really can make a difference in their community. *Photo by Nicole Hamilton.*

Loudoun Wildlife Festival 2008

For the second year in a row, the band Acoustic Burgoo helped organize a benefit concert for Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy at the Blue Ridge Center For Environmental Stewardship. The band is made up of students and alumni of Loudoun Valley High School. Concert expenses were covered by a generous donation from The Warren and MaryLou Hayford Foundation. The concert was free and donations were accepted at the door. Despite the unusually warm weather, over 250 people attended and LWC raised \$600. Reptiles Alive! provided a fantastic display of local amphibians. Other musicians — who generously donated their time and talents — included Andrew McKnight, One Horse Town, The Stringsmiths and Dirty River.

Counting Crows and Other Bird Species

As many of you know, bird population is a prime indicator for a healthy natural environment. LWC sponsors two bird counts throughout the year, the May Birdathon and Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to our many volunteers, LWC's detailed findings are submitted to larger organizations which compile data nationwide.

In August 2008, Spring Ligi was hired as a part-time LWC intern to compile a county bird list and coordinate a bird atlas project. LWC completed its first "Birds of Loudoun County" checklist in September. The list includes over 295 birds identified throughout the county, with over 110 confirmed or probable breeders. The information for this list was gathered from the following resources: the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve bird list; the Virginia Avian Records Committee (VARCOM) report; eBird; the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship bird list; the Virginia Society of Ornithology's Virginia's Birdlife; the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas Project (1985-1989); Maryland Osprey and Virginia Bird list servers archives; countywide Christmas

and migratory bird counts (1997-2007); and several individuals' personal records. LWC printed 2,000 copies of the bird list to distribute at LWC events. The list is also available on the LWC Web site.

The "Birds of Loudoun County" serves as the foundation for an exciting five-year Loudoun County Bird Atlas project (2009-2013), organized and funded by LWC. The primary funding source for this project is LWC's annual Birdathon. The atlas will establish a more comprehensive list of breeding and non-breeding birds in Loudoun County, including their dates of occurrence throughout the year and county distribution. This project will also create a baseline of information that can be used to indicate areas in need of conservation and measure the success of future conservation activities.



White-Crowned Sparrow.
Photo by Nicole Hamilton.

We're Growing!

Membership has grown continuously over the last few years. LWC membership grew 17 percent in 2008. Our growing numbers reflect the efforts of all of our volunteers.

Growth rates by membership category are:

- Family – 15%**
- Individual – 18%**
- Life – 9%**
- Corporate – 20%**
- Student – 42%**

Student membership growth was largely due to the ongoing efforts of Liam McGranahan and John DeMary, who encourage Loudoun Valley High School students to support environmental efforts through community service.

Geographically LWC membership can be broken down as follows:

- Western Loudoun – 60%**
- Eastern Loudoun – 25%**
- Outside Loudoun – 15%**

In 2008, the board increased the number of programs and community events in eastern Loudoun County. It is one of our primary goals to increase memberships and active involvement in this densely populated area.

Much effort was expended in 2008 to enhance the membership database and improve timeliness and efficiency of both mail and online procedures.

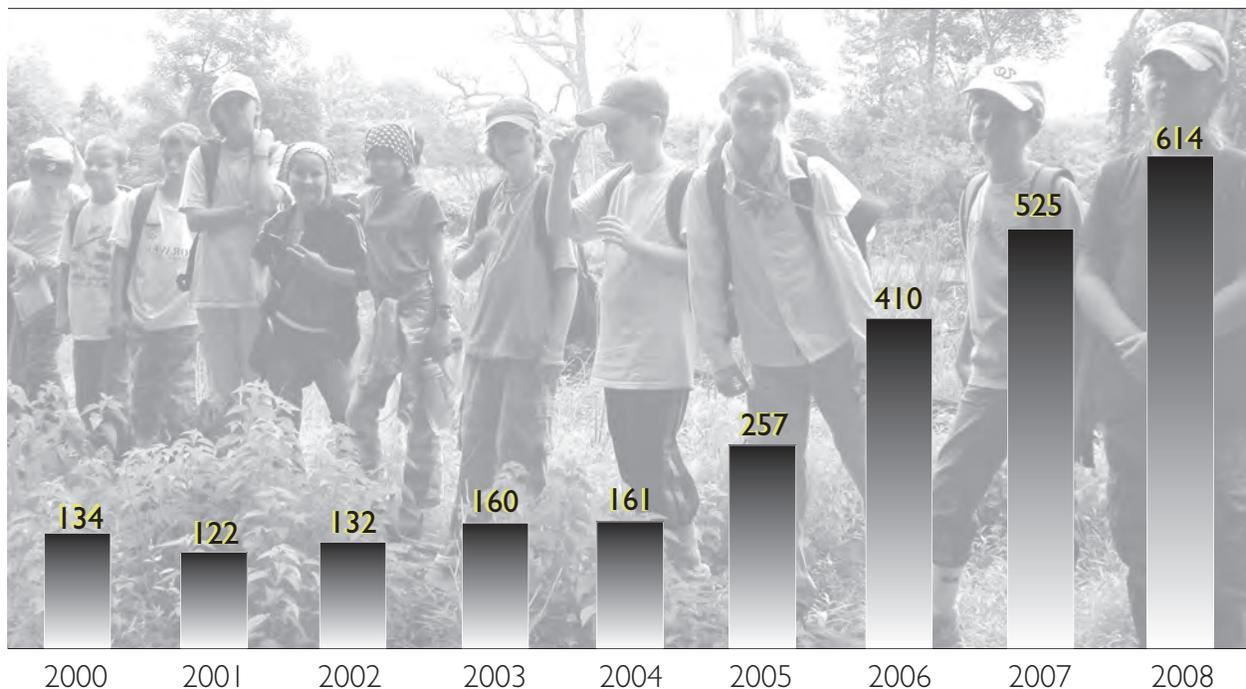
For instance, LWC simplified renewal letters, using less paper and reducing the necessity for stuffing envelopes. LWC also improved its methods for tracking prospective members, including donors and volunteers, with the goal of encouraging these individuals to support LWC with memberships.

In an effort to keep current members engaged, LWC made significant improvements to its monthly newsletter and mailed out formal invitations to the Annual Meeting. LWC's multi-faceted online presence and monthly emails have helped LWC to communicate with members in a timely manner regarding the needs of wildlife in our community, upcoming programs and exciting ways to get involved.

