



PRONGHORN

1st Quarter 2014
Volume 20 Number 1



ARIZONA ANTELOPE FOUNDATION, INC.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Page 3	President's Message
Page 4	The Journey
Page 7	Sonoran Pronghorn Update
Page 9	2014 Project Schedule
Page 10	Pronghorn Capture Update
Page 13	Pronghorn Poaching Case
Page 14	Help Save Recreational Shooting
Page 14	Annual Hunter Clinic
Page 14	Equipment Need
Page 14	Conservation License Plate
Page 15	Membership
Page 16	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle
Page 18	2014 Fundraising Banquet

AAF Mission Statement:

The Arizona Antelope Foundation is an organization dedicated to the welfare of pronghorn antelope. The Foundation's Mission is to actively seek to increase pronghorn populations in Arizona through habitat improvements, habitat acquisition, the translocation of animals to historic range, and public comment on activities affecting pronghorn and their habitat.



ON OUR COVER

AAF Field Manager John Millican snapped this beauty at the recent release of pronghorn in south-eastern Arizona transferred from New Mexico. Read John's article about the transfer on page 7

Pronghorn is a quarterly newsletter for the members of AAF. Letters, comments, news items, articles, pictures and stories are all welcome and will be considered for publication. Address all such items to: Tracy Unmacht, Pronghorn Editor, PO Box 12590, Glendale, AZ 85318, or by email at info@azantelope.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The obligation of humans to respect and protect the natural environment is a theme that appears throughout the Bible, often referring to just the kinds of problems we face today: cruelty to animals, destruction of wildlife and habitat, and pollution of our food, air, and water.

What is perhaps the world's first anti-pollution law is found in Deuteronomy (23:13-15), which forbids contaminating the land with human waste. And in 2 Kings (2:19-22), the prophet Elisha appears to remedy a crisis of water pollution that was causing miscarriages in the land.

In the books of Jeremiah (9:9-11) and Habakkuk (2:17), the Lord warns against destroying nature and wildlife. In Jeremiah, the Lord says that He "...will take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation...;neither can men hear the voice of the cattle; both the fowl of the heavens and the beasts are fled; they are gone." And Habakkuk condemns "...the destruction of the beasts, which made them afraid." In both cases, the punishment is that the land is "laid waste," just what we are doing today to much of our farmland and wilderness.

Trees and forests are accorded a special reverence in the Bible, and one of the first things the Israelites were commanded to do when they "came into" the Promised Land was to plant trees and allow them to mature before eating the fruits thereof (Leviticus 19:23).

One of the world's first nature-protection regulations is found in the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 20:19), which forbids the destruction of fruit-bearing trees even when waging war against a city. The verse concludes that "thou shalt not cut them down (for a tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege."

Elsewhere in the Mosaic Law, strict and detailed rules are set forth on caring for trees. For example, Genesis 19:23-25 orders that fruit trees be left wild and unpruned for the first few years in order to give them strength and increase their yield.

Throughout the Bible, in stressing the reverence humans should have toward the land, the Scriptures impart a strong conservation message, warning against over utilizing and wearing out natural resources. In Leviticus (25:2-4), the Lord commands that: "... the land shall keep a Sabbath unto the Lord .. in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard."

Also in Leviticus (26:3-6), the Lord's appreciation for the land is made clear when He promises the Israelites that, if they obey His commandments, the land will reward them: "If ye walk in My statutes, and keep



My commandments, and do them; then I will give you rains in their season, and the land shall yield her produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.... And I will give peace in the land."

There is even a suggestion that practicing conservation and kind treatment of animals may ensure oneself of a long life. Deuteronomy 22:6-7 says that if one chances upon a bird's nest with the mother sitting upon the eggs or the young, and one takes the latter, one must let the mother go "that it may go well with you," and that you may live a long life ("prolong thy days").

Besides the humane ethic enunciated here, remarkable for a food-gathering society, the early Hebrews understood the conservation principle of preserving breeding stock, a lesson we would do well to heed today. This is something I believe we recently accomplished via the work we did to facilitate the recent transplants of Pronghorn into southeast Arizona. In addition, we invest thousands of man hours a year improving the land. We do this so there may still be Pronghorn and habitat for them to roam for many generations.

