

## *ASGD Board Member Ann Bonnell Receives Colorado Field Ornithologist's Lifetime Achievement Award*



As a naturalist at Roxborough SP, the guiding light of Tuesday Birders, and a relentless activist for environmental preservation, Ann has earned the love and respect of the Front Range birding community. She is, in all respects, and as CFO has written, “a person of character, who has gained the respect of birders in their community through decades of service to birders and birding.”

Her father built his career in the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Her mother was a women’s rights, and community, activist. Perhaps, it

was destined that Ann would spend decades, inspiring new generations of birders and frustrating agencies bent on disrupting bird habitat.

Steeped in knowledge of wildflowers, and birds, Ann began volunteering at Roxborough SP in 1986, before the park opened to the public, and was among the first park naturalists. As a seasonal staff member for more than 25 years, she became a familiar face to visitors. As a volunteer naturalist she has also filled roles at South Platte Park, Denver Botanic Gardens, and the Audubon Society of Greater Denver. Her favorite activity is always working with bird related programs.

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## Ann Bonnell Lifetime Achievement Award *(Cont.)*

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Ann is a long-time member of ASGD where she continues to serve on the board. In the early days of her involvement with Denver Audubon, the office moved frequently as the Board searched for a site for a nature center. In 1999, Ann heard about an old homestead that might be available in Chatfield SP and urged the board to lease it as a permanent site for Audubon's environmental education efforts. ASGD has since renovated the homestead and it now serves the Denver metro area as the Audubon Center at Chatfield. Audubon's office is now installed at Chatfield, as well.

As an active birder, Ann has been most visible as a long-time leader of Tuesday Birders, leading 50 or so, bird outings a year. Her other birding activities include directing monthly surveys at the Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms, maintaining 49 bird boxes there, and annually documenting nesting activity. She also leads groups on the Denver, Douglas County, and Denver Urban Christmas, Bird Counts.

Her environmental activities have included service as a PLAN JeffCo Board Member, a participant in the Save-the-Mountain-Backdrop-Project, and a member of the Restoration Advisory Board for the Air Force Superfund site, owned by Lockheed Martin.

In recent years, Ann has been highly visible as an active advocate in ASGD's effort to evaluate, and then halt, the Chatfield Storage Reallocation Project. The project is impacting extensive cottonwood forest, wetlands and other habitat around Chatfield Reservoir, one of the best-known birding sites on the Front Range. Ann was the first environmental voice at meetings with project proponents, and with her extensive knowledge of bird life at the reservoir, she challenged the bird impact analysis of the Army Corps of Engineers. She is currently a dedicated member of ASGD's team that guides legal action against the Corps.

Her lifetime of work in Front Range bird education, field work, and conservation merits CFO's Lifetime Achievement Award.

## SHARE THE VIEW

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### Do Birdwatching and Advocacy Go Hand in Hand?

Every week or so I check out the field trips that ASGD and the Denver Field Ornithologists offer and wonder if there's time on my schedule to join one of them. I enjoy the company of expert birders – many of whom have completed ASGD's Master Birder class – and appreciate their sharing of their expertise (in the interests of transparency: our family often travels, hikes and camps, but birding isn't necessarily the major aim – natural and cultural history are the priorities). In addition, it's great to be outdoors doing something that challenges your intellect AND is indeed fun!

For some of us, joining a field trip, especially one that requires a lot of driving, has to be balanced with advocacy: for example, writing letters, sending email alerts to volunteers, discussing issues with members of our Conservation Committee, arranging meetings and attending meetings about conservation issues - you get the idea. Often – as on this year's spring bird count – an advocacy need, or a family activity, usurps a day of birdwatching. Other Committee members have expressed the same kind of concern.



### Can we watch birds as frequently as the experts and do advocacy too?

**One possibility:** In May and June, National Audubon encouraged its members to get out and count birds for a Climate Change project and for a western waters project. They made this as easy as possible, with on-line advice on survey protocols, reporting, and bird ID. Many folks are already counting anyway – for a spring bird count or on the regularly scheduled field trips - and doing these counts could, with a bit more notice and preparation, be woven into the NAS surveys. It WOULD be possible to combine birding with advocacy. But will birders step up and do it? (View these projects at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)).

