

# Minnesota State Pigeon Association

## MSPA Official Newsletter

Summer 2015

### **GOOD NEWS!**

It has been a while since a newsletter has been produced but I hope this will be the first of many timely newsletters to come. This issue is full of great articles and information about the pigeon hobby. Included in this issue is the official notice of the lift on the ban on pigeon and dove shows and swaps. The 2015 North Star Classic will be held on November 14, 2015, as scheduled. Please see the letter on pages 7 and 8.

### **Officers' Reports**

#### **A Message from our President: Paul Lepinski**

The very first thing I need to do is to apologize to each and everyone one of you for the lack of communication and newsletter not being timely. With everything going on both personally and professionally it has taken a lot of my time up these last few months. Hopefully everything is back on track.

There is good news in that the Pigeon shows in the state of Minnesota will be allowed with a few restrictions that are not really more than we already have in place at the North Star Classic for the most part. I would like to thank the other officers of the MSPA in helping to keep in communication with many of you over these last few months. There will be another newsletter as more information becomes available. We do need the help of any members in getting the word out in reference to Minnesota having pigeon shows. With the cancellations of the Kansas and Iowa shows it is likely that the North Star will be the 5<sup>th</sup> district NPA show again this year. Until the next newsletter be safe and I hope to see most of you at the North Star Classic.

As a side note from Ardy Prekker, Dr. Phil Nelson, Paul Lepinski, and Wayne Martin have been appointed as advisors to the State Board of Animal Health for pigeons and doves.

## **A message from our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Don Steinbruckner**

I received a phone call Saturday morning from Paul Lepinski. He stated that the ban on pigeon shows in Minnesota has been lifted, with some restrictions and rules, that will be covered in this newsletter.

The M.S.P.A. elections are coming up for the next two years. I have held the office of 1st and 2nd Vice President and I now have decided to run for President of the M.S.P.A.

## **A Message from our Treasurer: Ardy Prekker**

Greetings to all members of the MSPA. I assumed the responsibility for the office of Treasurer on July 7, 2015, and have been busy on a number of fronts since that date. I completed a cursory audit of the last 7 years of financial activities of the MSPA and, while there were a number of control and procedural issues that needed to be addressed, I discovered no real financial discrepancies in the review.

We have created a permanent address for the MSPA which will allow future changes in the office of treasurer to continue without changing checking arrangements. We now have an official e-mail address for the MSPA that should be used for all official correspondence to the club in general. Individual officers may still be contacted through their personal e-mail accounts. The MSPA's official e-mail address is: [MSPA@usa.com](mailto:MSPA@usa.com).

There is an official reimbursement procedure for any expenses you may incur on the club's behalf and, if you need a reimbursement form, please don't hesitate to contact me for one at the club e-mail address. You will simply complete the required information on the form; submit it to me via e-mail or snail mail and you will be reimbursed with-in 5 business days.

I am working with our web site developer, Michael Sordahl, to make many changes and improvements to the MSPA web site. We will soon be able to complete the membership application and/or renewal on line and pay the dues via PayPal or major credit card. Of course, you will still be able to pay via check and conventional USPS. The Members, Photo and Classifieds sections will only be able to be accessed by members who are current on their dues. The current newsletter, a newsletter archive, and many other timely informational topics will be posted to the Member section. We would love to see your photos of your birds and lofts and you will soon be able to upload them to the site for a three month period if you are a current member in good standing. The same will be true of your classified ads.

In the very near future we will have a system to take Credit Cards as well as checks and cash at all swaps and shows.

**Dues and Membership are at a crisis point** in my opinion! Fewer than 25% of the members are current on their dues. Many of you have not paid your dues since 2013 and the club is need of your participation to remain viable! The club is all volunteers and is only as strong as its participating members! We realize that it has been a while since you have seen a newsletter but that will be changing and they will be produced four times per

year. The club is more than a newsletter; it works hard to produce the swaps, shows and other events and is a tireless advocate for the rights of pigeon fanciers and the pigeon hobby at large. The current change in the ban on pigeon shows and swaps by the State of Minnesota is an example of those efforts. If we don't stick together and support the advocacy efforts for the hobby, it will soon be under more and more restrictions and regulations. Please use the attached Membership Form on page 20 and renew or extend your membership today. Mail the form and your payment to the address on the form and I will return your newly designed membership card to you immediately. Soon you will be able to do this all on line but for now PLEASE use the conventional method and pay your dues. The whole hobby thanks you!

I am also working to get an updated and accurate membership list so that we can efficiently contact our current members and stop contacting those who are no longer in the hobby. You may use the attached membership form to send me updated address information and e-mail address changes as well. We would like to do as much as possible electronically through e-mail and the web site as it conserves the money we need to spend on postage but we are more than willing to mail through conventional mail to those who do not have access to the web and e-mail.

Your cooperation and support of the work of the MSPA are greatly appreciated and please don't hesitate to contact me if you need any information regarding our efforts.

## **MSPA Executive Board**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**April 11, 2015**

President's report: Meeting was called to order by President Paul Lepinski.

- Paul mentioned that his computer will be down until at least Sunday. (update - it is still not functional as of 5/6/15. Apparently is not his machine, but a short in the feeder cable that provides service to his area. Unknown as to when that will be rectified.)
- Paul mentioned that Amy Piehl has the January MSPA newsletter together and expects that it will go out in the next couple weeks.
- The web master that the MSPA has been using has resigned. Paul has found a cost effective alternative in Mike Sordahl (sp) who will do it for \$200 per year plus a MSPA membership. The new site is up and running.
- Tentative date was set for a MSPA swap for August 29th
- North Star Classic has been reserved for the second Saturday of November for the next four years at the Hutchinson fair grounds.
- 60% of the MSPA members are receiving their newsletters via email.