The call of conservation is as old as the scriptures, but is never more relevant than today. We must conserve wisely, not under pressure of lofty organiza-

(Continued on page 13)

THE JOURNEY

BY JOHN MILLICAN, AAF FIELD/PROJECT MANAGER



Photo by Jim Unmacht

The route to Cimarron, New Mexico for Pronghorn lasted only 2 days and was rather direct along mostly interstates and paved back roads. The journey to get there was more circuitous and timely. It has been said that you cannot build a structure from the roof down. Of course that is common sense and definitely sage advice.

On January 13, 2014 a group of Arizona Game and Fish Department biologists, along with Arizona Antelope Foundation Vice-President, Glen Dickens, and myself traveled to Cimarron, New Mexico to assist the New Mexico Game and Fish Department in capturing Pronghorn for a translocation into Southeastern Arizona. This was a joint effort between two Wildlife agencies, which evolved from both States in need of a Big Game species to repopulate existing populations in need of help.



Photo by John Millican

New Mexico had a surplus of Pronghorn in an area that was causing landowner issues, while Arizona had a

(Continued on page 5)



Rounded Up



Ready for transport



Trapped



Loading



Ear tagged



Release

population of Gould's Turkey that had been used for translocation purposes for nearly a decade. Translocations from within State, and exchanges from other States have been a norm in Wildlife Management since the early 1900s. Many have been successful, while others have been less than desirable. The one common denominator that has surrounded most successful releases has been a broad ecological vision where

building a strong foundation prior to translocation resulted in long-term success.

That is the journey that the Arizona Antelope Foundation, Arizona Game and Fish Department, and numerous other agencies and landowners began. In 2010, the Tucson Game and Fish office brought together a wide

(Continued on page 6)

segment of conservation professionals to develop a Grassland initiative, resulting in the formation of the Southeast Arizona Grasslands Workgroup (SEAGRASS). Their goal was **bring together all government agencies and NGO's for structured approaches to grassland conservation and management of the Sky Island Grasslands zone of southeastern Arizona with emphasis on improving Pronghorn populations, distribution and connectiveness.** From this concept a proposal by Arizona Antelope Foundation was submitted to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), where a 3- year, \$230,000.00 grant was awarded. Utilizing broad based partners, state and federal funds, and AAF volunteers, a landscape focused management plan was designed to implement grassland restoration and Pronghorn population connectivity objectives. After nearly 3 years of coordinated resource habitat improvement projects involving removal of invasive species, prescribed burns, fence modification, water development, geodatabase development, and partnership enhancement, the ecological structure was complete. Now it was time for implementation of enhancement and distribution of Pronghorn populations within Game Management Unit 35.

On January fifteenth, after a successful capture of Pronghorn in New Mexico, a total of 41 animals were released into the Sonoita plains and San Rafael Valley. Twenty-four pronghorn joined up with the resident population south of Sonoita, with the remaining 17 enhancing the 11 pronghorn remaining in the San Rafael Valley. All pronghorn were released wearing 2 different color ear tags, with each designating specific release sites, allowing for identification of movement patterns,

herd interaction and reproduction success. Additionally, 3 pronghorn in the Sonoita release were fitted with Global Positioning System (GPS) radio collars, allowing for exact locations to be remotely downloaded to a computer database multiple times per day. Daily movements will be recorded by these GPS collars, allowing for the development of a data base identifying pronghorn movements, habitat preferences, fawning and breeding areas, movement corridors, seasonal movement patterns, potential bottlenecks, along with future management needs.

As part of this database development and tracking, the Tombstone High School FFA class will develop a geodata base where daily locations and movements will be tracked. Their involvement in this ongoing project was funded through a 2-year Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCD) grant and will allow the students the opportunity to acquire knowledge of data collection and mapping. Instruction will be provided by the AAF GIS Manager, Caroline Patrick.

In addition to classroom involvement, the FFA students will also be completing field work where they will be collecting pronghorn location, preferred water sources and quality, fawning site selection through vegetative sampling, and fawning survival.