Not Possible without Our Volunteers

Because LWC is an all-volunteer organization, all of the actual work we accomplish is due to volunteers. Over 400 people volunteered with LWC in 2008, many of them serving in multiple programs. Our volunteers are diverse. They are of all ages and interests and experience levels. They surveyed and monitored bird, amphibian and butterfly populations; monitored streams; restored wildlife habitats; educated the public; publicized our activities; and advocated for conservation and the environment to our elected officials. Applying an estimated dollar value to the number of hours our volunteers served in 2008 would run into the thousands. We are deeply grateful for their dedication and service on behalf of the environment.

LWC Membership Growth 2000 - 2008



Citizen Science

LWC conducts several citizen science programs throughout the year that help to monitor and report on wildlife activity in our county. Training is provided and anyone is welcome to join. It's a great way to give back to the environment.

Birdathon

Every May, LWC celebrates International Migratory Bird Day with a series of walks, a spring bird count, and a Birdathon. The year 2008 was no exception as over 50 people participated in various events, from May 3-11.

Eight of the walks and the count occurred on May 10 when over 40 people visited a variety of diverse birding hotspots in Loudoun County from Horsepen Preserve in the east to the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship in the far northwestern corner of the county. Including the Birdathon, 142 different species were observed during the week-long event. The Birdathon participants raised about \$4,500 from almost 50 donors. The money is used for bird conservation here in Loudoun County. The results of the walks and the Birdathon can be found on LWC's Web site.

On May 10, the largest groups visited Horsepen Preserve in eastern Loudoun County and the Phillips Farm in Waterford. It was LWC's first bird walk at the Phillips Farm and one of the organization's few walks at Horsepen Preserve. Plans are underway to visit both locations more frequently in the future.

The walk at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, led by Gerry Hawkins and assisted by Joe Coleman, tallied the most species, 73, but both the Dulles Greenway Wetlands Mitigation Project and Morven Park were close behind, with 72 and 71 species, respectively. Both of the latter walks were led by Bruce Hill assisted by Cheri Schneck. Including their visit to the new wetlands along Evergreen Mill Road, Bruce and Cheri tallied a total of 102 species on May 10.

The winners of the Birdathon in species seen (111 on May 3), and money raised (about \$3,000) was the Shrike Force team comprised of Laura Weidner, Mary Ann Good and Joe Coleman. The team of Gerry Hawkins, Marc Ribauda and Bruce Hill came in a close second on May 4, with 107 species.

Bluebird Monitoring

LWC's 2008 season began in April with a cold wet spring causing some casualties among the bluebirds. It was the first year LWC had private home trails registered, so homeowners discovered the joys of watching over bluebirds. In addition, two new trails were installed by the boy scouts — one at Pinebrook Elementary and one at Arcola Elementary. Monitors for both of these trails are still being sought.

In 2008, LWC had a total of 73 hard-working nature lovers helping out with trails. A training program was held in the spring so that teams could learn the protocols and strategies needed to be effective monitors. LWC monitored a total of 221 nestboxes and fledged 635 Bluebirds, 26 Chickadees, 252 Trees Swallows and 143 Wrens. The 2008 season closed at the end of August.



Over 50 people participated in LWC's annual Birdathon fundraising event. Photo by Nicole Hamilton.

Monarch butterfly. Photo by Laura Weidner.



Butterfly Count

The 12th Annual Butterfly Count was held Aug. 3, 2008 with 48 participants at locations all around the county, despite a postponement from Saturday to Sunday due to rain. Six teams assembled across the count circle, covering areas that included Rust Sanctuary, Ida Lee Park, Rockland Farm, Temple Hall Farm, Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, Appalachian Trail Road, Franklin Park, Fields of Flowers, Butterfly Hill Farm, Waterways, the Phillips Farm, and private properties throughout Waterford, Lincoln and areas south.

Having a mix of rain and sun can be good for plants, which the butterflies require, but it can also be good for the predators of butterflies and caterpillars, such as parasitic wasps and assassin bugs. Perfect butterfly count weather is mid-80s to low-90s, and that was just what the group had on Sunday, along with a slight breeze to cool the counters.

In total, counters identified 2,903 individual butterflies in 2008. This count follows an upward trend observed by LWC over the past two years. In 2005, for instance, counters saw over 5,000 individual butterflies, but then, in 2006, that number plummeted to 2,452. Since then, the numbers have been heading back up.

Even more encouraging was 2008's diversity of species — the highest number yet: 55 in total, and some of these were quite rare. A new record for the count, identified by Mona Miller and her team, was a Clouded Skipper at Butterfly Hill Farm. We knew they were present in Loudoun from US Geological Survey data, but this is the first time LWC has been able to record it

on the count. Other notable rarities include the Giant Swallowtail (spotted in two locations), the American Snout, and a high number of Juniper Hairstreaks.

The group also encountered the highest number of Zebra Swallowtails, indicating that it was also a great year for the Paw Paw tree, the host plant for this butterfly. Paw Paw, a wetland species often found along streams, must have done well with the increased rain. This was also the year for the highest number of Eastern-tailed Blues, a pretty little butterfly which feeds on clover and other plants in the pea family as a caterpillar.

There were some obvious species missing or reporting very low. Most notably, there were decreased numbers of Red-spotted Purples and Eastern Tiger Swallowtails. With the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, LWC reported 289, compared to almost 500 in each of the past three years; and with the Red-spotted Purple, counters saw only one in 2008. The Red-spotted Purple in particular has been in decline over the past few years. LWC's count had been 50-79 for most of the past decade, but it dwindled to just 10-13 in the past two years. Both the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail and the Red-spotted Purple use the Black Cherry tree as their host plant, which continues to thrive. LWC is unsure as to why these species were down, but will continue to watch this trend and hope for an up-tick next year.

LWC makes its findings available to the public online. To view the 12-year data from our butterfly counts, visit the LWC Web site.

LWC submits data and findings to the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) so that our local Loudoun data can be aggregated with that from other counts that take place in July and August across the country. NABA performs its own analysis of data regionally and nationwide to track the populations of our North American butterflies. For more information, visit www.naba.org.

Christmas Bird Count

Christmas Bird Count. A record 125 people helped with this year's Central Loudoun Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, Dec. 28 and found 90 species the day of the count and four more during the count week. Without the 20 sector and subsector leaders, and especially those people who consistently help with this and other counts every year, this count would not be possible.

