

UNITED Swallow Club



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mike Swanson

Hopefully, everyone is having a good breeding season with their birds. For the past month it has been cold and very rainy. In fact it has rained every day in May except for two days. On Mother's Day I got up at 3:00 A.M. to start the smoker for our prime rib dinner. The wind was howling, snow was blowing sideways and trees were breaking from the weight of the snow! Consequently, my birds have been extremely slow breeding. Today, the forecast is for the low 70's, a heat wave!

As most of you probably already know, the bird flu has been spreading in numerous parts of the country and millions of chickens and turkeys have been destroyed. Most of this has happened in just the last couple of weeks. Last week I received the bad news that Iowa has shut down all bird shows until the end of 2015.

Although Des Moines and Hans Schipper have been chosen as the location for our annual meet and our judge for this meet, this is no longer possible. Gloria Weisgram did a lot of work to put things in place for this meet, sending inquiries to potential judges and finalizing a judge for the USC ballot.

Prior to Iowa being shut down, I had been in contact with Western District Director Bill Griebel and asked him if Iowa shut down bird shows would California's Pageant of Pigeons take on the USC Annual Show. Bill indicated they would if things went south in Iowa. This is a very generous offer considering all the work that went into the USC Annual Show at last year's NPA National in Ontario, California. Selecting the Pageant of Pigeons as the alternate site is a logical next step since the only other location receiving a nomination was California's Pageant of Pigeons. Additionally, since the USC Annual Show was going to Iowa the SCCPC made plans for a USC Western District Meet and contacted Nate Wayne to judge the show and Nate accepted.

Also, as you know Bill Griebel has been working on the certified judging programs and has been taking suggestions from all USC members on changes to the program over the past year and a half. Once changes are

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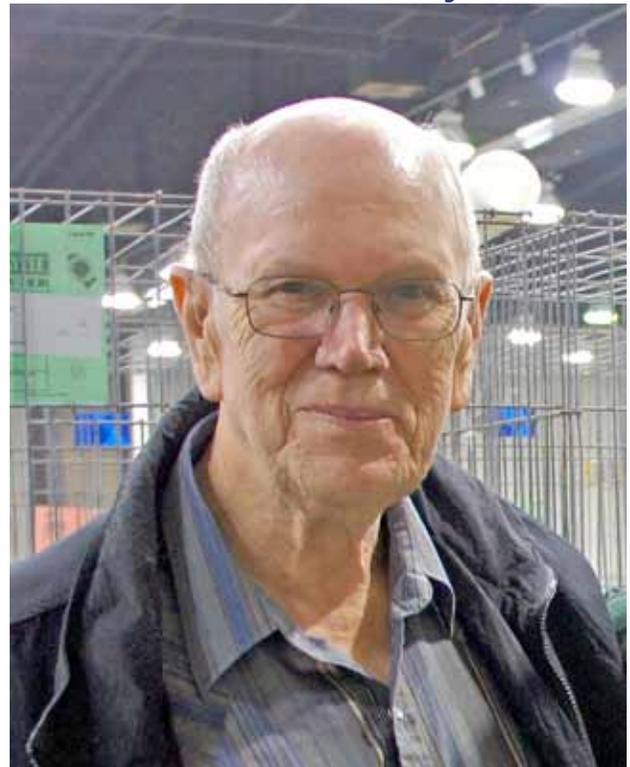
ELECTION RESULTS

From Chris Auer

- **Des Moines, Iowa State Pigeon Show Judge Hans Schipper of Holland**
***Unfortunately the show has been canceled**
See Presidents Message for details

Officer election results on the next page

Long Time USC Member, Judine Nelson Has Passed Away



Read more about Judine in The Presidents Message and in Bill Griebel's Western District News

Club Officers for 2014 & 2015 (See more officers on page 6)

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submitted to the certified judging committee for approval through voting completed by the current certified judging committee members; these changes will be allowed/ approved providing they are not in conflict with the USC Constitution and By-Laws, which supercedes the certified judging committee. With this being said, hopefully by this fall Nate Wayne can be voted on by the committee and be placed on the certified judging list prior to the USC Annual Show. Nate has judged numerous shows, does an excellent job and is over-qualified. Nate has most, if not all, requirements completed. Other members nominated may also be placed on the certified judges list that have been nominated. If you have not submitted some of your completed requirements to Bill Griebel and have been nominated please do so as soon as possible. Also, I'm sure Bill is going to have an article in this bulletin about the certified judging program. Please help him out by giving him your ideas!

