



AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION, INC.

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Member - Federation
Colombophile Internationale

RECEIVED

AUG 12 2013

MAYOR'S OFFICE

August 9, 2013

Honorable Sam Kooiker
City of Rapid City
300 Six Street
Rapid City SD 57701

The Honorable Sam Kooiker

As a member of the city council for the City of Rapid City, South Dakota, you are receiving this information with the intention that the materials herein clarify the hobby of raising and racing Homing Pigeons. It is our hope that the city council will adopt an ordinance favorable to the hobby.

The enclosed booklet, *Homing Pigeons: Perception vs. Reality*, offers correct information regarding lack of disease in registered, pedigreed birds. These are not the same feral pigeons seen in parks and they do not create the same problems associated with some common birds, as they do not fly after feeding. It is practically physically impossible for the birds to defecate while flying since they do not have a full crop when exercising or flying, as food is a key motivator to get the birds to come quickly into the home loft.

Per USDA definition (9 Code of Federal Regulations, Sub-part A, 145.1), pigeons are not defined as poultry, fowl or game birds. They are not exotic birds.

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Bill Mitiu, Exec. Vice President

Jay Holder, Vice President

Steve Lawler, President Ex-Officio

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Ron Pairan, Lakes Zone

Toni Wiaderski, NE Zone

Brad Hoggan, Mountain Zone

Al Hassler, SE Zone

Additionally, our national organization has conducted studies with CDC, Cornell University, and the University of California-Davis. We have challenged flocks of pigeons and CDC has reported that pigeons are not susceptible to many viruses. Because the temperature exceeds 107 degrees and the metabolism is so rapid, homing pigeons cannot host most diseases. Therefore, they cannot shed or serve as vectors.

The hobby of raising registered, banded Homing Pigeons is one that is nearly 100 years old in this country and offers people from all walks of life wholesome backyard activity. Many children and families enjoy the hobby. Pigeon keeping also provides enjoyment for seniors in their golden years.

I hope this information provides helpful support for an ordinance that favors registered, pedigreed pigeons.

Sincerely,



Deone Roberts
Sport Development Manager

FACT SHEET



FASCINATING...

- In the mid 1800's, the **Reuters News Agency** operated a live telex service using Homing Pigeons.
- There are nearly **1 million** pigeon fliers around the world today.
- The ancient Greeks used Homing Pigeons to carry messages 5,000 years ago.
- **Homing Pigeons race from 80 to 600 miles at speeds of 40 to 60 mph** over terrain they have often never seen before.
- Homing Pigeons were used extensively as a highly reliable method of communication in military conflicts during the two World Wars and the Korean War. They **saved thousands of lives** while in military service.
- Homing Pigeons were introduced to the United States in the mid 1800's. In the 1880's, the first 500-mile race took place in this country.
- Some international races award large cash prizes. **In the United States, most races are held for good, clean family fun.**

FAMOUS FANCIERS:

Walt Disney loved pigeons so much that for many years he released a flock of white Homing Pigeons as part of the daily ceremonies at Disneyland and Disney World.

Terry Bradshaw, former Pittsburgh Steelers' Quarterback, bred pigeons.

Ray Price, country singer, enjoys breeding Homing Pigeons.

Actors **Yul Brynner** and **Roy Rogers** raised pigeons.

Pablo Picasso, who also raised Homing Pigeons, named his daughter "Paloma", Spanish for dove.

Boxing champion, **George Foreman**, maintained a loft and bred Homing Pigeons..

Actress **Joanne Woodward** raised fancy breeds of pigeons.

Maurizo Gucci is a fancier of show pigeons who is on record for paying more than \$10,000 for an American bird.

The British Royal Family has raised Homing Pigeons for centuries, and has an active racing loft yet today.

DID YOU KNOW...

- A combination of an extremely accurate internal "sunclock" and magnetic fields enable the athletes to return home.
- The ability to hear sounds 11 octaves below middle C allow the pigeons to detect **earthquakes and electrical storms.**
- The top national race, *Snowbird Classic*, awards a purse of **\$600,000.**
- The **highest priced Homing Pigeon was sold for \$225,000.**
- Homing Pigeons have pedigrees like racehorses. They are bred and trained with the same care bestowed upon their equine counterparts.

