

NY Falconer



Newsletter of the New York State Falconry Association

Summer 2005



NY Falconers at Green Chimneys

Top: Tim and his Great Horned Owl at the annual Green Chimneys "With Wings and a Prayer" event in May.

Bottom: John Kellerman and Sonny Squicciarino with John's red-tail.

President's Report

A great season ahead

Falconers are often stereotyped as a bunch of loners and New Yorkers are often stereotyped as inhospitable and hard-nosed. Small wonder, then, that directing the New York State Falconry Association can be like rounding up a herd of cats. Yet two exiting leaders have managed to keep the herd healthy (and dare I say happy?) as it worked its way into the new millennium.

Tom Lowe has been a gracious and hard-working president who's provided the leadership and guidance needed to keep the club functioning at a high level. Mary Forness was the glue that kept the organization together for more years than I can remember. Even as she was undergoing major medical procedures, she managed to keep our records and finances straight. Diane Williams and I have big shoes to fill and hope you will remain patient as we iron out the final wrinkles in the transition.

For those curmudgeons who have been dragged mantling and footing into the 20th century by the marvel of telemetry, brace yourself: electronic communication is upon you. NYSFA is establishing its own Website to keep members informed about items of interest to New York falconers. In the meantime, check out the NYSFalconers list-server at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NYSFalconers/>. Enrollment is easy and free; if you find otherwise, give me a holler. Once in, jump in on the dialogues (and sometimes diatribes)

that arise and lend us your wisdom.

Many of you have responded to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife's proposed revisions to falconry regulation. Once the feds decide which parts they will adopt (probably at least a year down the road), we'll start figuring out how to coordinate these with NYS DEC.

Our picnic at Green Chimneys was a great success as always, thanks to the hospitality of Paul Kupchok. So many friends, falconers, and celebrities.

Finally, I'd like to pass on some information on the **2005 Field Meet on November 4-5**. Gino Altimari has been itching for years to coordinate our meet, so we've finally let him loose. He's negotiated a package deal with the Friar Tuck Convention Center just south of Catskill. The room charge will include dinner the night before and breakfast the morning after. The Saturday night dinner will be our banquet.

For more information about the center, see www.friartuck.com.

Bill Deckert and Alan Scott are coordinating full programs and auctions on *both* Friday and Saturday evenings. We will probably experiment with targeted auctions (as done at the NAFA meets) rather than the first-drawn, first-pick procedure. The Friar Tuck facility has several hundred acres of woods that falconers will be allowed to hunt, in addition to the spots that are always found by the reconnaissance (and dumb luck) of falconers.

Jim Webber

Green Chimneys: A great day

I hope everyone's molts are going flawlessly. Congratulations to the new club officers. It was great seeing everyone at Green Chimneys. For those members who have never attended GC, it's a facility where kids with problems learn to help themselves by learning to help animals. The farm program is run

by past NYSFA president Paul Kupchok. Our club goes with birds each year to help GC during its fundraising/open house day.

It is a great time to see other club members without the pressure of it being during hawking season. By bringing in falconry birds and answering questions for the people who paid to get in, we provide a service for GC in addition to having a nice day. If you've never attended, try to make it next year.

I would like to make some recommendations. First, GC gives NYSFA members free admission and lunch to bring birds and answer questions. Bring birds: bring a lot of them, even if they are all the same type. Make sure your bird is in good condition; you are representing the club. If you

can't bring a bird, do the honorable thing and pay the admission and lunch fees; they are reasonable and it goes for a good cause.

The weathering area, for the safety of the birds, should follow NAFA guidelines. There should be no feeding of birds in the weathering yard. Take a walk with the bird. Long leashes allow the bird to pick up too much momentum and it can injure itself. A long leash can also allow it to grab another bird or be grabbed itself after bating. By keeping all perches about a foot high and by allocating each bird a 4' by 4' space, we can prevent injuries and continue to have a good safety record while enjoying a great day.

Have a clean molt and hope to see you at the meet. Gino has been working hard for us – let's not let him down.

Tom Lowe



More photos from Green Chimneys

Top: Falconers swap tales about experiences in the field

Bottom: Actor/comedian Dan Akroyd (and his dog) show an interest in Anthony Giardinelli and his Harris hawk.

Secretary/Treasurer Report

Help update records

Greetings to everyone. I hope you are well and enjoying this wonderful summer weather. I would like to extend a very sincere thank you to everyone for their patience and understanding as I muddle through the first several months of trying to fill Mary's shoes. Things finally seem to be coming together, and I expect to get the 2005 membership cards mailed out soon.

I do have one problem. I don't believe I have an accurate list of current members. The list I have was generated from the forms mailed back to me

with this year's dues. If you know of any members who do not receive a card or this newsletter, please have them contact me so I can add their names to my records. I am sure there are many life members out there, as well as members who paid the dues at last year's meet, for whom I have no information.