**Another possibility:** participating in *Project Feeder Watch*, which you can do in your own home. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has organized this one and will send you an informational packet, complete with bird guide to common back-yard birds. The data will be analyzed to see if any trends in bird populations can be identified.

It is always very informative, but also frustrating, to attend meetings of birders and realize that most of these folks aren't aware of or interested in doing any advocacy to save the habitats of the birds they love to watch. For them, it's just THE BIRDS. They know a lot about them, sure; but it's hard not to jump up and say, "Hey, folks, if you don't get off your \_\_\_ and take action, you and your children (and grandchildren) won't be enjoying birds like this in the future. Their habitats will be gone and we won't see them again. Resist those developers! Fight apathetic government agencies! Agitate and make your voices heard. Is recreational shooting posing problems on the Pawnee Grassland? Write to the land manager – the US Forest Service – and ask them to take appropriate action."

*(Cont. next page)*

Major advances in conservation require persistent, dedicated action that in fact may curtail our birding time. Are birders willing to spend the time and energy, to preserve a piece of land, to change a policy, to convince a legislator? We know there is a small group that will do both advocacy and intensive birding, and such people deserve all our thanks and support. Many volunteers do lead our environmental education programs as well. I would hope ALL our ASGD birders could/would take some action, no matter how small, and truly become conservationists.

Still, we shouldn't forget Edward Abbey's advice to get out and enjoy the natural world – hike the trails, watch the birds, and feel the wind in our hair. Maybe we'll even outlive our opponents, as he promised.

### **Chatfield Update:**

On May 14, ASGD's legal team filed a response to the Corps of Engineers' response to our appeal of the Chatfield Reallocation Project (all our documents can be found at [www.savechatfield.org](http://www.savechatfield.org)). The next day they also filed a request for an expedited review of ASGD's case, citing construction that is due to begin in the fall of 2018 – tree removal and construction along the South Platte River that will eliminate much of the vegetation richness that supports migratory, wintering, and breeding birds in that part of Chatfield State Park. We all hope for an objective review of the case and a decision in favor of our arguments on compliance with the Clean Water Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. This year's legal team has worked especially hard and let's hope their efforts are crowned with success.

### **ASGD/Front Range Birding Seed Sale Partnership: A portion of all seed sales will be donated to ASGD**

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver and The Front Range Birding Company have partnered to make backyard bird feeding easy and affordable. You will be supporting Denver Audubon as a portion of all seed sales - all year - will be donated to ASGD. Be sure to take advantage of Front Range Birding's "Seed Vault Program." You can buy as much as you like up front and pick up fresh seed anytime. Seed Vault purchases never expire! There's no need to pre-order. Just stop by the Front Range Birding Company store and let them know you are there for Denver Audubon. Front Range Birding Company: 10146 W San Juan Way #110, Littleton, CO 80127 303-979-Bird (2473)



Spotted Towhee by Dick Vogel

### **WOODPECKER WOES AND OTHER WILDLIFE ISSUES?**

<http://www.denveraudubon.org/about/wildlife-issues/>



HERE IS THE WEBSITE FOR FOLKS TO REPORT FOX SIGHTINGS AS PART OF A RESEARCH PROJECT:

[www.ifoundafox.org](http://www.ifoundafox.org)



THIS LINK WILL CONNECT YOU TO THE NATIONAL AUDUBON WEBSITE AND OTHER HELPFUL LINKS TO HELP YOU DEAL WITH COMMON QUESTIONS!



Red Crossbill by Carol Vogel

Over the winter Red Crossbills descended from the mountains to the city. Our last column mentioned several, from Elizabeth to Aurora. This spring, Jean Stevenson reports a group of 10-12 “almost every day for two months in our yard in southeast Aurora. They usually land in a small group on the bird bath to drink for a few minutes then fly away. Sometimes they perch in a pine tree. We are 30 miles east of the foothills, technically in short grass prairie, although the homes have been here for over 30 years and have lots of mature trees.”