ABOUT THE "AU"

The American Racing Pigeon Union was founded in 1910 and is the largest pigeon association in the country. The AU sets race rules and provides members a code of conduct, as well as funds veterinary and scientific research to enhance the sport and assist its members.

For more information on how to join the nearly 10,000 American Racing Pigeon Union members across the United States, call 405-848-5801 or fax 405-848-5888.

Or write:

American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.
P.O. Box 18465
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73154-0465

Visit our website: www.pigeon.org

Join the Sport of Pigeon Racing Today!

Ackley World Journal

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2009

ACKLEYWORLDJOURNAL.COM

VOLUME 115, WEEK 20

\$1.00

AT A GLANCE:

Graduation activities

AGWSR High School Awards Day will be held Wednesday, May 13, at 12:30 p.m. in the high school gym. The public is invited. The faculty will provide a "senior dinner" at 6 p.m. in the Commons.

Baccalaureate service is Wednesday, May 13, at 7 p.m. in the high school gym. Lynn Arends and Pastor Diane Martin are guest speakers.

The Class of 2009 commencement exercises will be held at the AGWSR High School gym Sunday, May 17, at 2 p.m.

The graduation address will be given by Marcus Newsom, Wartburg College track coach, assistant football coach, assistant athletic director and diversity issues coordinator.

Representing the 43 graduates will be Class President Gabriel Wagner.

Garden Walk

The Ackley Chamber is once again planning a garden/pond walk Sunday, July 26, 1-4 p.m. The committee is asking that people interested in having their garden and/or pond on the tour contact the *World Journal* office, (641) 847-2592, or e-mail ladona@iafalls.com.

Homeowners are only asked to be on hand to visit with their guests, sharing information about their garden and enjoying the day. A Chamber representative will sit at each garden to take tickets and serve refreshments.

City Council to meet

Ackley City Council will meet tonight, May 13, at 7 p.m. in the council chambers in City Hall. The public is welcome.

Tractor Ride

The A-G Lions' fourth annual Sauerkraut Days Tractor Ride Safari is June 6. Tractors will meet at the Ackley bus barn 7:30-8:30 a.m. for registration and coffee. The ride will leave for the Eldora farm museum at 8:30 a.m. Registration is \$25 and includes a noon meal. Extra riders will pay for the noon meal. Contact Marvin Fritz at 847-6300. ♦

WEATHER:

THURSDAY 70 50
Mostly Sunny

FRIDAY 69 52
Sunny, Undercast

SATURDAY 66 45
Partly Sunny

SUNDAY 68 47
Mostly Sunny

MONDAY 71 51
Partly Cloudy

TUESDAY 75 52
Partly Sunny

WEDNESDAY 74 52
Sunny

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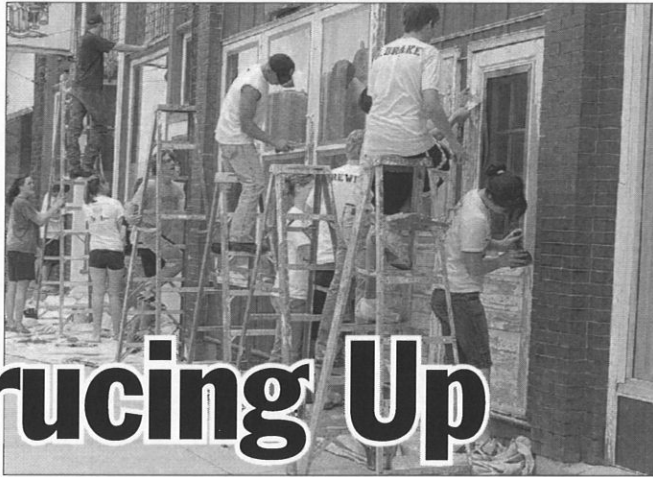
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Ackley, IA 50601
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ackleyworldjournal.com



"It would have really been a big job if we old guys would have had to do it all ourselves. They were great."

DUANE SUDELTEGTE



Sprucing Up

AGWWSR High School students and staff swarmed the streets of Ackley Friday afternoon on a mission ... to spruce up the storefronts with freshly planted flowers, wash windows and relocate Heritage Center treasures to the new Depot location.

And they would have finished their community service

project, but Mother Nature had other ideas. With about an hour and a half's work done, the drizzle started and pretty soon the skies opened up with a downpour.