If you are not sure if I have your name or current address, send the information anyway. You can e-mail me at nfyaldwilliams@msn.com or send it to Diane Williams, 1123 State Route 38, Locke NY 13092.

Diane Williams

Come to the NYSFA picnic!

Dear club members: I hope your spring went well and your summer is going even better. The club's transition from old officers to new is going well and should be complete by the time you read this. I would like to thank all of you that attended Green Chimneys. Paul and the school greatly appreciate all we do for them.

Gino has been hard at work getting everything ready for our meet in November. This has all the makings of a great meet – the accommodations, the area, the guest speakers, the raffle, etc. – and I hope all of you will be there.

I would like to touch base on one subject: falconry etiquette. I did notice some circumstances while at Green Chimneys this year. Some people thought the tents for us to put our birds under were only for their own birds and equipment (long leashes, giant hoods, chairs, etc.). Some people put their birds too close to others. Luckily, we had no problems. Please! Respect other falconers. Enough said.

Speaking of Green Chimneys, NYSFA is putting

together its first picnic on Saturday, Aug. 6, from 12 to 5 p.m. It will be very informal. We will ask everyone attending to bring their own food and drinks and something to share. Paul Kupchok has graciously offered the use of the picnic area at Green Chimneys in Brewster (Putnam County). If the turnout is good we will consider having one every year. For now let's just get together, have fun, and get some ideas for next year's picnic. We would like to get an idea of how many people plan on coming to the picnic. Please call me at 631-385-4223 if you're planning to come.

I would like to thank all of you that voted for me and I promise to do my very best to bring the club up to the next level. Let's make the New York club the best. After all, we are New Yorkers.

William Deckert



Vendors who contributed to the 2004 NYSFA Raffle

Chris Comeaux	Hardware, jewelry	mewskeeper@hotmail.com
D. B. Scientific	Vitamins, jess grease	www.vitahawk.com
Hawkhill Hoods	Hoods	Bryant@hawkhillhoods.com
International Falconer	Magazine	www.intfalconer.com
Karl Shank	Bells	hawkmanshank@aol.com
L. L. Electronics	Telemetry	lle@pdnt.com
Larry Counce	Bells	www.councebells.com
Linda J. Parkinson	Artwork	www.originalbirdart.com
Marzo Glove	Gauntlets	ar@marzoglove.com
Mikes Falconry Supplies	Falconry supplies	www.mikesfalconry.com
Northwest Gamebirds	Coturnix Quail	www.northwestgamebirds.com
Northwoods Limited	Falconry supplies	www.northwoodsfalconry.com
Paul Domski	Hoods	emtn_hawker@yahoo.com
Rina Foley	Equipment, leather goods	www.falco@kingston.net
Roy Frock	Falconry ID (reward) tags	1305 Bridgeton Hill Rd. Upper Black Eddy, PA 18972
The Peregrine Fund	Archives, books	www.peregrinefund.org
Western Sporting	Books, videos, artwork	www.westernsporting.com
Alan Jenkins		
North American Falconers Association (www.n-a-f-a.org)		
Minnesota Falconers		

Contributing NYSFA Falconers

Jim Bonelli	Zach Bristol
Ed Deitch	Tim Gallagher
Anthony Giardinelli	John Kellerman
Jenn & Gary Kennedy	Gary Lawrence
Long Island Falconers' Association	Heinz Meng
Mark Moore	Dick Smith
Frank Turrigiano	Patty & Mike Weston



New York Meet: Cortland, 2004

Top: Tim Gallagher's peregrine with a wild-caught mallard.

Bottom: Heinz Meng and Gino Altimari have an easier time finding food.

Winter hawking in the northland

Greetings from your new Northern Director! I would like to thank all of you who chose me from among the dozens of other qualified nominees. Actually, I was the only person nominated and I have my father to thank for that. But, it should be a good experience for me to be more involved with

the club and an excuse to keep in better touch with my fellow northern falconers.

This winter my father and I each got camera phones. I began sending him pictures every time my perlin caught a pigeon. Then he started sending photos of his red-tail with a squirrel or his Harris with a rabbit.

This, of course, escalated into a

competition. I would send off a picture of the perlin on a kill with the triumphant message of “#10!” only to get in the car and receive a photo of that damn red-tail on another squirrel and the message, “#11!” I was pulling ahead by three when my perlin was killed by a cat after chasing a pigeon into a hayloft. This was a big blow to me, as he was a wonderful little bird – fun to watch fly and becoming deadly on pigeons. I spent the rest of the season living vicariously by watching my dad’s hawk round up squirrel after squirrel. I still think the perlin would have won.

I spent some time hawking with Dave Giardinelli, who was also working hard on thinning the

squirrel population with his female red-tail “Mari-
posa.” Dave’s hawk would hit those trees so hard going after those squirrels that it hurt to watch. It worked well for her though; she managed to stay in one piece and catch a lot of game.