Secretary's report: absent

First Vice President report: absent

Second Vice President report:

- Show report catalog edited by Dick Okeson and Tim Kvidera for the North Star Classic has been sent out to all exhibitors and MSPA members.
- This is the fifth year in a row that there have been in excess of 1,000 North Star Classic entries.

Treasurer's report:

- MSPA has \$315 in the checking account and \$3059 in savings.
- There is an outstanding check for \$2,500 to cover costs of the 400 holes of cooping, bases and stands that will be purchased from the International Modena Club.
- Report of the financials from the North Star Classic documented \$7,264 income, \$4009 expenses generating a \$3,255 income, less costs of show report catalog of about \$526 submitted after Dave's report.

Old Business: none brought up

New Business:

- The Show Chairman position for the North Star Classic is open.
- Ads for the 2015 North Star Classic Premium book will open up June 1. \$50 for cover, \$30 for full page, \$20 for half page.
- Paul mentioned that the Lahore and German Beauty Homer meets have moved to the Albert Lea show for 2015. Don Roscoe commented that it should be no big deal. Specialty clubs move around all the time. You lose some, you win some.
- Dave Nicolai expressed his need to step down from the Treasurer position and had approached Ardy Prekker to take over the money end of the club business.
- There was discussion as to the MSPA's status as a non-profit and whether it would be appropriate to become 501c3 certified. Ardy said he would check into that with his attorney.
- Swap door receipts \$218, building rental \$125.

Meeting adjourned. Minutes prepared by Tim Kvidera

## **MSPA Executive Board**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**June 18, 2015**

A meeting of the MSPA Executive Board was requested by potential incoming Treasurer Ardy Prekker to discuss the current state of the MSPA treasury and suggested actions to

bring the processes within generally accepted good accounting practices. Meeting was held at the Hopkins, MN Perkins restaurant the evening of June 18, 2015.

**Present were:** President Paul Lepinski, 1st Vice President Don Steinbruckner, 2nd Vice President Tim Kvidera, Secretaries Pam and Allison Radunz, Current Treasurers Dave and Amy Nicolai, and Ardy and Pat Prekker.

Meeting was called to order and Ardy Prekker introduced himself briefly, explaining his business background and understanding of how organizational income and expenditures should be controlled to achieve good accountability of funds. Ardy then became the meeting facilitator and passed out an agenda outlining Banking Issues, Tax and IRS Standards, 501(c)(3), Membership, Dues, News Letters.

The Board unanimously approved allowing Ardy Prekker to assume the MSPA Treasurer duties.

### **Banking Issues:**

Currently multiple individuals access the MSPA treasury account which makes it difficult to know what is being transacted. There are relatively few transactions so it is probably not worth the efforts to set up a General Ledger Accounting system. All club deposits need to go through the Treasurer with annotations as to what they are for. In the past MSPA Treasurers have set up a new treasury checking account with their personal addresses resulting in multiple check books existing even if the account stayed with the same financial institution. Ardy will set up a trust account using the McLeod fairgrounds as the MSPA address. (permission to use the fairgrounds address was subsequently obtained by Paul Lepinski) The trust account will have one signatory for the account, the MSPA treasurer, and a Trustee who can sign in absence of the signatory. Tim Kvidera was appointed the Trustee. Ardy will draft a document explaining the control language for handling MSPA funds.

Discussion was held regarding having the ability to receive funds electronically via PayPal, credit cards, Bit Coin, etc. and the potential use of account provided debit cards.

The Treasurer will provide financial reporting upon demand, and quarterly financial statements will be prepared. New checks will be issued with the permanent club address. Mailing address for the account will be the Treasurer's address. All old club checkbooks should be identified and destroyed.

### **Tax and IRS Standards:**

501(c)(3) Status could be set up allowing the MSPA to receive tax-exempt status. The costs, red tape in applying and the extended timeline in obtaining a determination from the IRS along with our relatively minor amount of funds makes it doubtful that applying for 501(c)(3) status is worth the effort. Plusses and minuses were discussed and consensus was we would not pursue it at this time.

**Membership/Dues:**

Need to explain the reasons that pigeon breeders should be a member of the MSPA. Current records suggest there are many who have not renewed their MSPA dues, there are "members" listed as current who have deceased or made it known that they no longer wish to be members. The current roster needs to be reviewed and brought up to date. Paul and Ardy will work on that. Web site should be set up to accept new member applications. Ardy wants to set up an invoicing system for dues renewals. Need to determine a cutoff date for the membership year or change to a rolling twelve months membership. Do we want to offer a Lifetime Membership dues? Some of this would require amendments to the current MSPA Constitution.

**Newsletters:**

We have not had a MSPA Bulletin since September 2014. There have been assorted reasons for the delays. We need to get a bulletin out ASAP. Bulletin material will be forwarded to Ardy. He will edit and prepare a bulletin to be sent out to all known current and recent members with an invoice asking for renewals to those in arrears. Failure to receive said renewals will cause those individuals to be dropped from the membership roster.