With the release of these Pronghorn, the long awaited journey was finally complete. The future holds promise, but we must be diligent in our monitoring and maintenance of pronghorn and habitat conditions. Even though our efforts have affected change, Mother Nature will provide what management cannot. Pray for Rain.





SONORAN PRONGHORN UPDATE



BY JILL BRIGHT AZ GAME & FISH
JANUARY 21, 2014

Captive Breeding:

Cabeza Prieta Captive Breeding Pen

We did our annual capture of pronghorn in the boma traps December 13-15. The capture/release operation was a success again this year due to assistance from numerous personnel from many agencies including Arizona Game and Fish, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Cabeza Prieta and Kofa Refuges, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Luke Air Force Base, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, and US Border Patrol, and Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club. In addition to our Game and Fish veterinarian (Dr. Anne Justice-Allen), a volunteer veterinarian, and contracted veterinarian (Dr. Ole Alcumbrac), we also hosted Dr. Ivonne Cassaigne from the National University of Mexico. Papillion Helicopters provided helicopters and pilots. Barry M. Goldwater Range, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma and Yuma Proving Ground permitted access to their restricted airspace. Many thanks to everyone who participated!

The Cabeza crew prepared for the boma capture throughout November by strategically feeding in the bomas, and monitoring activity with cameras. December 9 – 12, seventy pronghorn were captured in the north (34) and south (36) bomas. Processing took place December 13 – 15. All pronghorn were vaccinated against Bluetongue/EHD and other diseases and had blood drawn for disease and genetic testing. Pronghorn that were needed in the pens for breeding and this year's fawns were marked and released back into the pen. One adult buck from north was moved to south, and one adult buck from south was moved to north for breeding.

On the first day, all the pronghorn in the north herd were processed. All animals to be released were collared with either a VHF or GPS radio collar. Eleven pronghorn were tranquilized, and placed into a new specialized game trailer with air conditioning for transport to the 7-acre holding pen on Kofa NWR. The vehicle left the Cabeza pen around 12:30 pm and arrived at the holding pen on Kofa NWR at 6:00 pm. All 11 pronghorn were released from the trailer into the holding pen, and appeared to be in good condition. One buck got too hot to risk moving him to Kofa, so he was collared and placed in an emergency holding pen just west of the main Cabeza pen; an additional buck was collared and put in this pen to keep him company and reduce stress. We also started processing in the south herd, and two pronghorn were flown by helicopter to the holding pen on Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument.

On the second day, we continued processing in the south boma. An additional 5 pronghorn were moved to the holding pen on Kofa by helicopter. We did not use the trailer on the second day as this was our first attempt to move pronghorn by trailer and we were cautious of the potential for later mortality from capture myopathy, and didn't want to risk all the pronghorn slated for release. An additional 4 pronghorn were moved by helicopter to the Organ Pipe holding pen. On the third day, four pronghorn were moved by helicopter to the holding pen on the BMGR-West.

No immediate injuries or mortalities occurred during the capture, processing or transport. All animals released back in the main pen are doing well. There were no injuries or mortalities to the animals in the Organ Pipe and BMGR-West holding pens and they have been released and are doing well in the wild. There is one doe in the Kofa holding pen that has a fairly substantial limp; we are going to recapture her and put her in the main Kofa pen rather than release her.

(Continued on page 8)

There are also 2 animals whose GPS collars have quit working. We are debating recapturing them to replace the collars. We are holding the animals in the Kofa holding pen until the animals from the Kofa pen are ready to be released.

One doe in South herd had been thin before capture, and was examined by veterinarians during processing. It was determined she had tape worms; she was treated with an additional de-wormer. The pen crew cleaned the feeding areas extensively, and moved the feeders. A treatment option for the whole herd is being investigated. The two bucks that were moved into the opposite pen appear to be adjusting; no aggressive behaviors have been seen.

There is a buck in the south herd that needs to be removed from the pen for breeding purposes; he was not caught in the bomas. We are investigating the best method to capture and remove him from the pen. He will initially be moved to the emergency pen to recover; we are holding the two bucks in the emergency pen, who are both doing well, until all are released together.