Since we need to make the change for the USC Annual Show to a new location and judge, according to the USC Constitution, in an emergency the executive committee decides where the annual meet will be held. So, in the next two to three weeks I will be contacting the executive committee on this issue. So, if you have concerns please contact one of the executive committee members to let them know your concerns or ideas.

Unfortunately, I have an uneasy feeling that other states

may also close down all bird shows; this could mean California as well. The only good news on this topic so far is pigeons don't get the flu.

Again, thank you to all USC members for your contributions to the club and helping the club in so many ways!

Chris Auer is also working on the USC Constitution and By-Laws in collaboration with Leon Stephens and Ron DeClement. Please review the USC Constitution and By-Laws closely and provide feedback about vague language and unclear interpretation. Your input will result in a strong and clear document and not left to subjective interpretation. Your voice in strengthening this document to be more concise is welcomed and needed with the outcome of improving the USC.

The Purebred Pigeon sent the USC, via Elliot Yeske, an invoice for our ad in the magazine. The cost is \$459.00 per year. We have had this ad for numerous years. Initially, I thought the cost was a bit expensive and the club could use this money in more meaningful ways. However, I've reconsidered my viewpoint for the following reasons:

1. The Purebred Pigeon publishes a quality magazine every two months, using quality paper and supports an array of breeds and the USC. 2. The Purebred Pigeon supports our hobby, our beloved swallows and our organization. This magazine is a great conduit for promoting pigeons, if we lose this magazine what else do we have? 3. Our ¼ page ad costs approximately \$85.00 per issue. In the last issue of Purebred Pigeon they published Gary Romig's tremendous article about our USC Annual Show in Ontario, California. This article also included exceptional photos from George de la Nuez, Tom Moss and Gary. There were a total of 3 ¾ pages of Swallow photos along with the article. If these photos and article had been advertisements it would have cost the USC \$980.00 (according to their prices on their inside cover). So in summary, Gary's article and accompanying photos provided the USC with almost \$1000.00 in free publicity in just one issue! Thank you Gary!

What makes the USC unique is the variety of members who consider what is best for the USC and act with this perspective as opposed to what is personally best. Instead, our members make decisions and act on what is best for all of the USC. Therefore, unless I get feedback to discontinue the Purebred advertisement, we will continue with this practice. An additional thought, those of you who advertise birds for sale in the back pages of the Purebred Pigeon probably benefitted from Gary's article as well as I bet much interest in Swallows was generated.



A blue checker Silesian wing pigeon from Mike Swanson. Shown at the USC Annual Meet in California Jan. 2015. Rated E 97

Now that the election of officers is complete I would like to thank all officers for all of their hard work and contributions for the past year and a half and thank you in advance for your continued efforts as USC officers until January of 2016 or 2018. Your collective efforts sustain our breed and our organization. Thank you Jesse Espinosa as the Eastern District Director over the past two years and your effort to come to the NPA National in Ontario, California and support the USC. Jesse has always been very supportive whenever I asked for help. Welcome to Ron DeClement as the new Eastern District Director as of January 2016. Ron is always a very staunch supporter of Swallows and the USC.

Thanks to Chris Auer our election commissioner for compiling and making sure the votes were accurate.