**Other:**

Paul mentioned the many activities that have been going on regarding pigeons and avian influenza. As it stands now there are to be no congregations of chickens, turkeys, waterfowl or pigeons within the state of Minnesota, no swaps or shows. Many other states have made the same decisions. There are states that are allowing pigeon activities. It is all still in a state of flux. Paul will not make a "final" decision on whether the MSPA will have a November North Star Classic until September. There will not be a September swap. He will work on putting together a MSPA picnic in late July or later.

Meeting adjourned. Minutes prepared by Tim Kvidera

July 24, 2015

The Board is releasing the ban on those pigeon events listed below, as long as the listed restrictions are followed. The release of the restrictions is based in part on the participating groups and individuals participating in a Loft Certification and Biosecurity educational conference, to be held at the University of Minnesota, in the fall of 2015.

If, at any point in time during the remainder of the year, there is a resurgence of highly pathogenic avian influenza in the State of Minnesota and the Board determines that a ban on commingling needs to be reinstated to protect the health of the domestic animals of the state, all groups will adhere to the ban.

#### Racing Pigeons:

1. Owners may race young birds beginning August 8<sup>th</sup> with no restrictions as long as the birds are not released within a quarantine zone. A current map of zones can be found at: <https://www.bah.state.mn.us/media/areas-for-permitting.pdf> or by calling the Board at 1-888-702-9963.
2. Birds may not be mixed with other birds in race crates, with only 1 loft per race crate. Crates will be labeled with names of handlers and used for the entire season. Crates are to be sprayed with Nolvasan every 2 weeks or less.
3. Foot baths will be present at each shipping location to be used at entry and exit. Hand sanitizer will be used between handling birds from other lofts when entering into the race.
4. No pigeons will be released in Iowa. Owners will contact other states, as needed.
5. Owners will minimize loft visitations.
6. Only pigeons that are part of the Loft Registration Program will be on a trailer. All clubs in the state will work towards Loft Registration before racing next year.

Other flying breeds such as rollers:

1. Competitions allowed, with minimal loft visitation and bird handling.

Fancy breeds:

1. No shows at local, county or state fairs. If other shows are scheduled, are with restricted access as determined by organizers.
2. Shows will have foot baths and hand sanitizer.
3. Birds in show crates will be separated by loft, and with physical barriers in between.

Contact:

Dr. Phil Nelson, Twin City Concourse Racing Pigeon Association 612-968-3492,

[drphil@petcentralanimalhospital.com](mailto:drphil@petcentralanimalhospital.com)

Paul Lepinski, Minnesota State Pigeon Association, 320-223-0415, [paulsloft@mchsi.com](mailto:paulsloft@mchsi.com)

Wayne Martin, U of M Extension Service, 612-625-6224, [marti067@umn.edu](mailto:marti067@umn.edu)

## **Education and Information**

### **After Ivermectin®**

**By - Tim Kvidera**

For years Ivermectin has been the "standard" wormer used by many pigeon breeders. This has been successful in addressing internal worms by using the injectable concentrate (1% solution) and giving 2 - 6 drops down the throat of individual birds or by coating feed grains with the sheep drench version (0.08% solution) at a rate of one ounce per four pounds of feed. Both these methods have worked well for me for many years.

A couple years ago while at show someone mentioned that for flock treatment there was a water soluble horse wormer that has been found to be effective. Ivermectin is not water soluble which is why Clair Hetland was suggesting putting it on the feed when wanting to do a flock treatment. It takes some effort and time for me to coat enough feed to handle my flock when doing four pound batches. But the method worked and I continued to do it ever since Clair mentioned it to me, well before he sold Foy's to Jerry Gagne. Recently I was approaching the end of my bottle of Ivermectin Sheep drench which prompted me to remember the potential for using the horse wormer for flock treatments. So I started trying to chase down the information on the horse wormer.

Turns out that Quest® horse wormer (moxidectin) has been used very successfully in the Racing Homer game for about a decade. There are a number of hits one gets when

surfing the web for “Quest wormer for pigeons”.[http://www.mclaughlinlofts.com/Secrets\\_.html](http://www.mclaughlinlofts.com/Secrets_.html) is a web site that mentions in McLaughlin Lofts Secret #2 that a tube of Quest will treat 8 gallons of water. His procedure is to put half of the tube of Quest into a cup of water and stir it in a blender for 30 seconds. Take this solution and add it to four gallons of water. Use the treated water as the only source of water for the birds for 24 hours.

Not having a spare blender available I opted for hand mixing the gel in a small amount of warm water. It takes some effort to ensure that the clear gel is really dissolved, but it can be done in a few minutes.