Nevertheless, a lot was accomplished — storefronts were scraped (and will be painted one day this week), door frames and doors were painted, windows were washed, and the planters donated by

the Ackley Economic Development and FFA were filled with flowers (grown in the AGWSR greenhouse).

Best of all, at least according to Duane Sudtegte, Heritage Center board co-chair, the students and teachers helped empty the former Heritage Center museum above City Hall. "You could rollerskate up there now!" he joked after the chairs, tables, settees,

lamps, pump organ, boxes, buggies and all other items were carried out. "It would have really been a big job if we old guys would have had to do it all ourselves. They were great."

The project was the brainchild of an instructor/FFA teacher James Abbas as a way for students and staff to become more involved in the community in a very positive

way. Each teacher was given a group of kids to lead on certain projects.

Teacher Al Jones was given the task of overseeing the painting and scraping. "These kids were anxious to do this. They are good kids. When you have good people to work with, things go well," he said from atop a ladder as thunder boomed overhead. "We'll be back and finish up!" ♦

Come fly with me

Homing pigeons race in support of medical center

By LADONA ROELFS
EDITOR

ACKLEY—Ask someone if they have ever seen a homing pigeon race and, trust me, you'll probably get a puzzled "What?"

It won't be that way for long, though, not after word gets out that Ackley has its own certified homing pigeon racing club, the Iowa Loft-stormers (Get it ... like the Iowa Barnstormers?).

What makes it even more fun is that the group will be selling raffle tickets at Sauerkraut Days, June 5-7, for the first-ever Ackley Homing Pigeon Race as a fundraiser for the new medical center.

Organizing the club

Bill Halter, rural Ackley, retired Farmers Co-op truck driver, part-time farmhand and long-time pigeon lover, is bringing this newest activity, homing pigeon racing, to adults and kids all over the area.

Halter, who has been a lover of barn pigeons since he was a boy, had been a member of the Eastern Iowa Racing Club of Waterloo, where members race their homing pigeons against other clubs throughout the country. He enjoyed it, but decided it was just more driving time than he wanted, so he decided the best thing to do would be to start a club in Ackley.

"I just started talking to a few people about getting a group going. Teresa Perry at the Hardin County Extension really helped with things I needed to know. Before long, I had people contacting me wanting more information," Halter said. "We have people coming from Ackley, Iowa

Falls, Aredale, Dumont, Coulter and Grundy Center. Many of the adult members are parents but not all ... some just used to have pigeons and want to get back into it."

Since the first meeting in January, the club already has nine adult and 13 junior members ages 6-18. To be long, all you need is pigeons ... and not everyone does, which created somewhat of a problem.

Everybody gets some

"At the first meeting, Cody (Morton of Iowa Falls) and a kid from Coulter were the only ones with birds of their own," he said. "Everybody else was excited and anxious to get birds to train and race."

Halter's goal was to see to it that each member has at least 10 young birds of their own to enjoy and work with.

Although he's not real sure how word spread so quickly (possibly because the group is registered with the American Racing Pigeon Union), Halter has been receiving and accepting donations of young birds and supplies from all over the United States — people he knows, members of pigeon clubs in other states, complete strangers, people who saw the information online.

"A guy from Pennsylvania got word of what we were doing and that we needed supplies. He put it online, and the next day I got a letter from a man in Nebraska saying he was sending a counter-mark bander (worth \$100) that he doesn't need anymore. A man from Illinois sent counter marks," Halter said, laughing. (A counter mark is a numbered leg band for the pigeon.)

Young birds have been shipped (through the post office) from Maryland, Georgia, Oklahoma and Illinois, as well as from Pennsylvania. "This man from Pennsylvania sent eight birds, including two silver reds, saying kids like the



Bill Halter, who raises, trains and races homing pigeons, uses release crates such as this when he takes his birds to a release location for both training and racing. The pigeons will always return to their home loft, no matter where they are released.

colored birds. The pre-paid shipping was \$70! I even got a call from a guy in Washington (state) asking how he could help." One day Halter drove to Davenport to meet a man from Chicago who was giving the Loft-stormers 18 young birds from combined clubs in that area. Halter has given away 110 of his own young birds, hatched out in his loft.

His goal is to keep the cost down as much as possible for the kids. "I wanted to give them their first birds to get them started. If it's too expensive, they won't keep it up," Halter said. He explained that now that they all have birds, the only expense would be a dry shed ("as simple or as elaborate as they want") with perches, a release door and good ventilation; feed; grit and water; and maybe a little corn. "For \$3 a month, a person can easily raise 10 pigeons."