On a sad note, Chris Auer informed me a few days ago, that Judine Nelson has passed away after a brief illness. Judine was a very good friend and always worked hard for the United Swallow Club. Judine contributed in many ways: as an officer, publishing USC bulletins, and his great love for Swallows and the breeders. I met Judine in the early 1970's and was able to get quality birds from him. In fact, I can still trace the bloodline of one of my birds back to a blue spangle Fairy cock bird of Judine's! Members of the USC have voiced it would be nice to honor Judine in some way. Let me know your ideas, as he was a very integral part of the USC for decades and a true friend that will be dearly missed. He had pictures of some of his Swallows in the last USC bulletin (Spring 2015).

Dave Averbeck has lost a close Uncle to him in the last month so we all wish Dave our best. Elliot Yeske lost his Dad in April of this year. Elliot's Dad was in The War and had on his discharge papers that he worked with the racing homers during The War. Memorial Day was yesterday so I am fondly thinking about the sacrifices Elliot's Dad made for this country and how Elliot has fostered his Dad's love of pigeons.

Lastly, we had Plan A for the show this year. Then, we now are working on Plan B. If that doesn't work out Gary Romig has an idea for Plan C if all the shows get shut down this year, which is in its infancy. The United Swallow Club always has members looking for positive ideas!! (More to come).

In closing, Elliot has very few bands left in muffed and clean leg. So if you need some contact him as soon as possible. Also, do not forget Judine's suggestion last year that if you have extra bands let members know!

Frank Bailey shares this picture of his 2015 baby red spangle Silesian

MORE ELECTION RESULTS

From Chris Auer

Officers for 2016 to 2018

- **President:**
Mike Swanson
- **Vice-President:**
Gary Romig
- **Secretary-Treasurer:**
Elliot Yeske
- **Western District Director**
Bill Griebel Sr.,
- **Central District Director:**
Dave Averbeck
- **Eastern District Director:**
Ron DeClement
- **Canadian District Director:**
Bernie Licht
- **Publicity director**
Frank Bailey



Selecting breeding stock is the determining factor in the advancement of a flock towards the desired goal of producing highly superior swallows on a consistent basis. The selection of swallows or any other variety of pigeon for breeding stock, followed by how they are paired each spring determines the success of the breeder. This is the single most important factor that makes certain breeders consistently effective and gives the flock a uniformity and quality that sets them aside as a competent breeder.



Swallow/Wing Pigeon Head. by Gary Romig

There are many good breeders within the swallow fancy and certain breeders produce large numbers of superior and highly superior birds every year. This is accomplished by decisions the breeder makes two times during the course of the year. The first is when the breeding birds are selected and the second is when they decide which birds should be paired.

There is no doubt that the swallows we breed have large, genetically diverse backgrounds, which results in recombinations that produce a wide variation in the young. Even two highly superior parents may surprise the breeder with the variation they produce in their young.

The famous cartoon which Johnny Otis published in the bulletin several years ago tells the story accurately where two jars in the lab used for the mix of the perfect swallow are labeled luck and chance. There is some truth to this because the more birds produced, the greater the chance of success simply due to luck and chance. Yet, if the breeder selects properly, their result is a narrowing of the variation found in the young which produces a more consistent flock of birds closer to the standard.

Let us look at some of these selecting factors which might help us create more pigeons that will rate in that elusive highly superior category. Here we will look basically at type and conformation.

It is best to first look for the overall impression of a bird, and then evaluate the entire bird point by point. Beginning with the beak, there is a difference in the thickness of the beak between hens and cocks and the length of the beak, which is stated in the standard. The breeder must choose birds which have attractive beaks that are not too short or especially too large and coarse. The beak must be balanced with the bird and certain colors have beaks that we term "crow beaks" that are too large and thick and these should be eliminated when possible or paired to birds with refined, delicate beaks. This affects the appearance of the wattle too.

The next important point is the frontal of the skull. The skull must have full pronounced frontal and not sloped such

as one sees in the canvasback duck. There is nothing more unsightly than a sloping frontal in a swallow pigeon and this can reduce the overall impression drastically and actually make an otherwise proportioned, well colored bird appear ugly. Where possible, select for a skull that rises off the beak nearly perpendicular. This gives the head of the pigeon the full, well rounded appearance they need to look balanced. This leads to the next point which is the roundness of the skull and top line.