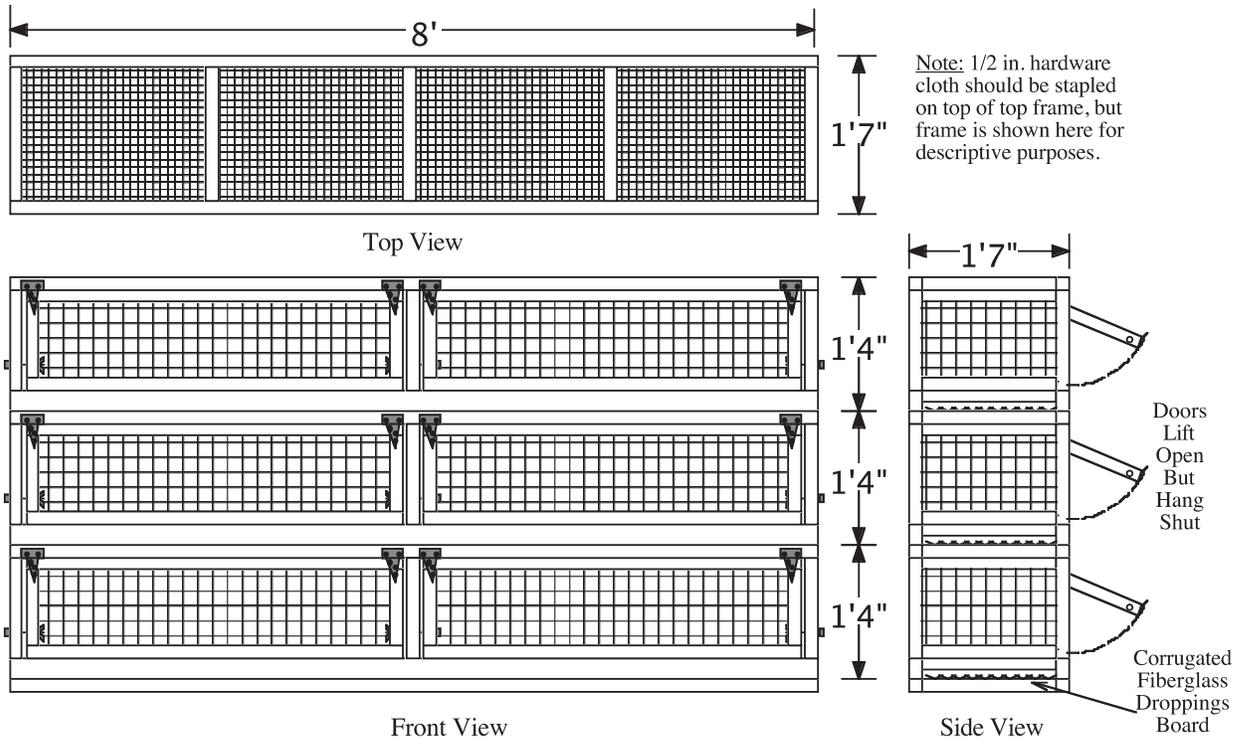
The Quest wormer comes in a syringe like applicator for injecting the clear gel paste down the throats of horses. The plunger of the syringe has markings on it indicating poundage of weight of the intended horse. The full tube will dose a 1150 pound horse. Using McLaughlin's dosage of one full tube for eight gallons of water one can calculate that a 144# setting would be the setting for a gallon of water. The markings on the syringe barrel are at 50 pound intervals, so 150# per gallon would equate to McLaughlin's suggested dose. It is difficult to do a reproducible discharge of the 150# amount so he recommends doing a minimum of two gallons at a time.

In discussing the topic of Quest with various pigeon fanciers recently I have found that some go as high as 250# per gallon with positive results and no ill effects on the birds. I used a 350# setting for 2.5 gallons of water and next time may increase that some, as well as getting a blender from Goodwill, garage sale, or the like - to help dissolve the gel. Quest can be found at most farm supply stores, Tractor Supply, Fleet Farm, etc. and is quite economical compared to most other worming products typically used on pigeons. In any case, no matter what you decide to use, controlling the internal parasites in your flock is a major step in the directions of their overall good health.

## **Porches for Pigeons**

**By- G.B. Peterson, MSPA**

Balcony-like sun porches can be worthwhile additions to a pigeon loft. For example, when breeding pairs are housed in individual compartments to insure parentage and guarantee the validity of pedigrees, providing each pair with its own outside porch where they can get fresh air, sunshine and intestinal relief is a good husbandry practice. And when space is limited, as it often is in the typical urban residential backyard, installing multiple-deck sun porches can effectively increase the overall outdoor floor area and thereby reduce crowding. This article outlines general plans and principles for building inexpensive single-deck or multiple-deck porches for pigeons that are both practical and attractive.



A three-deck, six-porch setup is shown here for illustration purposes, but the basic concept in this plan can be easily adapted to build a single deck unit or any number of multiple deck setups containing whatever number of porches is desired. In this example, each deck contains two separate porches, one on the left, and one on the right. As the drawing shows, “droppings boards”, which can be cut from plywood or corrugated fiberglass (as depicted) or any other suitable material, are slid between decks, beneath the wire floor of the upper deck and above the ceiling of the next lower deck. For the cage floors, 1” x 2” welded wire is best. It is recommended that stout 1” x 1/2” welded wire be used on the front doors and the side walls to keep out sparrows, rodents, raccoons and other unwelcome intruders, but standard weight 1/2” hardware cloth is sufficient for the ceiling of each cage as that surface is quite inaccessible to pests or predators. In fact, my practical experience with porches built this way suggests that, except for the very top porches, it may be unnecessary to cover the ceiling frames with hardware cloth and, indeed, it may actually be better to leave them uncovered as it more readily permits any dried droppings or feathers that spill out of the droppings boards to fall through to ground level when all the droppings boards have been removed for cleaning. In any event, I highly recommend droppings boards like this for aesthetic purposes as well as for conscientious animal husbandry purposes.