Status of Pronghorn in Cabeza Pen

January 2014

NORTH HALF		SOUTH HALF	
Adult Females	10	Adult Females	7
Yearling Females (b 2012)	1	Yearling Females (b 2012)	3
Breeding Buck (b 2010, Purple 3)	1	Yearling Males (b2012)	2
Back-up Buck (b 2012, Grn/Wht 3)	1	Breeding Buck (b 2010, Yellow 3)	1
Fawns (born 2013, 13F, 3M)	16	Breeding Buck (b 2011, Yel/Blk 3)	1
		Fawns (born 2013, 10F, 8M)	18
TOTAL	29	TOTAL	32
Total Pen	61		

Kofa Captive Breeding Pen

The first annual capture and release from the Kofa pen took place January 8, 2014. Again we had a large crew including AZ Game and Fish, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Cabeza Prieta and Kofa Refuges, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Luke Air Force Base, and Marine Corps Air Station Yuma. The entire herd (25 animals) was captured in the bomas on January 5 by the pen technicians. Seven males and 3 females were processed, fitted with VHF radio collars, and transported by stretcher to the holding pen on the southeast corner of the main pen. These pronghorn will be monitored for 2+ weeks for any injuries or effects of the capture and then released. All the other pronghorn were processed, marked and released back into the main pen for breeding. There were no injuries or mortalities. However, one buck escaped from the holding pen back into the main pen the first night; sign indicated he jumped over the fence.

Status of Pronghorn in Kofa Pen

	January 2014
Adult Females	9
Yearling Females (b 2012)	2
Adult Males	3
Fawns (born 2013, 1f, 1m)	2
TOTAL	16

(Continued on page 9)

Summary of Pronghorn for Release into the Wild

	Kofa NWR	BMGR-West	Organ Pipe Cactus NM	TOTAL
From Cabeza Pen				
Adult Females	2		1	3
Yearling Females (b 2012)	5*	2	2	9
Adult Males	1			1
Yearling Males (b 2012)	8	2	3	13
From Kofa Pen				
Adult Females	1			1
Yearling Females (b 2012)	2			2
Adult Males	1			1
Yearling Males (b 2012)	5			5
Total	25	4	6	35

* one injured doe to be moved back to Kofa pen

2012 Released Pronghorn - Cabeza

Nothing new to report.

2012 Released Pronghorn - KOFA

During deer surveys in January, three pronghorn were observed in King Valley near the Neversweat Mountains. It is believed they are the same three that have been recorded on camera at a water on YPG during the summer.

Water Projects: Nothing new to report.

Forage Enhancements: Nothing new to report.

Other Projects/Personnel: The biennial range wide survey in Sonora Mexico took place December 7 – 10. We had maintenance issues with one of the aircraft; consequently we were only able to complete the area on the east side of Highway 8. We saw 372 pronghorn (compared to 167 on the last survey in 2011 in the same area), and our estimate for that part of the range was 434 (versus 189 in 2011). We plan to go back and do the west side of the Highway - the Pinacate area - in February.

Wild Pronghorn Cabeza/ORPI/BMGR herd : Nothing new to report.

2014 PROJECT SCHEDULE

April 12th Rosetree
June 28th Unit 7 HW 180
August 16th Unit 7 HW 64
September 20th Unit 32 Bonita
November 16th Unit 19A, Prescott

PRONGHORN CAPTURE UPDATE

BY GLEN DICKENS VICE PRESIDENT, PROJECTS & GRANTS MANAGER

On January 27-29th 2014 Arizona Antelope Foundation (AAF) board members, 50+ volunteers including the Hereford District of NRC, Tombstone High School FFA class, University of Arizona and Northern Arizona students, Phoenix College Student Conservation Corp, and 30+ Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD)

employees set up to capture pronghorn in the Prescott area. The purpose of this capture project was to bolster two pronghorn populations with additional numbers and genetic diversity in southeastern Arizona in game management Units 35A/B, while keeping the Prescott area

(Continued on page 11)



Trap alley and corral construction begins.
Photos by Betty Dickens





(Capture Update continued from page 10)
pronghorn population in Unit 19A at a manageable size and allow for continued recruitment of fawns.