In Silesians, a rounded full top line with plenty of height above the eyes is important. Otherwise the skull

has a blue jay looking head with the eyes too close to the top line. In crested birds, of course, this full frontal is vital to the skull lines and the top part of the skull should be flat to the crest which means the crest must be properly positioned on the skull to give this balanced appearance to a fairy or full head swallow with crest. There are some full head swallows without crest and these must have the Silesian top line.

Skull width is important, especially between the eyes and at the back of the skull in crested swallows; if not the birds appear to have a field mouse appearance to their head which is not attractive.

The backskull completes the picture and birds need full backskull to look balanced. Birds which lack backskull may appear pretty, but never have the balanced appearance of a bird with full, well developed backskull and should not be rated above superior because the overall appearance of the bird is compromised.

The head is the first thing anyone will observe when evaluating any creature and the swallow head needs to be balanced and developed for the bird to rate above superior.

Then the neck should be full and short as stated in the standard. A long thin neck does not appear attractive and gullet of course is undesirable and should be eliminated from the program whenever possible. Some breeders prefer a thicker neck, termed bull neck, and others prefer some refinement. A bird could have either if the overall neck appearance produces a balanced specimen.

The neck joins shoulders which should be wide and well developed to allow for an attractive heart and proper taper to the tail. Narrow shoulders are a problem for all breeders and produce a narrow looking bird that is out of balance. The neck and shoulder combination are a critical selecting point for a properly typed bird.

When looking at the back, this conformation stands out dramatically and effects the overall appearance of the bird and if not in balance makes the bird appear narrow, small and long, all of which we are trying to escape. If the bird is balanced then the bird will appear attractive.

When the birds look too long or too short then conformation is out of balance and birds with these faults should not be paired together. However, most breeders would rather struggle with birds that are too short rather than too long and thin.

Then we look for the fullness of the breast and deep keel which gives the bird a rounded appearance and makes the bird appear proportioned. Any swallow without a full, well rounded deep breast should never rate above superior. The breast should also be broad as well as deep and this gives the bird the full developed body type which Gary, Gloria and others portray in their art work. Look at any Frank Cook painting as well, and you immediately notice the full, well rounded body characteristic

of many color pigeons. I would choose body type over color and marking when selecting breeding stock which is personal preference. There is no doubt a small, narrow swallow appears hideous compared to a well developed swallow with good type even if the smaller narrow bird has better color or wing patterns. This is assuming, of course, the basics of color and marking are relatively consistent, even if not ideal.

Then a major consideration is station and carriage. I separate these two into the height the bird stands on its legs and the angle with which it hold its body in this stance. Any bird tall on its legs should be eliminated from a program and any bird which stands at the wrong angle should also not be used when possible. When looking at the angle of stance, the bird should not hold its breast high and the tail should not touch the floor. Hens tend to have better station than cocks but proper station can be found in both. Birds also do not need to "settle" for good station. A bird with good station will hold that look regardless of its nervousness, within reason of course. To me a



"Eclipse 2", by Gary Romig a remake of M. F. Cook's 1926 illustration of the ideal swallow titled "Eclipse"

poorly stationed bird could never rate above a superior regardless of the other features.

In feathering, beginning with crest, the biggest problems are in the rosettes being properly formed and they seem to be affected by the position of the crest on the head. Certainly try to eliminate crests which are too low on the skull which then give the top line a rounded appearance to the crest. In certain colors this is difficult to achieve.

Breeders should pay particular attention to the mane and birds lacking mane should not be used or paired to birds with well developed manes. This feature is not often commented upon but certainly can ruin an otherwise attractive bird in ratings.

Muff is an area where breeders forever struggle especially in certain colors and

markings. It is also an area where judging mistakes are often made because many birds with improperly shaped muff are receiving highly superior ratings. If we look at the art work, for example, we see every artist portraying the muff properly, which is full and rounded from the front to the hock. Any bird with longer muff in the front should never receive a highly superior rating. The muff must be round and of proportionate length from the front to the hock.