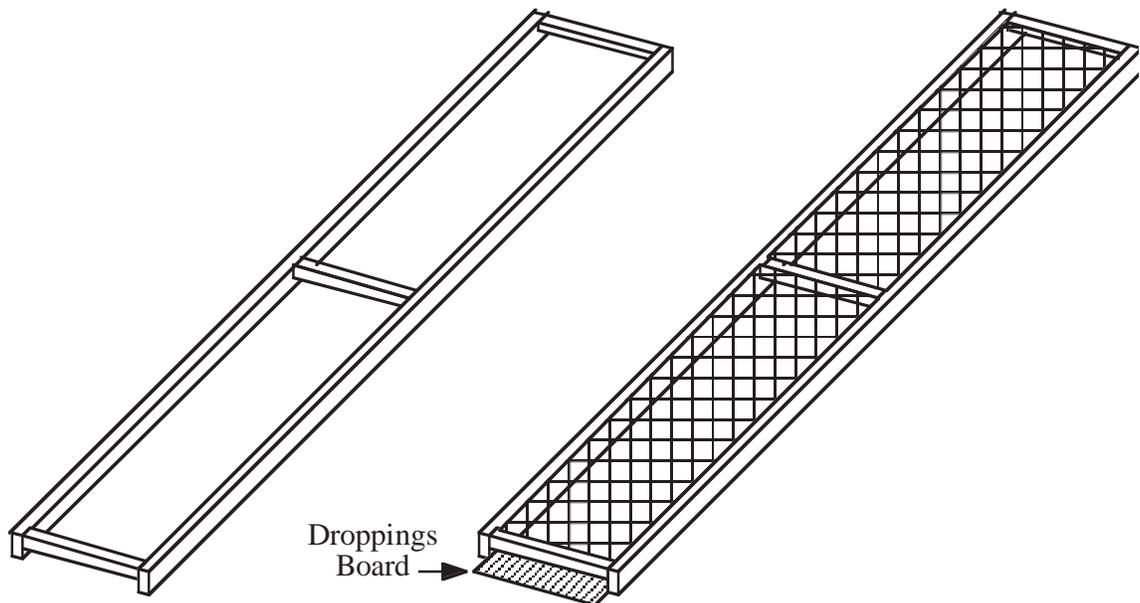
The doors of the porches are hinged at the top so that they will be naturally swung shut by gravity if left unfastened. In this drawing, the doors are held shut by 1/4” bolts and wing nuts, which, given the infrequent need to access the inside of the cage, is a simple, cheap, and handy way to secure them. Each cage can be attached separately to the outside wall of the loft with lag screws that go through the back verticals of the porch’s side walls, through the loft siding, and into the studs of the loft wall. The upper decks sit on the lower decks, and the lowest deck has a “ceiling frame” screwed to it from below to hold the bottom droppings board. Construction details are given below.

In the example setup shown here, each cage consists of seven separate parts:

1 - a ceiling; 2 - a floor; 3, 4, & 5 - two end walls and a center wall; 6 & 7 - two doors.

Except for the floor, every porch level is framed with nominal 2" x 2" treated pine. The exception for the floor is that it is framed with nominal 2" x 3" treated pine on the long dimension, but 2" x 2" on the short (depth) dimension. Obviously, this means that there is about a one-inch gap on each end of the floor frame. This gap is deliberate. The reason for it is that the extra depth of the 3" material on the front and back allows the droppings boards to be slipped in from the side ends under the 2" x 2" cross pieces of the floor framing. (The 2" x 3" also serves to screen the droppings boards from view and give each unit a neat appearance.)

The floor frame is probably the trickiest part of the plan, and it isn't very tricky.



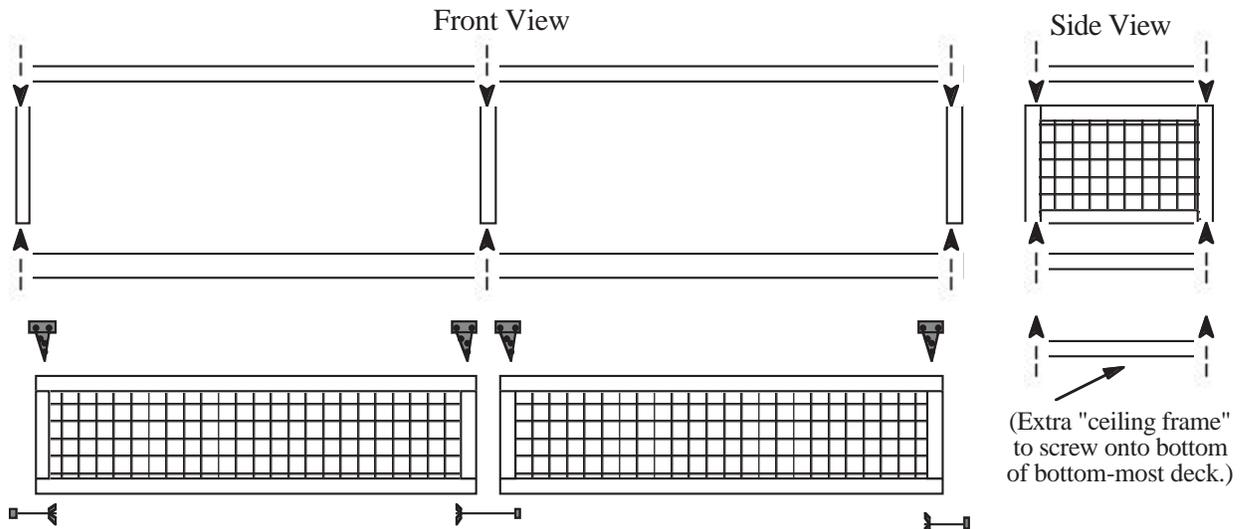
Bare frame for floor  
19 inches wide, 8 feet long  
(cross pieces = 16 inches)

Floor frame clad with 1" x 2" welded wire.  
Droppings board shown to fit in gap under  
cross pieces so it can be slid in and out.