The project activity included constructing an alley way fence and corral on day one. Then on days two and three capture time utilizing ground spotters and a helicopter to bring nearby herds/groups of pronghorn to the trap site

(Continued on page 12)

(Capture Update continued from page 11)

and drive them into the mouth of the winged fences. Everything was go on capture day and on day one 8 pronghorn were successfully caught and processed by all of the various student groups present with guidance from AGFD personnel and loaded on the trailer. These animals were successfully released north of Elgin. But after that group was secured many other groups of pronghorn were safely guided to the trap and each and every group failed to enter the critical alleyway of the trap leading to the actual capture corral and this continued on day two, thus giving negative results similar to attempts in 2012.

Department personnel are in conference about “what it is that must be modified to overcome this across the board species reaction to the trap or trap site(s)?”

That said the professionalism and persistence employed by all the Arizona Game and Fish Department personnel

present over the three days should make us all proud. They certainly earned the respect from all the volunteers, students and AAF Board members. At the risk of not recognizing the many deserving involved and committed Department employees we must give special credit and recognition to two key Kingman Regional wildlife personnel those being; Erin Butler, Regional Game Specialist and Virginia Gouldsbury District Wildlife Manager. And from the Phoenix Game Branch, Branch Chief Brian Wakeling and Big Game Supervisor Amber Munig. Without the planning, organization, coordination and patience of these four Department personnel the entire endeavor would not have been possible. We AAF Board members who participated including Tice Supplee, Al Sue, Jim McCasland and yours truly tip our hat to you all and have already signed up to assist in our collective success “next year”.

Photos by Betty Dickens



AAF members Ron Yee and Marsha Sue make a good team!



AAF Past President & Life Member Jim McCasland along with AAF Director and Life Member Al Sue, celebrating completion!



Time to round em' up!



Students from Tombstone waiting patiently for the pronghorn to arrive in Elgin

REWARD OFFERED IN PRONGHORN POACHING CASE

ARIZONA GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE FEB. 28, 2014

INFORMATION SOUGHT

Arizona Game and Fish and the Arizona Antelope Foundation are seeking information regarding the poaching of a pronghorn doe on Feb. 23 A half mile southeast of Stone Lake
Up to \$1,500 in rewards available

The animal was shot and left to waste



Operation Game Thief
(800) 352-0700
Anyone with information should reference case #14-000402



Caller identities remain confidential
www.azgfd.gov/thief

Arizona Game and Fish is seeking information regarding the poaching of a pronghorn doe in Game Management Unit 10.

Officers with Game and Fish need public assistance and Operation Game Thief is offering up to a \$750 reward for information leading to an arrest of those responsible for the crime. The Arizona Antelope Foundation is of-

fering up to \$750 upon conviction.

“An officer is investigating the incident and has recovered significant physical evidence from the scene,” said Zen Mocarski, public information officer for the Game and Fish Region 3 office in Kingman. “However, the help of the public is critical in finding those responsible.”

The doe was unlawfully shot the morning of Feb. 23 about a half mile southeast of Stone Lake in Unit 10. The animal was left to waste and there is no season for the take of pronghorn does.

If found, those responsible may face criminal charges, including knowingly take of big game wildlife during a closed season, which is a Class 1 misdemeanor and carries a maximum fine of \$2,500 and six months in jail.

After the case is adjudicated, those responsible also face a potential civil assessment by the Game and Fish Commission and possible license revocation.

“It is important to remember this is not the act of a hunter,” Mocarski stated. “Poaching is a crime. It is important for anyone with information to come forward. There’s a lot of territory for an officer to cover and the eyes and ears of the public are critically important in bringing poachers to justice.”

Anyone with information regarding this case, or any wildlife violation, should call the OGT hotline at (800) 352-0700. Web submissions can be reported via the Internet by going to www.azgfd.gov/thief. Identities will remain confidential. Anyone calling should reference case number 14-000402.

