

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

It is our hope that our Eighteenth Annual Meeting at Syracuse, June 11-13, will be our biggest and best ever. We hope that each of our 35 clubs will send their full complement of delegates, and that in addition, many of the individual members (and other friends and guests) of the Federation will join us for what is always an enjoyable and stimulating weekend. A fine program is planned and facilities are both excellent and reasonable in cost. Syracuse is as centrally-located a city as we can find, and this is our first visit there. Don't miss it!

In a recent letter from the President of one of our member clubs, the following question was asked, "What are we getting for our membership, besides our copy of the Kingbird?" Your President answered the question in roughly the following way:

"If you judge your support of the Federation and its work by what physical evidence you have in return, you are probably not getting every dollar's worth. But no educational, charitable, or conservation organization really provides a dollar's worth of chattel for every dollar contributed. What does one get back physically when one contributes to the Red Cross, the U.S.O., or the local hospital? We support them because we believe that these are worthy causes, and that by helping them, we benefit ourselves—and everyone.

"The Federation is a worthy cause. It was founded 18 years ago by a group of far-seeing birdwatchers and conservationists, to accomplish a multiple purpose. First, in the realm of conservation, it has given us a much stronger voice statewide, and provided statewide support to local organizations when they asked for it. With our present 35 clubs and 5,500 members we have a voice in Albany (and everywhere) far more powerful than any one club can produce. We have made our voice known in legislative matters with some success, and we are constantly alerted to new proposals—both helpful and dangerous, through our Conservation Bulletins.

"Second, in the realm of the gathering and exchange of information on New York State ornithology we are extremely active, as the ever-increasing value of *The Kingbird* will attest. We have brought birders together from the seven corners of the state at interesting annual meetings, where almost 200 papers on New York State ornithology have been given. We conduct statewide research projects like the annual Waterfowl Count, the Nesting Card program, and the gathering of data for the new state book. We have a going inter-club Bulletin Exchange program, and a State Ornithological Bibliography that is up-to-date. We are also, as you know, planning the publication of a major work, a new *Birds of New York State*, upon which thousands of hours of work have already been expended. All these valuable activities are the result of the volunteer services of many hard-working devoted people—officers, committee chairmen, and members. I

believe that they add up to something not merely of intangible worth, but something that has become indispensable to our state.

"So when you ask what you are getting from the Federation, I am tempted to paraphrase our late revered President Kennedy and say 'Ask not what your Federation can do for you . . . ' We are still young, much remains to be accomplished, and many improvements could be made. I can think of many myself, mostly dependent on getting *more people active*. I will welcome any and all from you . . . both ideas and service."

Robert S. Arbib, Jr., 226 Guion Drive, Mamaroneck

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