Dec. 28 was unseasonably warm with relatively strong southwesterly winds in the morning. While the count, itself, with 90 bird species and 34,290 individuals was pretty average, the 121 participants in the field were 30 more than ever before and included a lot of new birders and several young people. About 50 individuals wrapped up the day with a nice dinner at the Tally Rally at the ANS Rust Nature Sanctuary in Leesburg. Thanks to all of those who helped behind the scenes in a variety of ways, including Rhonda Chocha who coordinated the Tally Rally, and those who helped her there.

The rarest find, a Glaucous Gull, occurred on Saturday, when Bob Abrams visited the county landfill. The 2,709 Ring-Billed Gulls, counted on Sunday, were not only LWC's highest count ever, they were well-distributed in the more

eastern portions of the circle and the Great Black-Backed Gulls have only been found on three of our other counts. Surprisingly, the two Double-Crested Cormorants found on Sunday, were a first for LWC. Also unusual in 2008 were the high numbers of Pine Siskins; most years counters don't find any Pine Siskins. LWC is also pleased to report findings of a Loggerhead Shrike, 33 Bald Eagles, a Merlin, 7 Phoebes, and 28 Common Ravens.

As always, some of the more exciting finds were count week birds. There were a dozen Redheads at the Beaverdam Reservoir, a Short-Eared Owl at Mountain View Elementary school near Purcellville, and an American Coot (found on only four of the counts).

Owl observations were especially disappointing with the only highlight being two Barn Owls found during the day. And while it is not surprising, it is certainly sad that not a single Northern Bobwhite or Rusty Blackbird were found.

Amphibian Monitoring Program

The Loudoun Amphibian Monitoring Program (LAMP) continues to evolve and develop under the leadership of Nicole Hamilton. LWC not only held its annual LAMP kickoff as scheduled — with approximately 30 new volunteers trained — it also introduced the Spring Pools Institute. The Spring Pools Institute is an intensive three-day class led by Mike Hayslett, a Virginia vernal pools expert. Participants were treated to a classroom session on the first afternoon followed by two days of field explorations.

During class, the group enjoyed a classic spring rain and donned weather gear for a nighttime amphibian road crossing assist. As this was the first time for such an outing, procedures for organizing volunteers and conducting the effort were closely observed. Logistics for doing a road crossing assist continue to be difficult due to the spontaneous nature of the event, so LWC is exploring ways to improve the process.



Wood Frog.
Photo by Nicole Hamilton.

Citizen Science, continued from page 5

Throughout 2008, amphibian monitors continued to collect data from running their frog call routes and conducting site surveys. The data sent in was instrumental in LWC's ability to identify some key new habitats, such as the complex of sink hole pools through the Lucketts area, as well as a rare habitat in the Lost Corner area of Lucketts called an upland depression swamp. Recognizing that both of these areas were under development pressures, LWC contacted county representatives and worked with them to identify special habitats so that they — and the amphibians that use them — can be better protected. LWC is now exploring ways to feed data to their GIS system, so it can be used by county engineers.

LAMP progress since its 2006 launch:

- * Identified important county locations for LAMP activities
- * Trained over 100 LAMP volunteers and collected data
- * Worked with the county and a land owner to protect a vernal pool complex and its upland forest
- * Developed a Google Map of Loudoun amphibians and their pools
- * Planned new education and outreach programs
- * Submitted a grant proposal for two significant wetland/upland restoration projects on properties identified through LAMP

Stream Monitoring

LWC's Stream Quality Program supports benthic and bacterial stream monitoring, and hosts numerous educational awareness programs about the importance of water quality and watershed protection in Loudoun County.

In 2008, LWC conducted stream monitoring of benthic macroinvertebrates at 10 sites throughout Loudoun county. LWC adopted the user-friendly Virginia Save Our Streams (VASOS) methodology for volunteer monitoring, and purchased new stream equipment to enable VASOS compliance for each Team Leader in charge of a monitoring site. Also in 2008, LWC's Stream Monitoring Chair Meg Findley received VASOS certification as a Regional Trainer, authorized to train and certify stream monitors in the VASOS methodology. Five new volunteer monitors were certified in 2008.

Designated monitoring sites vary from pristine to degraded conditions, and include a variety of wooded, urban and agricultural stream habitat. These sites were mapped using Google Maps and posted on the LWC Web site. Seven of these 10 sites are established LWC monitoring sites that have been monitored by LWC for over 10 years:

- * Limestone Branch at Temple Hall Farm, north of Leesburg
- * Crooked Run, near Lincoln
- * Sweet Run in the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship
- * Tuscarora Creek, in Leesburg
- * Sycolin Creek, on the southern edge of Leesburg
- * Beaverdam Run, in Ashburn
- * Milltown Creek, near Waterford



Mike Hayslett leads a group of volunteers in vernal pool exploration.
Photo by Nicole Hamilton.

Sites established in 2008 represent a new focus of LWC's Stream Program, to directly link benthological stream monitoring with habitat change (either habitat restoration or degradation):

- * Watercress Creek at Banshee Reeks, to monitor impacts from landfill expansion and encroachment on Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve
- * Catocin Creek at Phillips Farm in Waterford, to monitor impacts from LWC's habitat restoration activities on the farm

In addition to establishing stream monitoring sites, LWC continues to support the Catocin Watershed Project sponsored by Loudoun Watershed Watch to monitor the impact of the Catocin Creek Bacteria TMDL Implementation Plan (TMDL IP). The TMDL seeks to improve water quality because Catocin Creek does not meet the state water quality standards for recreational use due to fecal pollution from non-point sources (NPS). LWC volunteers have helped collect water samples, and LWC has provided materials and support to teachers and students involved with community stewardship projects.

In 2008, LWC prepared a grant proposal to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to support the Catocin bacterial monitoring program. As a result, LWC received over \$800 for the purchase of bacterial plating supplies.

Educating the public is of primary importance to LWC. In 2008, LWC provided numerous programs to promote awareness and environmental stewardship of Loudoun's streams and water supplies:

- * Delivered to Ashburn Middle School a presentation on "Knowing Your Watershed and What's in Your Streams"
- * Provided an overview presentation and demonstration for LWC's Stream Monitoring Program
- * Hosted a kickoff of LWC's 2008 stream monitoring season for LWC volunteers
- * Participated in Family Stream Day with other local watershed stewardship organizations
- * Coordinated information programs with LWC's Habitat Restoration Committee in Lucketts and Phillips Farm in Waterford
- * Conducted a Stream Walk in November to examine good farming practices that protect streambanks and stream water quality

Environmental Education

LWC is dedicated to providing environmental education to all ages through its many and varied programs.