Try wherever possible to choose birds with plenty of full back muff. Also try to choose a bird with wide feathers in the muff and not use birds with narrow feathers. Any bird with a gap between the muff and the hock has a major fault in feathering. We all have these birds and it is difficult to eliminate. These birds, although pretty, fall short of the top ratings with this fault. Certain colors show a greater degree of fault in back muff than others.

The muff also needs three distinct layers and if the proper length to the muff is there, the outer layer could be pulled and the bird would still have a rounded full, although shorter muff.

While discussing muff it should be added to watch for mold in the muff in barred birds and especially in checkered birds. Mold in the muff of a checkered bird is equivalent to lacing or spangling in the muff of a white barred or spangled bird and should be watched and eliminated when possible.

I am leaving out some obvious features about feathering such as the tail width or rag feather, but these are stated in the standard clearly. Breeders of red and yellow swallows know they have to fight, and at times tolerate, rag feather in their breeding stock.

Unfortunately depending on color and marking, we have to tolerate much more than we wish, but this is what makes the swallow difficult, fun and such a challenge to breed. In the swallow it should be said that all the selecting points to consider vary, depending on variety; certain colors and markings are well ahead of others in development and refinement. The breeder with a difficult color and marking which often have less desirable type because of breeding difficulty then has to compromise and try to select for the overall balance and hope "luck and chance" swing their way.

In the more popular colors, which are easier

to breed because they have been refined over time, by all means select with higher discretion and if that is not possible, the breeder then has two choices to improve their color and marking to the point of the average swallow in the group. The first is obtain birds closer to the ideal which many breeders try to do by importation and buying, and the second is to just have fun breeding and working for the ideal even if it takes years to achieve and higher ratings in the show room are not attainable for some time.

I was visiting Dr. Hummel's loft for many years and saw the birds Perry Mueller took from there when he was beginning with swallows. They were far from ideal and here was an excellent example of a breeder who simply buckled down and bred until he produced the quality he wanted. If anyone knew Doc, they were well aware of the fact that it was a struggle to obtain birds of any quality, especially if you were young and just beginning. But, here was an example which showed it can be done with time and patience. Breeders need time and an abundance of patience to breed what the swallow expert, Dr. Hummel, once called the "Porcelain of the Pigeon World."



Portrait of Perry Mueller's Champion Young Hen at the USC Annual Meet in 2009. Illustration by Gary Romig

Judges Corner

Bill Griebel

We are still working on updating our Certified Judging Program. Had a long talk with Mike Swanson on updates and we are ready to move forward. Thanks to Cathy Swanson for retyping the program so we can make the changes necessary to show the certified judges. Finally, Nate Wayne is close to submitting his application as he is just about to complete his requirements. He has judged 4 or 5 Pageants, Co-judged with Steve Ball and sat in with judges like Hans Schipper and Andreas Meyer.



Nate Wayne helping Andreas Meyer Judge Swallows at the 2004 Pageant. Photo: Frank Bailey

More USC Officers for 2014-2015

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Western District News

Bill Griebel

Sad to hear our friend Jud Nelson passed away on May 20. Jud has bred swallows and color pigeons off and on for many years. We had the pleasure of visiting Jud twice in the past, once at his home in Fort Dodge Iowa where we saw newly imported swallows from Germany and once at his house in Afton Oklahoma. Jud had the champion swallow with a silver spangle Silesian at the St. Paul, MN, USC Annual meet in 1973. He held the office of Secretary for the USC for several years. Our hearts go out to the Nelson Family.

Remember when we were young and we were choosing teams and we always wanted the best players on our team.

Well, guess what, we have the best players on our team! In the March/April 2015 issue of the Purebred Pigeon appeared an article on the USC Annual Meet in Ontario, Calif. Gary Romig did a masterful job of capturing the goings-on at this show and George de la Nuez's photos put Gary's article over the top as one of the best swallow coverages we have ever seen. Thanks Gary! Class Job!

