

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board  
Williamsburg Bird Club  
Conference Room, Human Services Bldg.  
April 22, 2009**

Board Member Attendees: Fred Blystone, Shirley Devan, Mary Anne Fennell, Charles Litterst, Joe Piotrowski, Chuck Rend

Chair Attendees: John Fennell, Jeanette Navia

Absent: Joanne Andrews, Bob Long

1. Secretary's Report: With the correction of one typo, the minutes from the January meeting were approved as presented.
2. Treasurer's Report:
  - a. Chuck entered into the record a summary of the current financial report. Assets total \$10, 775.
  - b. Ornithology grants: The College is still working on naming the recipients of our three graduate student grants.
3. Committee Reports:
  - a. Programs: Joe entered into the record his current schedule for programs. Programs are scheduled through the February 17<sup>th</sup> 2010 meeting. This year has been a travelogue theme and next year will be a conservation theme. Joe also pointed out that someone in the WBC needs to have a user ID and password for the media system in room 117 Millington Hall. Shirley volunteered to contact Dan Cristol about this.
  - b. Newsletter: Fred announced that Jeanette has begun archiving newsletters on the web site, starting with 2008 issues and is continuing to add additional older months as new months' editions are published. Mary Anne volunteered to compile an index for the topical articles in the newsletter so items of interest can be more easily found.
  - c. Field Trips: Tom was absent but the May 16 field trip will be led by Hugh Beard to Wisc Center.
  - d. Records and Bird Counts: Bill was absent but the Spring Bird Count will be April 26.
  - e. Membership: Jeanette reported that there are 12 new members and Chuck reported that 18 haven't renewed from last year.
  - f. Refreshments: no report
  - g. Library: no report
  - h. Historian: no report
  - i. Adopt-A-Highway: John said that a pickup will be scheduled for this fall when he returns from Maine. The road is currently in good condition.
4. Old Business:
  - a. Nature Camp Scholarship: Shirley wants a line added to the application asking how the student heard about the competition. Shirley entered the summary of this year's competition into the record. The criteria for

judging applicants were also entered into the record. See the addendum to the minutes for a copy of these reports.

- b. "Birds of Williamsburg": Fred requested that we determine a ballpark figure as to the upfront costs to the club of our obligation to help with publishing "The Birds of Williamsburg" that is being compiled by Bill Williams. No action was taken at this time.

5. New Business:

- a. There was discussion as to the advisability of looking for new meeting space as we have been at over-capacity in room 117 the last several meetings. Suggestions were made as to community rooms in new home developments or the Croaker Library. Both these would charge us. Shirley was going to check with Bill Williams about the availability of the Wightman Cup Room in WM & Mary Hall. A decision was tabled until more information is obtained.
- b. How to identify birds: The numerous requests from new members for a bird identifying seminar were discussed. Ideas presented were: a 3-5 evening seminar, a WBC meeting in the early spring devoted to the topic, or maybe doing a "Bird ID" per meeting. Shirley will contact Williamsburg Area Learning Tree [WALT] to assess their interest in sponsoring such a course.

The meeting was adjourned by the president.

Respectfully Submitted  
Mary Anne Fennell, Secretary  
Williamsburg Bird Club

Addendum:

Summary of Nature Camp Scholarship Competition for 2009

- Deadline was January 15, 2009
- Bird Club received 20 applications (2 of which were incomplete)
- Reviewers were: Jeanette Navia, Mary Anne Fennell, Lee Schuster, Alex Minarik
- Chuck Rend advised us of the winners January 26. Per Chuck: “there was very good agreement among the four evaluators. For example: three of you chose Chandler Fox as #1 and all of you placed Emily Simperts in the top three.”
- Winners were: Chandler Fox and Emily Simperts – middle school students.
- I advised both winners immediately and the winners promptly submitted their applications to Nature Camp.
- Director of Nature Camp advised us that he had received both applications and the Club’s checks by February 6.

**NOTE:** Bird Club had earliest application deadline of all the organizations offering Nature Camp Scholarships. I coordinated with VNPS and several Garden Clubs to ensure that multiple scholarships were not awarded to the same students.

## **Criteria for Evaluating the Essays for the Nature Camp Scholarships**

I hope these criteria may prove useful in our important task of rewarding these deserving young people,

Mary Anne Fennell

1. Is the essay age appropriate [ i.e., does an 8<sup>th</sup> grader sound like an 8<sup>th</sup> grader and a 5<sup>th</sup> grader sound like a 5<sup>th</sup> grader, rather than vice versa]?
2. Does the student follow the directions as to length [i.e. is the essay under 300 words]?
3. Does the student give concrete reasons on why he/she wants to attend Nature Camp? Are these reasons that we want to reward? [Everyone wants to have fun and spend 2 weeks in the woods].
4. Does the student give concrete examples of their areas of interest and things they hope to learn about at NC?
5. Has the student given any examples or indications of interest in nature in his/her current school or home activities?
6. I give some weight to the teacher recommendation, but also consider that some teachers don't seem to take the time to write an exceptional or detailed letter of recommendation.
7. Finally, we need to decide whether we will count off or not consider applications in which students say they don't plan to take the bird study course at camp.