Schools: In 2008, LWC continued to support environmental education at Loudoun Valley High School by assisting staff, as requested, on several field experiences. LWC members offered their expertise in bird identification and water monitoring as students visited various sites during the academic year as part of their Environmental Science classes.

LWC also provided support for the Potomac River Rangers of Lucketts Elementary School by assisting with a riparian buffer planting and by being one of the presenters at a Water Resources Night held at the school in November. During the Water Resources Night participants were challenged to locate and then identify various invertebrates from water samples taken from a local creek.

Once again, LWC members participated as judges at the Loudoun County Regional Science and Engineering Fair. Cash prizes for three deserving Loudoun County students were awarded to participants in the fair whose projects dealt with environmental issues. Additionally, these students were invited to LWC's Annual Meeting in May to present their projects and receive their awards.

Scouts: LWC provided a number of interpretive nature walks throughout the year involving Cub Scouts, Brownies and Girl Scouts. These walks were not only informative, but enabled participants to meet requirements toward the attainment of scouting badges. It is also worth noting that several scout troops participated in habitat restoration and riparian buffer projects at Phillip's Farm sponsored by LWC.

Camp: Summer Nature Camp was held at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve. Twelve children — ages nine to 13 — enjoyed rewarding experiences during the five-day camp. Although the sessions were thematically based, the inquisitive nature of the campers was encouraged and this led to a variety of nature explorations. In 2008, LWC was fortunate to have two LWC summer interns as assistants each day of the camp experience.

Internships: LWC had two summer interns in 2008, Joey Villari and Kate Gentry, both students in the environmental studies program at Northern Virginia Community College. Kate and Joey supported the stream monitoring and habitat restoration programs from mid-May through mid-August. They both spent a lot of the summer working in Waterford. They provided weekly updates of the riparian buffer planting in March at the Waterford Mill. They also removed purple loosestrife and mile-a-minute from Phillips Farm. Both interns worked at the Banshee Reeks summer camp held in July.

Programs and Field Trips: LWC continued its popular series of field trips, programs, surveys and classes, in 2008. Over 650 people participated in 58 field trips. Our partnerships with the Audubon Naturalist Society, the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, the Friends of the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve, Potomac Valley Audubon Society, and The Northern Virginia Bird Club continue to demonstrate how like-minded joint efforts benefit everyone, especially wildlife.

Over 350 people attended LWC's four special presentations for 2008. The topics varied from wildlife rescue and rehab to waterfowl photography. LWC also offered six classes in 2008, including the ever-popular hawk identification class



In 2008, summer interns removed invasive plants at locations around Loudoun County. Photo by Nicole Hamilton.

and field trip to Waggoner's Gap, Pa., and a class on streams and their inhabitants. One field trip, enjoyed by a group of seven, was an exciting journey to the Eastern Shore to look for birds that over winter there.

LWC continues to seek out environmental experts who can help educate our citizens about wildlife and habitat concerns. In addition, LWC is actively seeking new locations for its programs so that we can reach a wider audience.

New Committee: In late fall, a five-member Environmental Education Committee — headed up by incoming chair and board member Paul Miller — was formed to assess the resources of LWC, examine the needs of our youth, and determine the future direction as it relates to environmental education. Exciting plans are underway that will see LWC expand its educational offerings targeting children in the elementary and middle school age range beginning in 2009.

Communications

LWC is dedicated to communicating effectively with its members and Loudoun County citizens regarding upcoming programs, volunteer opportunities and organizational developments. This is accomplished through community outreach, marketing, public relations, publications and the LWC web site.

Community Outreach

LWC believes in maintaining a strong presence at community events throughout the county. During 2008, LWC set up its booth at numerous fairs including the first ever Living Green/Living Healthy fair at Claude Moore Park; Arbor Day at Banshee Reeks; the Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival; and the local foods fair at American Flatbread in Broadlands; Lucketts Fair; the Bluemont Festival; SterlingFest; and the 2008 Sustainable Loudoun Energy Summit.

At the fairs, LWC sponsored activities for children, answered many questions about wildlife, passed out literature on programs available through our organization, and gave away some great nature books as raffle prizes. As part of our ongoing effort to raise awareness of wildlife issues around the county, we produced and distributed an information packet on turkey vultures.

Communications, continued from page 7

Our work at events around the county would not be possible without the many wonderful volunteers who dedicate their time and talents. In total, we estimate that over 20 volunteers put in more than 100 hours to our community outreach efforts on behalf of wildlife in our community.

Marketing

LWC ran ads in the spring of 2008 in *Leesburg Today* promoting its citizen science programs, such as the annual Birdathon and Stream Monitoring program. In addition, adopting a more formal approach to branding in 2008, LWC ran a series of ads in *Leesburg Today* in October promoting the values stated in its tagline, "People and Wildlife Living in Harmony." The ads featured current LWC members Loudoun County Supervisor Kelly Burk, Robert Lauten of Lauten Construction, and Pastor Tiffany Towberman of Community Lutheran Church in Sterling. Ad copy promoted LWC and community involvement on behalf of the environment. Loudoun photographer Sarah Huntington donated her professional skills to the success of the campaign.

In March, just in time for LWC's community fair season, new T-shirts were ordered prominently displaying the LWC logo. The organic T-shirts come in a variety of adult and child sizes, colors and styles, and help to promote the organization, as well as serve as a fundraiser for LWC. T-shirts were also made available at the LWC online store.

Public Relations

In addition to submitting monthly event listings to local publications, LWC issued numerous press releases. In 2008, the *Washington Post* and *The Connection* published articles on the annual Butterfly Count; the *Loudoun Times-Mirror* published an article on Arbor Day at Banshee Reeks; and *Leesburg Today* and the *Loudoun Times-Mirror* published articles on the Phillips Farm habitat restoration project in Waterford. But the highlight of the year was an article about LWC and its founder and current president Joe Coleman in the summer issue of *Loudoun Magazine*.

