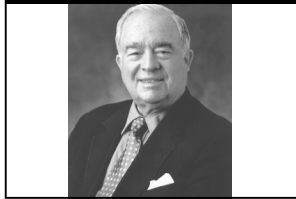


LEADERSHIP

Board Chairman



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What a glorious day it was! The opening of the first urban Audubon Center in the Boathouse at Prospect Park was not only great fun, but a huge success. The audience — crammed into a large space between the Lake and the newly re-built Boathouse, sat delightedly in warm sunlight as the assembled dignitaries held forth — if the truth be known, the dignitaries froze in the shade — while looking down on the enthusiastic audience of students, City Park workers, Rangers, historians, and members of Audubon New York's partner organization — the Brooklyn Prospect Park Alliance, all free with applause and well wishes.

Led by John Flicker, Tupper Thomas and David Miller, the speak-

**TO CONSERVE AND RESTORE NATURAL
ECOSYSTEMS, FOCUSING ON BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE
AND THEIR HABITATS FOR THE BENEFIT OF
HUMANITY AND THE EARTH'S BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY.**

ers included Senator Schumer, State Parks Commissioner Bernadette Castro and DEC Commissioner Erin Crotty, Borough President Marty Markowitz, City Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe, and many other distinguished Commissioners, legislators, new and former City Councilmen and the leadership of the Prospect Park Alliance. Deputy Mayor Patti Harris represented Mayor Bloomberg, and Dr. Evelyn Castro, Superintendent of School District 17 spoke as well.

A special welcome was given to Veronica Pollard, of Toyota North America, which has generously contributed \$1 million toward the Center's endowment.

After the ceremonies, the participants and audience toured the Boathouse, checking out the fantastically imaginative exhibits and teaching tools and exchanging happy compliments.

What a day! Everyone involved deserves a hearty "Thank You!" from all of us.

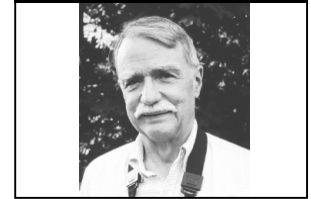
Since the last issue of the *Audubon Advocate*, there has been encouraging news on several of our Conservation Policy Resolutions.

For many years, Audubon, and other environmental groups, have been advocating for legislation that would ban the sale of lead fishing sinkers in New York State because they poison Common Loons, and several species of ducks, geese and swans that inadvertently consume them. This year, at last, Governor Pataki was able to sign a bill that had made it through both houses of the legislature. While this legislation won't end waterfowl mortality due to lead sinkers from the past, it will improve aquatic environments for the future.

We continue to make progress on pesticides. Most recently, Westchester County Executive Andrew Spano declared May 4, 2002 as "No Pesticide Day" focus public attention on the connection between pesticide use, groundwater contamination, ecosystem damage, and public health problems, and to make people aware that pesticides have profound impacts on many areas of the natural world beyond the pests in one's lawn. This is a classic example of how various entities of Audubon can work together to make things happen. The Council Resolution on Pesticides, the work of Audubon chapters, Audubon New York, and National Audubon have gone a long way towards raising the public and political awareness of pesticide issues. And, from the first days of the West Nile virus scare, Lucy Waletsky, M.D. and National Audubon board member, has been a leading advocate for safe and sane use of pesticides. In fact, it was Dr. Waletsky who conceived of and spearheaded the Westchester initiative with strong support from Audubon New York.

One of our longest campaigns has been for the public acquisition of the thousands of acres of Sterling Forest. Over 90 percent of it had been secured by New York and New Jersey, and Governor Pataki had designated the New York-owned portion (about 18,500 acres) as a Bird Conservation Area in October. On May 6, the Governor announced the acquisition of still more land — two parcels totaling 634 acres — which makes Sterling Forest one of the State's largest parks at nearly 18,000 acres of forests, lakes, streams and other sensitive natural resources.

Council Chairman



**GEOFFRY
COBB RYAN**

Various of our resolutions have advocated protection of Forest Preserve and other lands in the Catskill Park. One in particular addresses a proposal to develop 1,900 acres of high elevation habitat near DEC's Belleayre Mountain Ski Center. The plans include two golf courses and hundreds of resort units (hotel rooms, time-shares, and detached houses). The properties lie entirely within the watersheds of the Ashokan and Pepacton Reservoirs, the two largest in New York City's water supply system. Both the State Attorney General's Office and the City's Department of Environmental Protection, among other concerned parties, have expressed extensive, serious concerns about the proposal (and its attendant Environmental Impact Statement).

Finally, Governor Pataki has designated two new Bird Conservation Areas — the Lake Champlain Marshes (announced by DEC Commissioner Erin Crotty at our Spring Council Meeting) and Hi-Tor Wildlife Management Area in the Finger Lakes Region.

All in all, it has been an extremely successful conservation year to date.

"The Council Resolution on Pesticides, the work of Audubon chapters, Audubon New York, and National Audubon have gone a long way towards raising the public and political awareness of pesticide issues."

Yes, Consider Me an Advocate for Birds, Wildlife and their Habitats in New York State



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- I would like to receive the *Audubon Advocate* in the future.
- I am willing to write a letter, make a phone call or send a fax or e-mail on behalf of birds, wildlife and their habitats in New York state.
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