Tina Jones heard them for three days, Apr. 30-May 2, in Bow-Mar. Carol Vogel photographed one in her Littleton yard on May 5. Jared Del Rosso saw 11 in deKoevend Park (Littleton) on May 21. eBird has many reports from Arapahoe and Denver counties this spring.

Other mountain birds include continuing Red-breasted Nuthatches and Mountain Chickadees “nearly all year” in Linda Lee Williams’ Highlands Ranch yard. “The Mountain Chickadees are extremely friendly. They talk to me in their raspy voices as soon as I come outside, and they often land on the feeder I’m standing next to. White-breasted Nuthatches are around--we have a pair right now--but I don’t see them as much. Have some Bushtits, too. All of our chickadees flee after the House Wrens arrive in mid-to-late May, but return around the first week in July.” They continued through mid-April in Jill Holden’s Roxborough yard and Randy Nelson’s Parker yard.

Mary Kay Waddington (Englewood) had an amazing visitor Apr. 6: “I just had a beautiful adult Northern Goshawk next to my house. It of course flew off after about three minutes, but it was a superb look! I’ve lived here 60 years and have never seen one at this low altitude before.”

We always anticipate the arrival of hummingbirds. Kevin Corwin (Centennial) reported the first one Apr. 9: “not at the feeder but perched in a nearby tree. Preening.” On Apr. 14 in Roxborough, Jill Holden saw her first (male) hummer, but then none until another male came on Apr. 25. Linda reported, on Apr. 21, “So typical of Aprils lately: cold, snowy, and our first broad-tailed hummingbird shows up--a female. She’s been here all morning, enjoying our heated nectar feeder. Up until four years ago, we always had males first...but now, that’s changed.” Karen Metz’s first one, a male, arrived Apr. 21 (“a late ‘first arrival.’”) Randy Nelson’s first one came Apr. 22 (in Parker), a male. In Larkspur, Kay Chambers saw her first of the season on Apr. 25, “very late for us.”



Hummingbird by Kevin Corwin

## Backyard Birds (cont.)

Spring migrants spread out. Barb Danford sent a photo of a Red-naped Sapsucker that came to a pine tree in her Lakewood yard on Apr. 1.

Jared Del Rosso (Centennial) reported, on Apr. 20, "For the better part of the past month, I've had visits from a Lincoln's Sparrow. I can't be sure it's the same one that showed up relatively early in mid-March, as I'll sometimes go a day or so without seeing it." Two days later he "was greeted by a collection of small, brown birds. Inspecting them, I found two White-crowned Sparrows, a Vesper, a continuing Lincoln's Sparrow, and, behind them all, a Hermit Thrush. The White-crowned and Vesper and thrush seem to have shown up in the past 24 hours, as they weren't there yesterday. The Vesper was a new yard bird for me.

"Soon after, a Great Blue Heron flew low over my yard. My chihuahua-terrier, who's usually blissfully unaware of birds, couldn't help but chase after and growl at the apparent monster above us."



Red-Naped Sapsucker by Barb Danford

In central Denver, Polly Reetz emailed, "the Ides of April seem to have wrought a sea change in the bird population of our back yard: birds we have seldom or never seen all winter are now showing up, either back from their winter residence or just moving around. In the past few days we've seen up to 3 Dark-eyed Juncos at a time, 3 White-crowned Sparrows at one time, a male American Goldfinch in full breeding plumage, 2 Mourning Doves, and a bird that I have identified as a Brewer's Sparrow after a long, good look at close range."

Tracy Rackauskas (east Denver, Apr. 28) emailed, "Cool! We've had three White-crowned Sparrows in our yard in Denver (near Colfax & Monaco) all week -- first time I've seen them here. They're

hanging out with the House Sparrows and eating bird seed off the ground."

On May 3, M. Brisse (Castle Rock) "was excited to see our first male Bullock Oriole's today at the suet feeder. He stayed around all afternoon eating suet."

For the week ending May 2, Tina reported a gaggle of brown birds: 6 White-crowned Sparrows, a Chipping and a Lincoln's sparrow, and a Green-tailed Towhee. "The onslaught of House Wrens continues. One continued to go in and out of a Chickadee box, while the chickadee remained very passive and the latter is the one who did all the work lining the box with moss, fur, and plant materials. The outcome is not looking too good at this point."