The three 2" x 2" cross pieces for the floor frame are 16 inches long, the two 2" x 3" runners are 8 feet long. The tops of the cross pieces are flush with the tops of the runners (so they should be screwed together upside down on a flat surface), and the welded wire 1" x 2" flooring should be securely nailed to those flush top surfaces. As the drawing shows, the droppings boards are slipped in from the ends and rest on the ceiling of the cage below. It is best to cut two droppings boards for each deck, one to be slipped in and out from one end and the other to be slipped in and out from the other end. (Two relatively short droppings boards, about 4 feet long in this example, are a lot easier to handle when cleaning them off than one long and unwieldy 8 foot panel.)

The remaining parts are all simple small rectangles framed from nominal 2" x 2" boards, as mentioned earlier. The side walls, for example, are simple rectangles 19" deep x 12" high, or thereabouts. A caution is in order here: you will find that the actual dimensions on nominal 2" x 2" treated pine and 2" x 3" treated pine are often a bit different from standard nominal dimension lumber, and therefore one should always measure those widths directly to get everything to work out right. Another caution: if you want the center wall between cages on a given level to be solid, e.g., covered with plywood so that the pigeons in one side can't see the pigeons on the other side, then the front vertical framing piece on that center wall frame should be either a doubled-up 2" x 2" or a 2"x 3" because you need to leave a normal 2" reveal on the front side edges of the vertical so that the doors will fit in properly. Personally, I think it is a good idea to make that center wall solid by screwing a piece of ½ inch plywood over it. A solid wall like this increases the structural integrity and helps keep the whole thing plumb and square when fully assembled and mounted.

Nail the welded wire to the inside surfaces of the side walls and cover the center wall prior to assembly. However, if you choose to cover all the ceilings with hardware cloth (which, as noted earlier, is optional), do not put the hardware cloth on the ceiling frame until the other parts have been put together; leaving that ceiling frame open gives you some good "handles" to grab on to when moving the cage around as you are putting things together. (Obviously, if you forego the covered ceiling option, then these "handles" will be automatically available anyway to make final assembly a snap.)



To assemble, start by setting the cage walls and the floor upside-down on the garage floor or on a work bench so that you can screw the floor frame onto the walls through the 2" x 2" cross pieces of the floor frame into the 2" X 2" bottom cross pieces of the walls. Predrill all holes and use 2 ½" deck screws. Then turn the whole thing over and screw the ceiling frame on the same way from the top down. Be sure that everything is square and plumb. Now, mount your doors. Voila! You're done. All that's left is to mount the cages on the loft. Put the top one on first, then the next, and so on. Put a 2" x 4" ledger board along the bottom edge of the bottom most deck. They should stack nicely one on

top the other with no need to screw them together, but you can if you want. I have put 4" right-angle steel brackets in the upper rear corners of all the side and center walls, as well as stout steel brackets under the bottom most deck against the loft wall for added support, but, frankly, I think that may be overkill in the support department; the 2" x 2" side wall and center wall framing are remarkably stout and stable, and securing the whole assembly to the loft wall with lag screws holds everything tight and firm. Besides, these porches will be occupied only by pigeons, not horses, so there is relatively little by way of a heavy load to cause these porches to get out of kilter.

There is absolutely nothing sacrosanct about these particular dimensions, but I have found these sizes to be perfect for Birmingham Rollers, and I see no reason why they wouldn't be about right for many other breeds as well. I have two sets of triple-deckers on opposite sides of my breeding loft. They have held up well for a long time and still look good. And the birds look good, too, out on these decks, splashing in a bath or just taking in the fresh air and sunshine. These decks are good for just looking at and studying your birds, too; I spend a lot of time standing in front of them and doing just that.



## **Poultry Flu**

**Provided by- Lynn Kral, Master Breeder**

Since several of us raise poultry along with our pigeons, I thought you may want to read this.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI):

Updated News and Information for Backyard and Small Poultry Producers

Because of the ongoing disease outbreak and the potential for spillover from wildlife, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) has become of significant importance for small poultry producers. The United States has been grappling with a growing highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak since late 2014. The first detection of HPAI in this outbreak was reported by Washington State on December 19, 2014. Since that first report, this ongoing outbreak has resulted in the destruction of more than 20 million birds, marking it as the largest avian influenza outbreak in United States history. HPAI has been identified in wild birds, commercial poultry flocks, and backyard flocks in at least 18 states, located within migratory bird paths designated as the Pacific, Central, and Mississippi flyways. The virus can travel in wild birds without making them appear sick, and wild birds are implicated in the spread of disease. Disease prevention is the best way to prevent HPAI infection, and will become of utmost importance in the event that HPAI is identified in your state. The following information contains detailed steps to help prevent the introduction of HPAI into poultry.