Club fees are just \$10 a year for juniors, which go to the national organization for the materials and the wide-

spread program. Adult fees are \$20.

Training and racing

At the club meetings, members learn about the birds, feeding, raising and training.

Young pigeons, called squabs, are weaned at 26-27 days, and 10 days later they are ready to begin training.

"These pigeons have never

PIGEONS page 2

Shooting for the Stars June 5

By LADONA ROELFS
EDITOR

ACKLEY—The annual American Cancer Society's Relay For Life will begin June 5 at 5 p.m. and continue through the night until 5 a.m. June 6. Teams of volunteers will be walking around the clock, increasing awareness of the disease and raising money to help find a cure.

Twenty-four teams, all from the county, have signed up and are each committed to raise at least \$50 per team member. To do this,

teams and/or individuals are canvassing neighborhoods, churches, organizations, work places, friends and family for donations and having raffles, bake sales, silent auctions and a large variety of other fundraisers. The overall Hardin County goal is \$96,000, says Tam Elerding county chair.

The 12-hour relay is not just an evening of walking or running around the Iowa Falls-Alden High School track. It is an evening of love, smiles, tears and hope.

RELAY page 2

"G.I. JOE"

"G.I. JOE" is the most outstanding military pigeon in history and is credited with saving the lives of at least 100 British allies during World War II.

The British 56th Brigade was scheduled to attack the city of Colvi Vecchia, Italy, at 10 a.m., October 18, 1943. The U.S. Air Support Command was scheduled to bomb the city to soften the entrance for the British Brigade. The Germans retreated leaving only a small rear guard and as a result the British troops entered the city with little resistance and occupied it ahead of schedule.

All attempts to cancel the bombings of the city, made by radio and other means of communication, had failed. Little "G.I. JOE" was released with the important message to cancel the bombing. He flew 20 miles back to the U.S. Air Support Command base in 20 minutes and arrived just as our planes were warming up to take off. If he had arrived a few minutes later, it might have been a different story.

Gen. Mark Clark, Commanding the U.S. Fifth Army, estimated that "G.I. JOE" saved the lives of at least 100 of our British allies.

In November 1946, "G.I. JOE" was shipped from Fort Monmouth, N.J. to London, England, where he was cited and awarded the Dickin Medal for gallantry by the Lord Mayor of London. "G.I. JOE" is the only bird or animal in the United States to receive this high award.

"G.I. JOE," a dark checker pied white flight cock, was hatched March 24, 1943, at the Pigeon Section in Algiers, Algeria, North Africa. Later he was taken to the Tunisian front, then to Bizerte, and from there to the Italian front. After World War II, "G.I. JOE" was housed in the Churchill Loft, U.S. Army's "Hall of Fame" at Ft. Monmouth, N.J., along with 24 other pigeon heroes.

In March of 1957, the remaining pigeon heroes were placed with different zoological gardens throughout the U.S.A. "G.I. JOE" was placed with the Detroit Zoological Gardens where he died June 3, 1961, at the age of 18. "G.I. JOE" was returned, mounted, and placed in the Historical Center, Meyer Hall, at Fort Monmouth, N.J.

--- Otto Meyer, U.S. Army (Retd.)

(Former Commander of the U.S. Army Pigeon Service)



"Old Sarge" Harry Lucas holding the famous G.I. Joe



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For more information, your local contact is:

Army Pigeons: Hall of Fame

Reprinted from *Racing Pigeon Review*, Jan. 1946
(War Dept. Release)
Photos by U.S. Signal Corps



"Captain Lederman"

"Captain Lederman," USA 44 SC 18957, a blue check cock, was hatched in Burma in September, 1944. His first work was in December, from a forward area on the Burma front. His first message was from a patrol operating 120 miles behind the Japanese lines. During January, February and March, 1945, "Captain Lederman" was dropped by parachute or taken by bamboo jump containers to patrols operating along or behind the enemy lines.

Each message brought back by this pigeon contained very valuable information on lap troop movements, heavy gun emplacements, etc. Four of the trips were from 175-225-375 and 320 miles. All trips were made the same day in excellent time, despite the fact that he was flying over some of the highest and most rugged mountains in Burma. Due to the information contained in messages carried by "Captain Lederman" and other Signal Corps pigeons, operations in Burma by Allied troops were materially aided.