On May 8 "five Pine Siskin spent the afternoon at (Jared's) feeder, bird bath, and trees, his first sighting of siskins since May 2016 The birds were quite vocal, adding some interesting noises to the goldfinch and House Wren calls. The next day, the siskin flock was up to about 18 birds. They spent some time foraging in a budding honey locust before moving on.

May 8 Jared "encountered a Rock Wren in a new and neat little depressed rock garden in a parking lot at D.U. This was my first of this bird on campus and, frankly, the most interesting, non-flyover that I've had on the rather non-birdy 'hotspot.'"

Other migrant reports: Randy, in April, "Spotted Towhees and robins singing, a few Say's Phoebes flying around, a pair of Swainson's Hawks flying over, and mountain bluebirds along the nearby gulch as the highlights so far." Jill listed Green-tailed Towhee, Tree Swallows, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Cedar Waxwings. Lesser Goldfinches visited Kay's, Karen's and our (one day only) yards; Chipping Sparrows patronized in Jill's, Karen's, and ours. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Karen's. A Lazuli Bunting decorated our feeding area on Apr. 30.

## Backyard Birds (cont.)

Just in, Merikay Hagerty's email today (May 20): "We've had Western Tanagers this week....the first, the exact same day as last year.



Rose-Breasted Grosbeak by Walt Haggerty

"Today a Rose-breasted Grosbeak.... definitely a backyard first. A female Bullock's appeared a few minutes ago. Too bad I was at the bird banding station with the grandkids and didn't get to see the grosbeak. Glad Walt got photos!"

Nobody reports the birds that they didn't see, but we should mention that we saw no House Wrens in April, and the Western Bluebirds show no signs of using our nest boxes this year (Tree Swallows like three boxes, and in May House Wrens have tentatively staked out two boxes.)

Wild Turkeys seem to have taken over our neighborhood. One day two years ago I counted 81 along our mile-long road. Though I haven't seen that many since, we still see up to 30 some days. Males display all day long; today four fanned their tails in the middle of the road, and a female simply walked through the middle of them without stopping. Still they must have mated because our neighbor, Bill Greer, sent a photo of a depredated nest. Perhaps by a squirrel, perhaps by some other observant opportunist.



Wild Turkey Nest by Bill Greer

Barbara Spagnuolo monitors birds for Castle Rock. On Apr. 16, she said, "We have our first bluebird eggs in the nest boxes that are monitored in Castle Rock. A female Western Bluebird was observed on Saturday, Apr, 14 remaining on a nest, indicating presence of eggs. On Monday, the 16th, I confirmed the presence of 6 eggs. Counting backwards from at least Monday, the first egg date is approximately April 10, although maybe earlier as we don't know if the clutch was complete on Saturday or not. This is one very busy bluebird as the nest was incomplete on April 6. The nest box elevation is 6280 ft. This is the first time that Mountain Bluebirds were not the first documented eggs of the season."

*Your contributions write this column. Thanks to you in urban and suburban Denver who sent in all these intriguing reports. Send a note or post card to P.O. Box 584, Franktown 80116, or Email me: ouzels8@aol.com*



Rose-breasted Grosbeak at ASGD Nature Center by Kate Hogan

# Leave a Legacy

## *Educate Generations - Protect Birds and Habitats into the Future Include ASGD in Your Will, and Other Gift Planning Options*

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver offers an opportunity for you to make a gift or bequest to leave a legacy and a lasting impact. The goal of planned giving is to help you plan your estate and charitable giving in a way that benefits you, your family and ASGD. We invite friends who share a commitment to educating all ages about birds, other wildlife, and habitats to consider making a personal investment in the future of our programs. There are several ways you can make these planned gifts to charity and enjoy tax and income benefits:

- **Specific, Residuary and Contingent Bequests**
- **Retirement Accounts and Pension Plans**
- **Insurance**
- **Securities**
- **Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)**
- **Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)**

Please consult with your financial planner and attorney to assure you receive the best financial advantages and that your intentions are carried out fully.