Publications

Thanks to dedicated volunteers, LWC continued to publish the *Habitat Herald* quarterly newsletter in 2008. Regular staff members included Joe Coleman (coordinator); Karen Coleman and Mary Ann Good (editors); and Lorrie Bennett (design). An exciting addition to the newsletter in 2008 was "Nature Detectives," featuring fun, educational nature mysteries for children written by Senia Hamoui. The *Habitat Herald* is sent to membership, and distributed widely throughout the county at libraries, community centers and at public events.

LWC published a new Crossword Puzzle Booklet in 2008. Created by Nicole Hamilton, the booklet is a fun, educational tool that can be used to test one's knowledge of different species or learn more about them. Each crossword puzzle corresponds to a past *Habitat Herald* article, which provides clues. The booklet is a great resource for teachers and parents, with all species contained in the booklet local to Loudoun County.

In addition, LWC published its first printing of the *Butterflies of Loudoun Checklist* in 2008, and produced a trifold brochure for the annual summer Nature Camp held at Banshee Reeks. The *Birds of Loudoun County* bird list, which lists over 200 birds, was also published in 2008.



LWC's 300-page Web site is a central location for accessing *Habitat Herald* archives, audio podcasts, videos, species checklists, activities for adults and families, and publications.

LWC Online Expanding into Social Media

The LWC Web site continues to be a key gathering place where people from across the area learn about our organization, access data and forms, download resources for further study and learn about and sign up for programs.

Now having almost 300 pages, the structure of the Web site was revised in 2008 to better organize educational resources. Thanks to webmaster, Nicole Hamilton, there is now a central location for accessing *Habitat Herald* archives, audio podcasts, videos, species checklists, activities for adults and families, publications such as the coloring book and crossword puzzle book, and links to resources beyond LWC.

LWC also jumped into the 21st Century new media wave with a new blog created and written by Nicole. While LWC had always sent monthly email announcements of programs and events to over 700 local residents, requests for more timely information about wildlife and happenings around Loudoun continued. Through the blog, we can now communicate more frequently, and people can receive the blog in new ways, such as via RSS feeds to their mobile devices. The new LWC blog features field trip reports, wildlife sightings, events of special interest, helpful links, seasonal information about wildlife and plants in our area, and other pertinent topics. Readers comment and exchange experiences and ideas, creating a stronger social network for our environmental community.

Another exciting online element added in 2008 is podcasting. Podcasts are audio files that can be listened to on the Web, downloaded to a computer or saved to an mp3 player, such as an iPod. Nicole creates 15- to 20-minute recordings on topics ranging from wildlife to habitat here in Loudoun County. One listener commented that "it's like a mini audio workshop." Podcasts can be subscribed to through iTunes and other podcast feeds, as well as downloaded through the LWC Web site and blog.

Advocacy

Threatened Vultures In Hamilton and Middleburg

In the winter of 2008, LWC became aware of the plans of the town governments of Hamilton and Middleburg to kill Turkey and Black Vultures and hang their dead bodies from trees in order to discourage fellow birds from roosting in surrounding trees and structures. Because Turkey and Black Vultures are protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act killing even one bird requires a permit from the USDA. LWC, with help from our members and residents in the towns, investigated the issues to gain an understanding of the extent of the flocks and if any damage was being caused by the birds. In each case, the flock size was not extraordinary and we did not find any damage.

LWC sent letters to each of the town governing bodies and requested copies of the applications for the permit to kill the birds so that we could review the justifications. LWC did not receive the requested information from the Town of Middleburg, but the town did indicate that it would proceed with killing a vulture and hanging it in effigy. The Town of Hamilton did not respond. LWC offered to each town our services in providing educational programs and information about the lifecycles and benefits of these birds so that greater public awareness and appreciation can be gained.

LWC members made an outpouring of support for the vultures by writing letters and emails to the town councils in protest of their plans. Neither Hamilton or Middleburg followed through on the killing of the vultures.

Loudoun County Preservation And Conservation Coalition

As a member of the Loudoun County Preservation and Conservation Coalition (LCPC), LWC worked side by side with other historic and conservation organizations on behalf of wildlife and wildlife habitat. These issues were our top priorities in 2008:

Transportation Plan and The Woods Road: While not initially identified as a priority, the Transportation Plan under consideration by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors included the paving of several of Loudoun County's rural dirt roads. Most of the rural dirt roads in Loudoun County have tree-lined hedgerows with stone walls they are excellent wildlife habitat. They also help generate a natural traffic calming effect which results in fewer animals being hit by motor vehicles. We feel these areas must be protected.

The Transportation Plan would also realign and pave The Woods Road through the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve. The new road would cut through the northern tier of the preserve, which would destroy a rare natural habitat in Virginia. In 2008, with the initiation of construction of a new solid waste management facility and the inclusion of the realignment on the county's VDOT secondary road six year plan, citizen concerns were raised considerably. A number of meetings were convened by county staff with stakeholder groups, and a public meeting was held on April 17, 2008 where it was acknowledged that the original concept plan for the realignment plan was unacceptable. At that meeting, Solid Waste Management and VDOT were charged with developing an alternative plan and presenting that plan to the public. No such public meeting has taken place. April 17, 2009 marked the first anniversary of the only public meeting held on this issue, which remains unresolved.



LWC Summer Nature Camp at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve.
Photo by Nicole Hamilton

Enacting Dark Sky Legislation: Loudoun County is the only local jurisdiction without a Dark Sky Ordinance. An ordinance almost became law four years ago, but was indefinitely tabled by the Board of Supervisors. The coalition believes there is not any reason Loudoun County should not enact that ordinance now.

Protecting Special Land Areas: Re-enacting legislation that would protect mountainsides, river and stream buffers, and areas that are prominently underlain with limestone soils. While the protection of these special areas is part of the Comprehensive Plan, the specific ordinances that protect them were allowed to disappear by the last Board of Supervisors.

Controlling Deer: Judy Randal is researching different methods, including contraception, to control the burgeoning deer population that is destroying significant amounts of wildlife habitat.

Enacting and Enforcing a Tree Save Ordinance: Loudoun County has been losing its forests at an alarming rate for the last ten years. Because trees play such an important role in the environment, the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy believes that the county should implement a no net-loss policy for trees. LCPC is developing a Tree Save position paper which would help protect our trees.