### **Biosecurity for Birds**

- Minimize contact with wild birds and waterfowl-
- o Consider housing poultry indoors or at minimum within a screened area
- o Remove food and water sources that attract wild birds
- **Know the warning signs of infectious bird disease-**
- o Increase in bird deaths
- o Wheezing, coughing, nasal discharge
- o Decreased energy

- o Decreased feed intake
- o Drop in egg production or egg quality
- o Swelling and/or discoloration of eyes, head, neck
- o Tremors, circling, drooping wings, twisting of head and neck
- **Isolate sick birds immediately, away from other birds -**
- o Tend to sick birds after tending to healthy birds, or have a person dedicated to tending sick birds who does not interact with healthy poultry
- **Isolate new birds (30 days), or birds that have been to a fair or exhibition (2 weeks) AWAY from other birds -**
- o Tend to these birds after tending to your healthy flock, but before tending to sick birds

### **Biosecurity for Trucks and Services**

- o Vehicles that visit other premises with poultry (including the feed store) should park as far as possible from your flock -
- o Truck driver should not have contact with your poultry if possible
- o If truck driver has had contact with other poultry premises:
  - a. boots should be cleaned and disinfected (or better, changed)♣
  - b. hands washed with soap and water♣
  - c. clothing changed (or clean coveralls worn) before having contact with your flock♣
- o Truck tires should be cleaned and disinfected before returning home

Clean and disinfect egg flats between shipments, or use one-time-use disposable egg flats -

- o Do not use equipment that cannot be cleaned and disinfected, including wood pallets and cardboard egg cartons

### **Biosecurity for Workers/Owners**

- No contact with other flocks -
- No contact with wildlife, especially sick or dead birds or wildlife -

Minimize number people who have contact with poultry -

o Those who work with your poultry

o Visitors

- Keep tools and equipment clean -

o Clean cages and food and water containers daily

- Wash hands with soap & water and wear clean boots (or walk through a disinfectant footbath) before working with poultry (and wash and disinfect boots afterward) -

o Consider having dedicated boots and clothing (coveralls) for working with your flock

#### **Additional Resources Biosecurity:**

• USDA: <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov>

• AVMA: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/FAQs/Pages/Avian-influenza-FAQs-general.aspx>

### **Who's Your Daddy? By - Tim Kvidera**

The vast majority of domestic pigeon breeding is done in community loft set-ups. That is the fancier has a relatively large pen in which his breeding pairs are housed with each pair having at least one nest box, some perches and usually access to a flypen of sorts. The pairs either compete for what becomes their nest box, or the fancier trains them to go to one of his choice. Once the pairs have settled down for the spring the breeding season is on and youngsters start hatching and maturing.

Pigeons are considered to be a monogamous species and the breeder records the offspring as having been bred by the pair that raised them. From these records he can document a multiple generation pedigree for the birds he has raised.

But every once in a while there is a surprise in the nest: an off colored youngster that was not expected from the pair. For example a grizzle is raised by a pair of blue bars. The fancier has been told by his genetically minded friends that this should not happen. But it did happen! Right there in his own loft. He knows that the blues are a pair. He has bred from them together for years. They were the ones who raised the grizzle. His friends have to be wrong.

Sure enough, the pair of blues did raise the grizzle youngster. But that does not mean that they bred the youngster. Oh, the hen most likely laid the egg, although in an open

loft one cannot be certain. But that does not mean the hen's mate's sperm fertilized that egg. Most likely there is a grizzle cock in the loft who did the deed.

Joe Quinn, in his Pigeon Breeders' Notebook, an Introduction to Pigeon Science, pages 110 - 112, mentions a study that he did which found lack of privacy in a community breeding loft results in a large number of youngsters that are fathered by someone other than their mother's mate. With open next fronts on small nest boxes there was a 12 - 17% infidelity rate. Larger nest boxes with open fronts dropped the rate to 6 - 8%. And large nest boxes with a nest front that had a small entrance opening had a 2 - 3% infidelity rate. Quinn mentions that these percentages could be on the conservative side. The only way to ensure dependable, reliable, accurate pedigrees is to breed pairs in individual pens. And to be more specific, even then you should suspect a first clutch from an isolated pair if the hen had been exposed to any other cock birds prior to pairing up the two. It has been found that viable sperm can be stored in a hen's body for at least three weeks.

I will not go into a bunch of specific cases in this article. There are plenty of informative articles on pigeon genetics out there and some very good books to fill in the blanks. But essentially a pair of birds cannot produce a youngster with a dominant mutation that neither of the pair of breeders has. Like the above example of a pair of blues "producing" a grizzle young bird. I cannot say that with total absoluteness though. All of our known dominant mutations occurred initially from un-mutated stock. But the instance of spontaneous mutation is extremely rare.

There are instances when dominant mutations have variable penetrance. That is they do not punch through and show up visibly unless feathers are critically evaluated. Dominant opal is notoriously variable in expression. Grizzle can be "hidden" by T pattern checker or spread. Although they may not look to be opal or grizzle they genetically are such and can produce "typical" colored offspring.

Another source of surprise youngsters is the emergence of recessive traits. The above pair of blues could very well produce a red youngster, if both blues carry a gene for recessive red. And if they do you can expect statistically a quarter of their youngsters to be recessive red.

More potential confusion occurs with look-alikes. A pair of blues cannot produce an ash red youngster. But if both these blues are heterozygous (impure) indigo, they can make a homozygous (pure) indigo a quarter of the time. Homozygous indigos are a very good knock-offs of ash reds. A pair of blues heterozygous for recessive opal will a quarter of the time make homozygous recessive opals, many of which could be mistaken for heterozygous indigos, or occasionally for dominant opals.

Bottom line, if you produce your birds in a community breeding section, be prepared to occasionally find surprise youngsters. With a good loft set-up and minimal crowding those resulting from infidelity can be minimized. And with a basic understanding of pigeon color genetics you should be able to identify, or at least narrow down the list of,

potential philanderers. If you want to be certain of the parentage of the birds you raise, use individual breeding compartments.