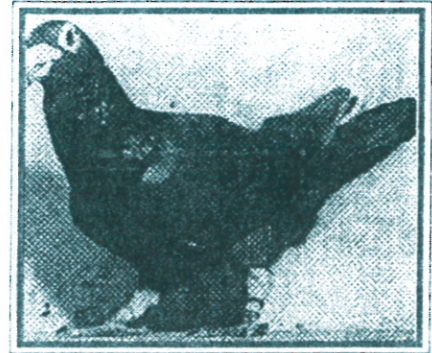
"Jungle Joe," USA 44 SC 19008, a black check cock, brought through some of the most important news carried by a pigeon during the Burma campaign. When only four months old

"Jungle Joe" was dropped by a parachute container with an airborne patrol far behind the Japanese lines. During the course of the jump the radio operator became lost from the rest of the party. A long search failed to find him and it is believed that he was captured. After the loss of the radio operator it was impossible for the patrol to come on the air. Thus, the unit had no contact with their rear headquarters.



"Jungle Joe"

"Jungle Joe" was kept confined for seven days while the patrol collected valuable information on the location of Japanese positions, troops, etc. During this period he was confined in a 14" x 4" x 4" bamboo jump container. On the eighth day "Jungle Joe" was liberated with a very "urgent" and "secret" message. In spite of the fact that he had been confined for such a long period, he covered the 225 miles in good time over some of the highest mountains in Burma. Due to the valuable information carried by this Signal Corps pigeon a large section of Burma was opened up to occupation by the Allied troops. In addition, a radio operator was flown to the location of the patrol and parachuted. Thereafter, it was possible for the patrol to keep contact with the rear headquarters thus furnishing more valuable information regarding the enemy troops.



"Blackie Halligan"

"Blackie Halligan," USA 42FTM 2615, black cock, was hatched at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. While still a very young bird he was shipped to Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, for service with the 280th Signal Pigeon Company. In June of that year "Blackie" was crated and shipped, with 1500 other birds, to a point of embarkation on the west coast. The following month saw him in Suva Bay, Fiji Islands, but only long enough for the ship to unload cargo. A week later "Blackie" landed at Noumea, New Caledonia. From the pigeon detachment he was sent to the 132nd Infantry of the American Division; from there he flew messages from outposts as far distant as 125 miles.

In November he was sent to Guadalcanal with the rest of the 132nd Infantry. This was the first island to be wrested from the Japanese. "Blackie" was stationed along the Lunga River, near the post office a block from "Tojo's Ice House" where the ruts in the roads were so deep you could easily hide a jeep in them. "Blackie" carried many messages to this location. One day he returned with a very important message giving the location of some 300 Japanese troops. He did this in spite of the fact that he was very badly wounded. When word reached General Patch, who was commanding the American Division, he made a special trip to the loft and decorated "Blackie." "Blackie" later saw action on several other islands in the Pacific. He was

Continued on next page

~AU SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY TASKFORCE~

*A committee of the American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.
Commissioned January 2004*

Veterinary Position Statement Regarding the Health Aspects of Pigeon Keeping



Approved as a resolution of the American Racing Pigeon Union
July 18, 2004

“The keeping and recreational use of pigeons, under currently accepted standards of pigeon husbandry and hygiene, is a safe activity, and poses no particular hazards to public health or safety or to the personal health or hygiene of pigeon caretakers beyond the risk posed by the keeping of any other animal. There are no zoonotic diseases specific to pigeons. For a healthy, immune-competent person, pigeon keeping in accord with current avicultural standards is a very safe activity.

Pigeons are extremely easy to keep, with very simple nutritional and husbandry requirements. They can comfortably tolerate a wide variety of environmental conditions, and adapt very readily and comfortably to a wide variety of avicultural situations and uses. Although relatively rare, the few diseases pigeons do get are easily treated with readily available medications or prevented with vaccines. Within the field of Veterinary Medicine, there is a specialty of Avian Medicine to support pigeon fanciers in keeping their birds healthy and comfortable.”

In consideration of data from the United States Communicable Disease Center and of research conducted pertaining to registered, pedigreed Homing Pigeons, we affirm that to our knowledge, the above Statement is true.

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