(President’s Message continued from page 3)

tions, government entities or pressures from the uninformed. It takes scientific, fact based information to justify the decisions we must make. One jaguar does not constitute a population. Unaccredited accounts of wolves in a fraction of our state does not justify populating the entire State. A pronghorn population on the brink of vanishing due to fragmentation of their habitat does! I encourage everyone to do the research and get behind the movements that have justification and fight

against those that do not.

By the time you read this, tags results will most likely have been made public. If you drew a tag, good luck and have a fair chase! If you were unlucky, get out and help on a project that will bolster our herds and afford more tags for the future!

Keep your fire lit,
Shane Stewart
President & Proud Life member



SHORT SHOTS

BANQUET UPDATE

The AAF found itself in the position of needing to postpone our fundraising banquet. Good news - we have decided to once again team up with the AZ Deer Association to hold a terrific joint event on **May 31st** at Wild Horse Pass Hotel & Casino in Chandler. The activities you've read about in this publication would not be possible without a successful fundraiser. **Please plan to attend and/or donate!** More information can be found later in this issue.

HELP SAVE RECREATIONAL SHOOTING OPPORTUNITIES IN ARIZONA

The Arizona Game and Fish Department and Tread Lightly! are hosting a Fun Shoot and Steak Dinner on **Saturday, April 12**, to raise funding to implement education/outreach and engagement strategies designed to save recreational shooting opportunities on public and private lands in Arizona.

The "Respected Access is Open Access" campaign is aimed at protecting and enhancing access and opportunities by fostering an enhanced sense of resource stewardship and responsible recreation throughout the outdoor recreation community.

You can sign up for the Fun Shoot and Steak Dinner or for the Steak Dinner Only. There will be an auction and raffle with exciting prizes. Space is limited, so pre-registration is requested. Visit the Arizona Game & Fish website for more information. www.azgfd.gov

AAF ANTELOPE HUNTER CLINIC JUNE 14TH AZ G&F HQ

By the time of publication, the draw results should be published. If you are one of the lucky recipients of a coveted pronghorn tag, you won't want to miss our annual educational clinic. We will have presentations on hunting tactics for both firearms and archery, optics discussion, field care and taxidermy, photography, and Arizona Game & Fish personnel will be on hand to discuss specific hunting units. Watch your mail and visit our website for more information.

WWW.AZANTELOPE.ORG

NEW WIRE ROLLER/QUAD/TRAILER

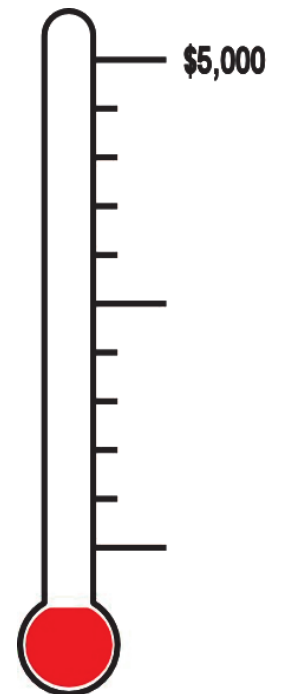
The AAF has begun a targeted fundraising campaign to raise funds for purchase of a new wire roller, a used quad to mount it to, and trailer to haul. If you've attended a fencing project recently, you have seen for yourself how valuable this equipment is to our work. The photo to the right shows similar equipment in action

Donations from our members along with 50/50 cash raffles at our habitat projects will be the primary funding source for purchasing this equipment.

Please send your donations to:
AZ Antelope Foundation
Att: Wire Roller Fund
PO Box 12590
Glendale, AZ 85318

You may also click on the DONATE button on our website at www.azantelope.org

Fundraising Goal



AZSFWC LICENSE PLATE

Don't forget to purchase your conservation license plate. When you do you will be making a contribution to Arizona's wildlife, habitat and conservation education. Grants from this fund provided a major funding source for AAF's new cook and equipment trailer as well as a video project related to our Annual Hunter Clinic.

For more information about Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation and the license plate program go to www.azsfwc.org



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LIFE MEMBERS

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mary Darling, Tucson Chad Villamor, Topock

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST LIFE MEMBER
#51 CLIFFORD NYSTROM**