We would be glad to discuss any planned giving option with you – in confidence and without obligation. For more information, please call 303-973-9530 or e-mail Karl Brummert, Executive Director, at [kbrummert@denveraudubon.org](mailto:kbrummert@denveraudubon.org)

## *Please Let Us Know*

We often receive bequests from people whom we have never had the opportunity to thank. If you include Audubon Society of Greater Denver in your estate plans, please let us know. We value the opportunity to express our gratitude in person to let you know that your gift is greatly appreciated now and for future generations of people and birds to come. Those people who have notified us of their intention to make a bequest to the Audubon Society of Greater Denver are invited to our Legacy Circle. Legacy Circle special events and activities highlighting the work we accomplish together will keep you connected to the “legacy” that you have planned for us.

**Legal Designation: If you wish to name Audubon Society of Greater Denver in your will or estate plan, we should be legally designated as:** *“Audubon Society of Greater Denver, a nonprofit organization (Tax ID #23-7063701), with its principal business headquarters address of 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd, Littleton, CO 80128.”*  
**Date of Incorporation: September 30, 1969**



Photo by Dick Vogel

## QUICK GLANCE - UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS & PROGRAMS

|        |     |   |         |         |  |
|--------|-----|---|---------|---------|--|
| JUL 1  | SUN | WALK THE WETLANDS   | JUL 29  | SUN     | HUMMINGBIRDS: WHO THEY ARE AND WHAT THEY EAT |
| JUL 1  | SUN | PARTNERSHIP BIOBLIZTES WITH HIGH LINE CANAL CONSERVANCY     | AUG 3   | FRI     | NOCTURNAL WILDLIFE HIKE – BEAVER BELIEVERS!  |
| JUL 6  | FRI | NOCTURNAL WILDLIFE HIKE – CUNNING CANINES                   | AUG 3-5 | FRI-SUN | COLONIAL NESTING TRIP – WALDEN AREA LAKES    |
| JUL 7  | SAT | BIRDING INSIGHTS – FRONT RANGE HUMMINGBIRDS                 | AUG 4   | SAT     | MT. EVANS SUNRISE TRIP                       |
| JUL 7  | SAT | FRONT RANGE BIRDING   | AUG 5   | SUN     | PARKER HONEY FESTIVAL                        |
| JUL 7  | SAT | HARVEY PARK   | AUG 5   | SUN     | WALK THE WETLANDS                            |
| JUL 12 | THU | ROXBOROUGH STATE PARK                                       | AUG 9   | THU     | ROXBOROUGH STATE PARK                        |
| JUL 13 | FRI | NOCTURNAL WILDLIFE HIKE – LIGHTNING BUGS                    | AUG 18  | SAT     | WESTERLY CREEK GREENWAY                      |
| JUL 14 | SAT | NATIVE PLANTS FOR BIRDS WORKSHOP                            | AUG 24  | FRI     | NOCTURNAL WILDLIFE HIKE – HUMMINGBIRD MOTHS  |
| JUL 21 | SAT | LAVENDER FESTIVAL AT DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS CHATFIELD FARMS | AUG 25  | SAT     | BIRD WALK ALONG THE CHERRY CREEK TRAIL       |
| JUL 21 | SAT | PARTNERSHIP BIOBLIZTES WITH HIGH LINE CANAL CONSERVANCY     | AUG 25  | SAT     | EXPLORE CHATFIELD STATE PARK                 |
| JUL 28 | SAT | EXPLORE CHATFIELD STATE PARK                                | SEP 15  | SAT     | 8TH ANNUAL HOOTENANNY OWL & MUSIC FESTIVAL   |

FOR A FULL DESCRIPTION OF THESE FIELD TRIPS, VISIT [WWW.DENVERAUDUBON.ORG/EVENTS/](http://WWW.DENVERAUDUBON.ORG/EVENTS/) OR CALL 303-973-9530

### **Birding, Wildlife and Scenery of Southwest Colorado**

**July 29 - August 4, 2018**

Join Audubon Society of Greater Denver (Facilitated by Leisure West Tours & Cruises) for a trip into the scenic wonderland that is Southwest Colorado, home to Golden Eagle and Desert Bighorn, Gambel's Quail and Mountain Lion. It will also be a journey into the past, as we tour the ancient cliff palaces hidden away in the majestic canyons of Mesa Verde National Park. We will look for many western specialty birds and mammals as we enjoy the varied and spectacular scenery of Colorado National Monument, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, the San Juan Mountains, Mesa Verde National Park and Great Sand Dunes National Park.