You Can Make a Difference

LWC welcomes volunteers of all experience levels to help us accomplish our mission of preserving and protecting the environment. We especially need individuals with leadership experience. Our most pressing needs are in the following areas:

- * Chairperson and Volunteers for Public Relations and Marketing
- * Coordinator for the *Habitat Herald* and Article Writers
- * Environmental Professionals to Help with Habitat Restoration and Various Citizen Science Programs
- * Chairperson and Volunteers for Conservation Advocacy

If you are interested, please contact Rhonda Chocha at rchocha@loudounwildlife.org.

LWC Financial Status for 2008

The financial status of LWC – an all volunteer organization – remains strong as membership growth, donations and unrestricted grants allow us to properly fund LWC programs in our key areas. In 2008, LWC continued to focus on minimizing operating expenses thereby maximizing the funds available for education and monitoring programs. In addition, this focus allowed us to continue increasing the scope of the habitat restoration program through 2008, an area in which we also increased budgeted funding in 2009.

LWC’s financial reserves have been prudently invested in FDIC insured institutions and our funds are in no way exposed to challenges affecting the economy.

FINANCIALS: JANUARY 1, 2008 — DECEMBER 31, 2008

Cash Balance December 31, 2007	.....	\$60,114.03
Income:		
Membership Dues	.....	\$14,565.27
Donations	.....	\$7,907.75
Fundraising	.....	\$6,848.30
Grants	.....	\$30,500.00
Income from Programs	.....	\$901.37
Miscellaneous	.....	\$1,626.85
Total Income:	.....	\$62,349.54
Expenses:		
Environmental Education	.....	\$24,164.29
Scientific Studies	.....	\$13,266.97
Habitat Restoration	.....	\$5,197.91
Summer Interns	.....	\$4,306.00
Administrative	.....	\$2,096.12
Membership Development	.....	\$5,148.00
Fundraising Expenses	.....	\$7,252.90
Total Expenses:	.....	\$61,432.21
Overall Total:	.....	\$917.33
Cash Balance December 31, 2008:	.....	\$61,031.36

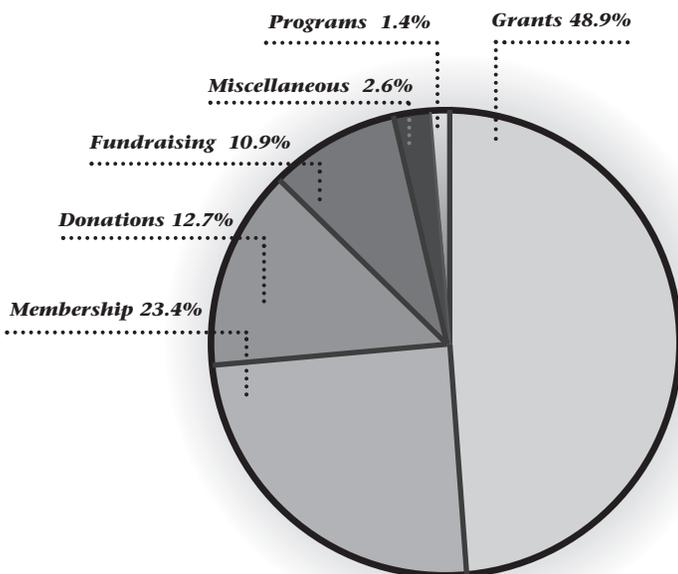
Dulles Greenway Paving the Way for Conservation

Through their generous donations over the years, Toll Road Investors Partnership (TRIP II) — owners of the Dulles Greenway — helps LWC to continue its work on behalf of wildlife and wildlife habitat here in Loudoun County. In 2008, Dulles Greenway presented a check in the amount of \$29,500 to LWC as a beneficiary of their very successful Drive for Charity event. In addition, the Dulles Greenway Wetlands Mitigation Project, managed by TRIP II, has become one of the best birding spots in the county. Bald Eagles have been nesting there since 2005.

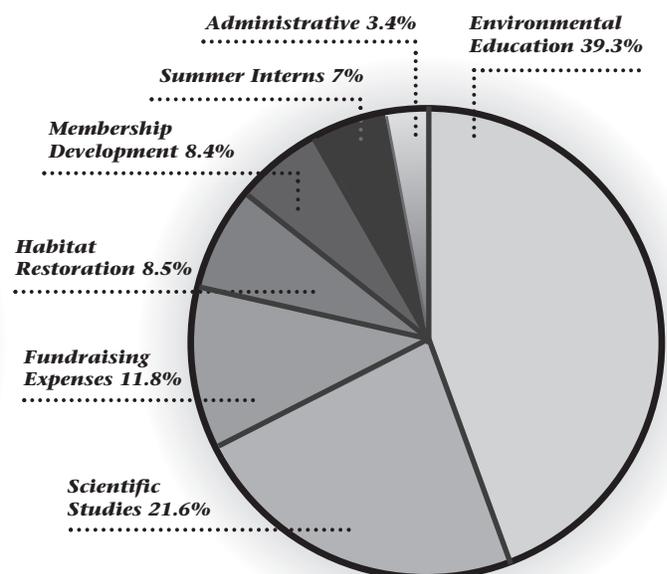
TRIP II’s wetlands preservation efforts allows LWC to lead public walks and conduct bird surveys at this strategic location.

We hope our members and Loudoun County citizens will continue to support Drive for Charity each May!

Income



Expenses



The Leadership, Talent, Generosity and Commitment That Make It All Possible

Our Donors *LWC is grateful to all of the organizations, individuals and families that made donations to LWC in 2008 on behalf of wildlife and wildlife habitat in Loudoun County. We apologize if we have inadvertently overlooked any donors when compiling this list.*