As for news from other parts of the area, Dave Schaub reports that he had a pretty good season with his male redtail, which he will be releasing soon. He has two Harrises in a chamber who are trying hard to breed – just no fertile eggs yet. Maybe soon. Ed Hepp’s pair of Finnish gosess successfully raised a female this year. He had success with his intermewed female Finnish gos this winter, catching mostly pheasants and ducks. Zach Bristol is molting out his female red-tail after catching some rabbits with her this season. He also has a new female merlin that has started to get going on starlings.

I am currently raising my first eyas accipiter, a sharpie that I pulled from a nest in my parents’ backyard at five days old. She grew incredibly quickly. Each time I looked at her she was a little bit bigger and her feathers were a little bit longer.

It’ll be no time until we’re out there terrorizing sparrows and starlings.

I hope all of you had a good season. I hope your hawks molt quickly and your eyases grow up healthy. See you in the fall!

Carrie Webber



Eyas Sharpie

Top: Sharp-shinned hawk fresh from the nest at five days.

Right: At three weeks old, she’s already trying out her wings.



In search of goshawks

Well, I want to thank all of you who voted for me, and thank Peggy Cullen for the fine job she did for Region 3. As many of you know, I tested for Master at the meet. To the people who went out with me I thank you from the bottom of my heart. As everybody knows, that's when your birds act up and do as they please. A lot of fun was had at last year's meet and it was so nice to have my significant other and her son there with me. Thank you all for making them feel a part of things and being the **great** people you are!

At the meet I gave my two Harris hawks away so I was birdless this hunting season. Not for the lack of trying; I was on the ridge every day for three weeks and did not see, let alone catch a goshawk. Then it got too cold and I had to get back to work. I hope everyone had a great season. The people I did talk to had a lot of fun, mostly with red-tails that were caught on the ridge.

I talked to Bobby Kennedy about the male and female red-tails I had caught there one day. Seems the male was a great bird for his young apprentice and he is having a great time flying him. (I talked to the young man at Green Chimneys for a few minutes.) But the female turned out to be nuts and took off! Sorry to hear about that! Mike and Patty

Weston are having a great time with their Harris hawks, flying them on squirrels and working as a cast.

As many of you know, a member of our falconry world is very sick. Master falconer Dan Smythe has cancer. Dan is holding his own for now, and has asked me to thank all of you who signed a shirt for him at the meet. When I started in falconry, Dan told me talk to everybody you meet and learn from them. I have been taught so much. I can never repay this debt to Dan or any of you.

I put in for a permit to take an eyas goshawk from the Mongaup Wildlife Management Area Region 3 and was given one. Thanks to Chris von Schilgen – in large part, it was what he did that made it possible to get the approval. Thanks to all that talked to me when I was going nuts fighting with the government; it was hard but they came through in time for me to look for an active nest. I have seen birds (goshawks) but none on a nest.

Congratulations to Norine Collodel (my significant other) on passing her falconry exam. Hope you all keep in touch with me and have a great summer. We look forward to seeing you at this year's meet.

Brian Bunce

NY contingent at national meet

New York falconers represented the Empire State at the North American Falconers Association meet in Kansas, November 2004. They included (standing, l. to r.) Tom Love, etc.; (seated l to r), xx, Jim Webber, Carrie Webber.



Falconers meet in Central NY

Not much happened up here this winter. The weather was the best I have seen in a long time, with hardly any snow until February, but my kills were down from last year (go figure). I really had no contact with any falconers up here this winter except for the mini-meet hosted by Rick West and Chris Gould in December. There were about eight falconers, lots of birds and a good time was had by all. I hope we can have a few more next year.

My birds took lots of squirrels, a couple of rabbits, two cock pheasants, and as usual several turkey flights. On one outing,

my cast had three turkeys on the ground – two toms and one hen – but could not hang on long enough for me to help them out. My birds started molting in February so I put them up. I've never had them start the molt so early in the season. I lost the whole month of March, which can be the best time to hawk up here.

My plan to fly a kestrel this summer was a wash-out due to not being able to find a falconer who was releasing his or her bird. Hopefully I can find one next year to fly (it was a blast).

Well, that's it for me up here in central NY. I hope everyone has a clean molt and see you next season.

Alan Scott



National Attention.

Above: This giant hood designed and built by Alan Scott turned heads during the auction at the NAFA meet last fall.

Current NYSFA Officers

President	Jim Webber	Region 4	Brian Bunce
Vice President	Bill Deckert	Region 5	Jim Bonelli
Secretary	Diane Williams	At Large	Alan Scott
Treasurer	Diane Williams	At Large	Tom Lowe
Region 1	Vacant	At Large	Rick West
Region 2	Vacant	At Large	Dave Schaub
Region 3	Carrie Webber	At Large	John Kellerman

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