*\$1879 Double Occupancy*

*<http://leisurewesttours.com/leisure>*

### **Cuba Essential Birding and Conservation Education:**

**February 9 to 16, 2019**

The tour host is Emily Hertz, who coordinates education programs for the Audubon Society of Greater Denver. Our Cuban tour provides you with a great opportunity to see more than twenty of the possible Cuban endemic birds, in addition to a good number of Caribbean endemic species. Cuban endemics include Gundlach's Hawk, Bee Hummingbird (smallest hummingbird in the world), Cuban Trogon, Cuban Tody, Cuban Parakeet, Zapata Wren and more. In addition, there are over twenty West Indian endemics possible, including West Indian Whistling-Duck, Key West Quail-Dove, Great Lizard-Cuckoo, Loggerhead Kingbird and Western Spindalis.



Cuban Tody by Arturo Kirkconnell, Jr.

This is a legal Cuba tour, where you are collecting ornithological data to support the education of the Cuban people about their natural resources. You will be birding, and travelling for humanitarian purposes.

You will also get to experience the local Cuban culture and have an opportunity to explore Havana and other interesting locations. Our friendly Cuban bird guide will be happy to discuss and give a local perspective on Cuban life, as well as share his extensive knowledge of the local birds and wildlife.

*Price: \$3,290 per Person with 8 participants for 8 Days and 7 Nights Trip cost includes guide and driver, all access fees, your meals, 7 nights of lodging, airport transfers and more. Tour Guide: Arturo Kirkconnell, Cuban author of the upcoming photographic field guide to the birds of Cuba (Cornell University Press). Register by contacting Charles Thornton-Kolbe, 720-320-1974, email [Charles@PIBird.com](mailto:Charles@PIBird.com)*

### **Kansas Prairie-Chickens and Spring Migration: Wetlands, Shorebirds and Grasslands: May 4 to 9, 2019 and May 11 to 16, 2019**

This birding tour will take you east into Kansas, with stops at some of the best midwestern birding destinations – Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. Cheyenne Bottoms, the largest marsh in the interior of the United States, is the most important shorebird spring migration point in the western hemisphere. Quivira hosts half a million birds in spring migration, and habitat types include saltwater marshes and sand dunes covered in prairie grasses.



Lesser Prairie-Chicken by Bill Schmoker

You will also stop at one of the few sites left where you can still see Lesser Prairie-Chickens. Greater Prairie-Chickens are here as well.

Some of the additional key bird species for this trip include Piping Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, Dickcissel and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and abundance of shore birds and more.

*Price: \$1,360 per person with 9 participants for 6 Days and 5 Nights Trip cost includes guide and driver, all access fees, five nights of lodging and more. Register: Charles Thornton-Kolbe, 720-320-1974, email [charles@PIBird.com](mailto:charles@PIBird.com)*

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*Thanks to all committees,  
board members and Audubon Master  
Birders for volunteering their time.*

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**Your volunteer hours are very important to us!**

Your volunteer hours are very important to us as we use them to raise money through grants and the SCFD. Please record your hours on Volgistics or email Kate Hogan with your completed hours as soon as possible. Thanks!

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9308 South Wadsworth Blvd.  
Littleton, CO 80128  
303.973.9530  
www.denveraudubon.org

**Staff**

**To contact us**

info@denveraudubon.org  
Karl Brummert  
Executive Director  
  
Kate Hogan  
Community Outreach Coordinator  
  
Emily Hertz  
School Programs Coordinator  
  
Suzy Hiskey  
Nature Educator  
  
Rhonda Shank  
Office Manager  
  
Mary Urban  
Newsletter Design/Layout