Organizations

Apple House Carpentry	Marlene Burkgren	Mary Ann Good	Barbara & Charles McCain	Tom Spittler
Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.	Margaret Burnham	Norman Gresley	Mary Ann & James McGowan	Stream Valley Veterinary Hospital
Broadlands Nature Center	Deborah Burtaine	Eugene & Kristin Gulland	Lee Meyer	Karen Strick
Catoctin Environmental, Inc	Susan Butler	Mary W. Harris	Carole D. Miller	Liz Stutz
Creighton Farms	Shannon Cate	Dirck Harris	Stephen Montague	Frances Taylor
Crooked Run Orchard	Rhonda Chocha	Gerry Hawkins	Merri Nelson	Richard & Heather Taylor
Goose Creek Golf Club	Kevin & Nana Chroninger	The Hayford Family	Nancy & Tony Norpel	Joanna Taylor
Harris Miller	Sheila Cochran	Michelle Henderson Pelot	Edward, Susan, Caroline Oldfield	Alfred P. Van Huyck
Miller & Hanson, Inc	Bonnie Coe	Bruce Hill	Bill & Beth Oscanyan`	Helen Van Ryzin
Kimley-Horn Foundation Program	Joe & Karen Coleman	Carl & Diane Hoffman	Robert Payne	Verizon Matching Grants
Kraft Foods	Anita Colvard	Douglas, Allison & Luke Hubbard	Jedediah Plunkert	Ralph J. Wall
Matching Gifts Program	Patric Copeland & Maura Walsh	Wayne & Linda Huyard	Linda B. Porter	Tim & Rita Walston
Lauten Construction Company	Casey & Candi Crichton	Bruce & Jill Johnson	Linda Pretty & John Pouy	Lynn Webster & Kurt Schroeder
Main Street Landscape	Ellie & Phil Daley	Robert & Jean Kaplan	Judith Randal	Marcia K. Weidner
Mr. Print	Robert & Cathey Daugherty	Sharon & Larry Kearns	Mark Randol	Laura Weidner
Red Line Motors	Marcia & George deGarmo	Lori Kimball	John J. Reynolds	Nancy West
The Bird Feeder	Christopher Dematatis	Jane Kirchner	Amy Suzanne Reynolds	James Wiesmueller
Sunny Lane Farm & Forge	Dennis B. Desmond	James Knowles	The Ricci Family	Bill & Micki Wilkinson
Verizon	Clarice and Charles Dieter	Dennis & Lori Kruse	Sandy Ruefer	Bobbie & Tom Wilkinson
Matching Grants Program	Terry & Carol Dunnigan	Page Kyle	Marc & Jean Sagan	Joyce Wilkinson
Virginia Society of Ornithology	Robbie East	Laurraine Landolt & Paul Miller III	DeLon D. Sargent	David and Cary Williams
Warren And Mary Lou Hayford Foundation	Elizabeth & Willilam Ebert	Robert & Dee Leggett	Lynne Sayles & Mark Newland	Jeffrey Wneck & Ana Arguelles
Waterford Foundation	Diane Feldman	Edward Lehmann & Edith Crockett	Cheri Schneck	Debbie Woods & Debra Breton
Wildwood Landscape, LLC	Neal Fitzpatrick	Sharon Lloyd-O'Connor	Nathan Schnetzler	Timothy Wyatt & Claudine Weatherford
Individuals & Families	Virginia Friend	Tamara & Scott MacDonald	Vernie Schnetzler	Janet Wyatt
Jill Beach	Cheryl & Kurt Gaskill	Robert & Karin MacDowell	Turner Smith & Christine Perdue	The Young Family
Cemile Bingol	Tina and Richard Gates	Tom Marshall	Meredith & Rick Solano	Fred & Shelley Zafran
Bob Blakney	Laurie Geiger	Stephen Mayer	Shannon & Jerry Sollinger	
Chuck Borchetta	Henry E. Gilliam III		Muriel Spetzman	

Our Partners

Audubon Naturalist Society	Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services
Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship	Loudoun Valley High School
Friend of Banshee Reeks	Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon Society
Goose Creek Association	Northern Virginia Bird Club
Leesburg Watershed Committee	Piedmont Environmental Council
Claude Moore Park	Potomac Valley Audubon Society
Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve	

Coalitions

TRIP II, The Dulles Greenway
U.S. Geological Survey at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
Virginia Bluebird Society
Virginia Master Naturalist Chapter at Banshee Reeks
Virginia Vernal Pools Program
Waterford Foundation
Campaign for Loudoun's Future
Loudoun County Preservation and Conservation Coalition
Loudoun Environmental Stewardship Alliance
Loudoun Watershed Watch

New Life Members 2008

The Hayford Family
Robert and Dee Leggett
Robert and JoAnn Lyon
Tony and Nancy Norpel
Bill and Beth Oscanyan
Joyce Wilkinson
David and Cary Williams
The Young Family

