

REPORT FROM RICHARD A. SLOSS, PRESIDENT 1976-77

This fall, the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs celebrated its 30th birthday, appropriately at the same location that New York State chose to celebrate its 200th birthday a few days later—the magnificent Albany Mall. Delegates from more than 30 Member Clubs attended and while the minutes of the Annual Meeting will be published in a future issue of *The Kingbird*, I believe a brief report from your outgoing President is appropriate.

During the past year, our membership has had a net growth of almost 20%, the largest annual increase that I can recall since my association with the Federation. Counting Family Memberships as two individuals we have over 685 members. Most of this increase has been due to an effective and intensive program of solicitation by Gordon Meade and he is to be congratulated. However, I am sure that he would be the first to agree with me that we cannot be complacent. When one considers that the total membership of our 41 Member Clubs approximates 10,000 New York State birders, it is evident that there is much more to be done. I'm sure that as the programs and services of the Federation continue to be more meaningful, we can look forward to an expanded membership.

Two years ago at Oneonta, Paul DeBenedictis proposed the establishment of a New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC). After a long and sometimes heated debate the delegates to that meeting, by a margin of *one vote*, referred the proposal to the Executive Committee of the Federation for further study. Since then, bylaws and guidelines for NYSARC were drafted by two consecutive committees, modified by the Executive Committee, and submitted to each Member Club of the Federation. At the Delegates Meeting in Albany, on Saturday morning, the proposed bylaws were examined in full, further amended and then *unanimously* adopted. With the appointment of five committee members, the New York State Avian Records Committee will become a reality. The Federation will have accomplished and at the same time embarked upon a significant and meaningful project for New York State ornithology. Recognition is due to all those who contributed their time and expertise: Robert Andrie, Paul DeBenedictis, Allen Benton, John Farrand, Robert Spahn, William Vaughan and particularly Morgan Jones, for his initial enthusiasm and groundwork, and Edgar Reilly, Chairman of Committee 2, for guiding the project to its completion.

The Nominating Committee presented, and your delegates have elected an excellent slate of Officers for the coming year: Stephen B. Dempsey, President; Alice D. Jones, Vice-President; Martin Borko, Corresponding Secretary; Dee DeSimone, Recording Secretary; John W. Forness, Treasurer. I am confident that under their guidance and with the help of the Executive Committee, the fortunes of the Federation will continue to prosper. And as we salute our new Officers let us pay tribute to two whose terms are expiring, Mary Ann Sunderlin and Lona Coates. Not many people have devoted as much time and effort to our organization as Mary Ann—Vice-President, Corresponding Secretary, Co-Editor of *New York Birders*, organizer of the popular Adirondack weekend. These are some of the many contributions for which we owe her a debt of gratitude. Lona arrived on the scene as Recording Secretary two years ago, a freshman to our group. She retires as a battle-scarred veteran of no less than ten Annual and Executive Committee meetings, all of which have been faithfully recorded for our archives. Her enthusiastic and capable pursuit of a sometimes difficult responsibility deserves our warm thanks.

On Friday afternoon, after the Delegates Meeting, while Gordon Meade and I were walking back to the hotel, he said, "Well, Dick, it's been a busy four years." It certainly has! But it has been rewarding and a lot of fun. Rewarding because I believe these years have been productive ones for the Federation. Fun because of the good times working and playing together with a great bunch of people. When I turned over the gavel to Steve Dempsey someone asked me whether it was with a feeling of relief. To my surprise I realized that it was with a feeling of regret, just because it had been busy and rewarding and fun. After all, isn't that what it's all about?

See you in Rochester, at the next Annual Meeting.