We had two shows in the Western District this year. The first was held in Colorado in conjunction with the Colorado State Pigeon Association on January 17, 2015. Thanks go out to NPA Master Judge Phil Gonzales for his work and congrats to Mike Swanson for his Champion blue check Silesian young hen.

As for our second show the USC Annual Meet in Ontario, CA, I'm still on a "Buzz" over this show. Thinking back I realized what a huge task Hans Schipper had with his judging assignment. We had 224 Swallow entered and of course with absentees there were just under 200 birds to Judge. Hans still took the time to talk and explain to the breeders of a particular bird what he saw and what the breeder could do to make their birds better. This happened on many occasions and Hans still managed to get the job done. Thanks Hans.

My long-time pal David Harris was able to attend the National with his long-time gal Sandra Simpson. David suffered a stroke some time back but that didn't seem to hold him back from getting around. At our Annual USC Meeting Nate Wayne nominated David for a lifetime membership and the membership voted to make this happen. Congrats David.

Finally, if you look back at our last bulletin at our group shot you'll realize how healthy USC is. But what's even better is you can see the future of our organization in the young breeders like Dustin Nell, Utah and Dave Averbeck, Missouri and Mitch Slagle, Washington and Steve Dreitz, Colorado. Our future is in good hands.

Two long time swallow breeders, Mike Swanson and David Harris. Probably 100 years of experience between the two.

Photo: Tom Moss



*Hans took the time to explain his concerns to many of the breeders. Here George de la Nuez looks on and listens.
Photo: Tom Moss*



Hans Schipper explaining to Gloria Weisgram, coop card writer, the strong and weak points of a black barless Silesian Swallow. Photo: Tom Moss



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Declement, Ronald 11179 Old Princess Anne Rd. Princess Anne, MD 21853 410-651-0256	•	01/18	Licht, Bernd 54149 Range Road 205A Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, Canada T8L 3Z2 alterkeiler@mcsnet.ca 780-998-4876	•	01/16	Smith, Ron 9 N. 40 Rd. Ponca, OK 74601 580-363-9809 ronsmith9809@yahoo.com	•	01/16			
Dorman, Michael 2127 Indian Point Rd. Oshkosh, WI 54901 mdorman@sbcglobal.net 920-235-8864	•	01/16	McCann, Jim 1933 188th St. NE Arlington, WA 98223 jrmccann.sr@wavecable.com	•	01/17						



Baby Red White Bar Saxon Wing Pigeon: Gary Romig



Baby red check, my first decent one: Gary Romig

Status on Band Sales

Elliot Yeske USC Sec/Treas.

Here is what we have left for bands to sell. 105 11mm for the muffed birds and 100 8mm for the clean leg birds bands are 50 cents each and \$3 for postage.

Send orders to me
 Elliot Yeske
 21649 State Hwy 108
 Pelican Rapids, MN 56572

News From Eastern District: Florida

Jesse Espinosa

Hi United Swallow Club, Hope everyone is having a great breeding season, and pray that this bird flu, influenza, whatever will not effect our future show season!

I have banded a lot of swallows, and quality wise it's the best season yet. Nice birds in black, blue, silver, red and yellow. So, I see many quality birds being available this year.

I have been in communication with Ron De Clement and others about upcoming shows. Everything seems to be riding on this bird flu epidemic.

Concerning the Souteastern shows I have committed to having a Southeastern Swallow Meet in conjunction with the Everness show Jan 6th 2016. The last Florida meet showcased 40 quality swallows. So, we know there are swallow breeders here in the south that are not members. I will do my best to recruit these breeders.

I am very blessed to be part of this amazing club. I have included some young bird pictures of the varieties of swallows I breed. Always looking forward to talking swallows. So, feel free to call anytime, 1-904-377-0477 sincerely your friend in the hobby Jesse.

A very sad note, I just found out of the passing of another swallow pigeon legend, Judine Nelson. My deep condolences to the Nelson family. A very amazing swallow friendship. My prayers are with you.



Red Spangle fullhead baby: Jesse Espinosa



Red Spangle fullhead well into the wing moult: Jesse Espinosa