Volunteers

Susan Abraham	Ron Circe'	Susan Ferster	Catie Hutchinson	Will McCarry	Frank Piliere	The Stringsmiths
Bob Abrams	Roger Clapp	Meg Findley	Ashley Ingels	David McCarthy	Jonathan Plissner	Nick Strocchia
Barb Adatte	Amanda Clayton	Scott Findley	Melanie Jerrell Snyder	Sarah McDade	Susan Posey	Michelle Stulga
Atilla Agoston	Eli Clizbe	Patty Fisher	Bruce Johnson	Liam McGranaghan	Andy Rabin	Hwi Y. Suh
Sarah Ali	Ike Clizbe	Holly Flannery	Jill Johnson	Bruce McGranahan	Niko Rabin	Joe Suppers
Ana Arguelles	Kent Clizbe	Eleanora Florance	Lisa Johnson	Virginia McGuire	Carolyn Randall	Lisa Taylor
Beth Arsenault	Betsey Coffey-Chaudet	Pam Forbes	Steve Johnson	Barbara McKee	Jennie Rathburn	Dorothy Tella
Cathlene Bailey	Jim Coleman	Fred Fox	Bruce Jones	Kevin McKee	Nancy Reaves	Katelyn Thorne
Lisa Baisden	Joe Coleman	Ben Francis	Greg Justice	Andrew McKnight	Dori Rhodes	Dale Thornton
Dale Ball	Karen Coleman	Carol Francis	Sharon Kearns	Frank McLaughlin	Marc Ribaudou	Amelia Tonelli
Jim Ball	Anita Colvard	Jay Frankenfield	Lucy Keller	Patty McLaughlin	Amy Ritter	Nathaniel Tonelli
Larry Ballard	Germaine Connolly	Chris Frear	Claudia Kirk	Larry Meade	Michelle Robbins	Jim Torrens
Nicole Ballard	Bill Cour	Ben French, Troop 969	Elliott Kirschbaum	Diana Menefee	Jennifer Roberts	James Tracy
Gaye Barbour	Regina Cour	Carter French	Nancy Kirschbaum	Stuart Merrell	Art Roderiguez	Craig Tufts
Larry Barbour	Candi Crichton	Michael Friedman	Robert Klarquist	Chris Meudt	Amanda Rost	Jean Tufts
Judy Bardsley-Redmond	Casey Crichton	Virginia Friend	Martha Krieger	Mark Meudt	Landon Rost	Amy Ulland
Charlie Beach	Toni Crouch	Andrea Gaines	Dennis Kruse	Lee Meyer	Sandy Ruefer	Sean Ulland
Jill Beach	Rhema Crowley	Ann Garvey	Lori Kruse	Scott Meyer	G. Ruyer	Larry Uman
Marlena Beach	Donna Cummings	Tony Garvey	Catherine Kubo	Joseph Midolo	Bob Ryan	Anna Urciolo
Benjamin Bean	Nathan Cummings	Jean Gentry	Kimberley LaFave	Carole Miller	Jordan Ryan	Helen Van Ryzin
Jeffrey Bean	Ellie Daley	Kate Gentry	Ken LaFrankie	Mona Miller	Renelle L. Sagana	David Van Tassel
Nick Beck	Phil Daley	Neil Gentry	Marin LaFrankie	Paul Miller	Scott Sandberg	Joey Villari
Carol Beckman	Cathy Darby	Anne Gockel	Nick LaFrankie	Linda Millington	Debra Sanderson	Jay Votel
Alex Behan	Molly Darr	Annie Good	Robin LaFrankie	Linwood Mishler	Del Sargent	Anthony Wagner
Jim Behan	Cathie Daugherty	Margaret Good	Lauren Lang	Sue Mishler	Gary Schmidt	Marta Wagner
Lorrie Bennett	Robert Daugherty	Mary Ann Good	David K. Larsen	David Mitchell	Pamela Schmidt	Warren Wagner
Jeanne Berens	Jim Debor	Barbara Gordon	David L. Larsen	Liz Mitchell	Parker Schmidt	Nancy Walker
Sara Bettinardi	LuAnn Debor	Sheri Graybill	Rob Lauten	Kevin Monroe	Cheri Schneck	Mike Walsh
Daniel Biggs	Stephen DeCubellis	Norman Gresley	Drew Lavan	Cathy Montero	Jackie Schneck	Ben Walters
Gem Bingol	Helen deGroot	Julie Gurnie	Gretl Learned	Mark Moran	Darrell Schwalm	David Ward
Larry Blair	Ariel DeMarco	Rick Gurnie	Janne Levy	Rusty Moran	Sara Schwarz	Lynn Webster
Bob Blakney	John Devine	Debra Gutenson	Spring Ligi	Barbara Morehead	Aaron Scurloch	Mary Weeks
Robert Blakney	Linda Devlin	Drew Gutenson	Sidney Lissner	Bill Morris	Ashley Scurloch	Laura Weidner
Kami Bledsoe	Shawna DeWitt	Otto Gutenson	Collin Little	Brandon Morris, Troop 969	Brian Scurloch	Marcia Weidner
Joan Bodreau	Clarice Dieter	Ian Gwinn	Jon Little	Brianna Morris	Josh Scurloch	Marianne Weitzel
Ann Bogar	Mary Dorsey-Lee	Christopher Haas	Steve Little	Tara Morris	Lindsey Scurloch	Mimi Westervelt
Fred Bogar	Kristine Dresser	Phyllis Haas	Michelle Littlefield	Frank Mullin	Louise Searle	Pat Whittle
Linda Bowman	Eslynn Dudek	Carol Hadlock	Scott Livingston	D. Muraleetharan	Andrew Sedlins	Dave Williams
Kristin Brace	Terry Dunnigan	Jay Hadlock	Mary Lopresti	Gary Myers	Bill Seebeck	John Williamson
Joanne Bradbury	Kate Dykgraaf	Gil Hamilton	Karen Lowe	Matt Myers	Stan Shetler	Seth Wilmore
Tena Brass	Bonnie Eaton	Nicole Hamilton	Richard Lynn	Marylou Neal	Sarah Shores	Carol Winkler
Bill Brown	Tim Eckert	Senia Hamoui	Bob Lyon	Jim Nelson	Bob Shuey	Jeff Wneck
Richelle Brown	Dana Eddy	Dirck Harris	Scott MacDonald	Michael Nerantzis	Sylvia Shuey	Katie Wolcott
Jo-Anne Burlew	Nicholas Edivan	Debra Harrison	Tamara MacDonald	Tony Nerantzis	Alex Sieh	Jeff Wolinski
Debbie Burtaine	Karen Elarde	Gerry Hawkins	Bob MacDowell	Kevin Oliveau	Linda Sieh	Tom Wooddell
Lloyd Burtaine	Ryan Elarde	Eliza Hayes	Karin MacDowell	Ashley Oliver	Chas Simmons	Neil Woodruff
Emily Bzdyk	Kate Eldridge	Janet Hays	Deb MacLean	Robert Orsino	Bruce Smart	William Woodruff
Kerry Bzdyk	Pam Esparolini	Mike Hayslett	Brian Magurn	Bill Oscanyan	Edie Smart	Melissa Wright
Rudy Bzdyk	Elizabeth Evans	William Hepper	Jennifer Mahlmann	Ed Patten	Ray Smith	Catherine Wyatt
Connie Cahill	Emma Evans	Bruce Hill	Steve Makranczy	Grace Payne	Turner Smith	Steve Wyatt
Ernie Carnevale	Hank Evans	Craig Himelright	Alexandra Marcollier	Rob Payne	Sally Snidow	James Yarborough
Michael Carr	Lily Evans	Tammy Himelright	Mia Marcollier	Suzanne Payne	Bronwen Souders	Kelly Yarborough
David Chamberlin	Middleton Evans	Robin Hoofnagle	Tammi Marcollier	Zach Payne	John Souders	John Yate
Barb Chambers	Cliff Fairweather	Allison Hubbard	Kate Marincic	Christine Perdue	Emily Southgate	Jake Yates, Troop 962
Constance Chatfield-Taylor	Karen Fairweather	Doug Hubbard	Tom Marshall	Jeffrey Pfoutz	Zoe Sowers	Allison Young
Elsie Chaudet	JoAnn Fawley	Luke Hubbard	Andrea Martin	Jackie Phillips	Christine St.John	Susan Young
Roy Chaudet	Rocky Fera	Kathleen Hughes	Caroline McCarry	Robin Phillips	Sharron Stephan	Rose Zabela
Rhonda Chochoa	Darci Fernholz	Lindsay Hunt	Nan McCarry	Natalie Pien	Karen Strick	Sasha Zabela
						Wyatt Zabel