

Calliope Crier



Masthead from the
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the Crier dated March

YAKIMA CHAPTER
SEATTLE AUDUBON SOCIETY

EDITOR: MRS. FRED LAGERGREN

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How The Calliope Crier Got Its Name

(The conclusion of the series of YVAS's early days)

Volume 1 Number 1 of the "Calliope Crier" came off the press in February 1970, edited by Mrs. Fred (Betty) Lagergren. How did the "Calliope Crier" get its name and who drew the very first hummingbird logo, reproduced here?

Lola Bartol, founder and first president, explained in a letter to then-president Andy Stepniewski in March 1986: Jack Whitnall, she noted, the public relations person for Boise Cascade, helped in the founding of Yakima Audubon.

"I believe his first article on the Calliope nest at the Wenas Park was in 1967. Since the focus had been on the Calliope, when it came time for me to publish the first issue of the newsletter, 'Calliope' seemed a natural choice. My daughter had just returned from a visit to the Ellensburg campus where their publication had 'Crier' in the title and she suggested that, and 'Calliope Crier' took wing.

"I took a copy of my encyclopedia to Jack and he made the masthead, using the hummingbird from the book..."

There's a clipping in the Audubon file from June 1970 of birders in the Wenas campgrounds, story and pictures by Whitnall, showing a male calliope sitting on a branch. "You could probably find that same branch and that same bird today," says current Audubon president Leslie Wahl.

Bartol has found four issues of the early "Crier", Volume 1, Numbers 1, 2 and 4 and Volume 2, Number 1.

Their contents aren't very different from those of today's "Crier": field trips to the Toppenish Wildlife Refuge, to the Yakima Firing Range for the "grouse mating ... bring binoculars and cameras ..."; meetings, conventions, and Memorial Day campouts at the Wenas campground.

Here are some other tidbits: "many of you will remember his visit with us last March and the trouble with the acoustics...this time we promise you can hear everything clearly".

Regarding a talk and exhibit on Starlings at the Wenas campout in 1971, "Pauline Hager will demonstrate gourmet cooking - - sautéed Starling."

For a field trip to the Bickleton area to look for Bluebirds, "Steve Layman will lead us...bring lunches and be prepared for any kind of weather - - as usual."

And from the March 1970 'Crier': "June-July-August. No meetings. If interesting field trips materialize, we will get the word to you somehow."

Wahl browsed through these four 'Criers'. She was pleased "to see the same threads running through our history: a connection with the Toppenish Wildlife Refuge, cooperation with the Yakima Training Center for field trips to see the sage grouse strut, and the Memorial Day campouts at the Wenas campground."

— Jeanne Crawford —

(See the adjoining story about an ongoing family story first reported in the March 1970 Crier.)

"Newest birder" welcomes his own second birder!

"Our hearty welcome to our newest birder - - Timothy Ryan. Congratulations to Connie and Roger too."

That's one of the first items in the "Calliope Crier" of March 1970, Volume 1, No. 2.

Just as I was reading that and looking through the Herald-Republic's birth announcements on November 2, 2002, I found this one: "to Timothy O. and Stacy Lynn (Hall) Ryan, Wapato, a daughter Samantha Lynn, October 28, 2002."

A call to Wapato, and Stacy Ryan confirms that her husband was the same "newest" birder, 32 years later. They have an older daughter Sara, five on December 21. And yes, they all look at birds. Stacy says that "I'm learning and enjoying it."

Let Timothy's mother, now Connie Estep of Richland, add to the story: "There's a tradition in our family that birdwatching is passed from mother-in law to the daughter-in-law. Betty Ryan, Timothy's grandmother, who learned from her mother-in-law, passed her birding skills on to me. And in turn, I'm passing them along to my daughter-in-law, Stacy. We're all hooked on birds," she admits.

"Did Stacy tell you," she queries, "that her clothesline is full of bird feeders?"

Timothy's parents were charter treasurer and membership chairman of the Yakima Valley Unit of the Seattle Audubon Society. His grandparents, Betty and Jim Ryan of Wapato, are still active birders.

Today, Estep is active in the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society and teaches birding classes. She regularly receives the "Crier". Roger Ryan lives in Valley, near Spokane, and recently, said Stacy, "sent us a picture of the 30 wild turkeys that gather in his yard every day."

(These Ryans are not related to our long-time Auduboners Edith and Bill. Coincidentally, Edith saw the birth announcement, too and wondered who they were.)

— Jeanne Crawford —