## **Comments by the Government's Chief Veterinarian on Avian Flu**

**By -Gary Thornton**

Analysis: Avian flu will be in all US flyways this fall!      Release Date: 2015-06-18

Dr. John Clifford, chief veterinary officer of the United States, spoke about preparedness for highly pathogenic avian influenza at the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council meeting.

The U.S. is experiencing the worst and largest animal disease event in its history with the highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks in poultry, and USDA is preparing for a worst-case scenario in the fall of 2015, said John Clifford, the chief veterinary officer of the United States. Speaking before the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council (USAPEEC), Dr. Clifford said, "The secretary of agriculture has asked the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to prepare for a worst-case scenario [with highly pathogenic avian influenza] in the fall of 2015, and we are doing that." A worst-case scenario, he said, would involve the highly pathogenic strain of avian influenza returning in migratory wild birds in the fall of 2015 and infections occurring in all poultry sectors – broilers, turkeys and egg layers – and across the country including in the broiler production regions of the Southeastern U.S. and the Upper Midwest and California. Clifford said another part of such a scenario is if the H5N2 virus were to genetically reassort to present a different strain than the one presently infecting poultry and wild birds in the U.S.

Cost of avian flu outbreaks in U.S. Clifford estimated the high-path avian flu outbreaks so far had cost \$600 million dollars. "If the disease returns in the fall," he said, "I would not be surprised if the cost would be \$1 billion to \$2 billion."

Clifford: Prepare for AI in all U.S. flyways in fall Clifford said preparations for better biosecurity are essential in the planning process. He said: "I believe [high-path avian influenza virus] will be in the fourth flyway in the fall. Already this year there were findings of the virus in wild birds in Ontario, Canada. I believe it will be present in wild birds in all the U.S. flyways this fall. "I hope the high-path virus becomes overtaken by a low path strain and ceases to exist in the wild bird populations, but I don't believe anybody can predict how long it will take."

Unprecedented avian flu challenge in wild birds In assessing the current avian flu disease challenge, Clifford said, "For the first time, we have high-path avian influenza all around the world in wild ducks. Things have changed and we all need to recognize those changes. This has caught all of us off guard." The planning process being led by USDA's APHIS will require input from the U.S. poultry industry and consultations with trading

partners. “So, we have a very short window of time to prepare and be ready by the fall before the wild bird migration starts,” he said. Speaking to the USAPEEC members, Clifford said, “We need to work together to address these things and close the gaps [in biosecurity] in order to help protect our industry and the health and economic well-being of our entire nation.”

Comprehensive plan and execution will cost millions of dollars Clifford said APHIS is working on a comprehensive plan that would likely cost the government and the poultry industry millions of dollars. “If we have to spend millions of dollars on preparation and no disease outbreaks occur in the fall, I will be elated. But, I am afraid that is not just going to happen. There is backyard poultry, and there are areas of contamination in the environment. And we are probably going to see some cases. But seeing some cases would be better than having 50 million birds being put down and destroyed. That’s what we need to prevent from happening again. It is going to take a huge amount of effort and ti amend cost from the industry to recover from this,” he said.

### **Biosecurity is essential part of preparation**

“Part of this planning requires good biosecurity,” he said. “Our epidemiology report indicates many factors are involved in the disease’s spread. But we are going to need your help to do it.” He concluded, “Looking at high-path AI, this is not the federal government’s problem. It is your problem. It is the states’ problem. It is our problem as well; and it is going to take all of us to solve this.”

### **Vaccination plans and scenarios**

“The use of vaccine has to part of our planning for the fall,” Clifford continued. “I am not saying we are going to use it, but our planning will include things like how and when we would use it. If the disease is across 10 to 12 to 14 poultry producing states across the U.S. and we are seeing what we are seeing today, we are probably going to use it in that kind of scenario.” He said the U.S. is already beginning to work with other countries toward new trade protocols to allow trade to continue between countries where product is produced in disease-free zones where vaccination is employed in a Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals (DIVA) strategy. “It is going to take time to convince other countries as well as the World Organization for Animal Health where we use vaccines, especially if we have a DIVA strategy, where we can tell the difference between the vaccine and the virus to save birds,” he said.

### **Cooping Purchase from IMC**

On July 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Tim Kvidera, Don Steinbruckner, and Ardy Prekker traveled to Wichita, Kansas, and picked up the cooping that the Minnesota State Pigeon Association purchased from the International Modena Club. The cooping consists of 100 sections of 15 inch- 4 hole. The cooping included bases and stands and was in good used condition. The authorization for purchase was made back in 2014 for \$2,500. An additional \$548.40 was spent on gas and the miscellaneous travel costs involved in traveling to Kansas and

transporting the cooping back to Minnesota. This makes the cost per hole \$7.62, a very reasonable cost for the quality of the coops. The IMC was paid and the cooping currently is being stored in Don's pole barn. This cooping will make a nice addition for smaller birds and will be available for this year's shows and swaps.

# Minnesota State Pigeon Association

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_      New ( )    Renewal ( )

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_      Cell Number: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Bulletin Option: ( ) Read on MSPA web site ( ) E-mail ( ) Postal Delivery

### Membership Options and Dues:

Individual ( ) \$10.00

Family ( ) \$15.00

Junior ( ) \$5.00

Please note: *The membership year is January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. Any new memberships received after November 1<sup>st</sup> will be applied to the following year unless specific instructions are provided to apply the dues to the current year.*

**Mail to: Ardy Prekker, Treasurer  
MSPA  
8108 291<sup>st</sup> Ave N.W.  
Princeton, MN 55371**