

The Roadrunner



Volume 17 (10)

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

Dec 1987-Jan 1988

GENERAL MEETING

MON., DEC. 14, 7:30 PM in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant in Memorial Park. BIRD IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP and planning meeting for CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS. (Note: This month's meeting falls on the 2nd Monday rather than the customary 3rd Monday.) Come join in the yearly fun of CBCs.

MON., JAN. 18, 7:30 PM in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant in Memorial Park. We all know the diverse habitats of the El Paso area support a rich avifauna. On Jan 18, you'll learn that our herpetofauna is similarly impressive. John Hanson and Bill Howe of the El Paso Herpetological Society will be introducing us to the many reptiles and amphibians found in this area. Some species will be on slides. Some will be live and in person. We hope you'll be there, too!

Also at this meeting, we'll be electing chapter officers for 1988-89.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., DEC. 7, 1987, 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at Joyce Davis', 200 N. Mesa Hills Dr. #1505 (581-9470). All members are welcome.

MON., JAN. 11, 1988, 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at Gloria Woelfel's, 615 Frontera Rd. (833-7523). All members are welcome.

FEATHER LAKE WORKDAYS

December 6

January 16

(see FL NEWS p.4)



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Joyce Davis (581-9470 h, 544-6772w) is compiler for the Hueco Tanks count slated for Dec 19. Bob Johnson (751-0125 h, 757-1876 w) will compile the El Paso count scheduled for Jan 2. The compilers will assign leaders (who enlist supporting team members) to cover given sectors of the count area--a circle 1.5 miles in diameter. For the Hueco Tanks count, the center of the circle is a peak in the Hueco Mts. 1.9 miles south of US hwy 62-180; the center for the El Paso count circle is the south end of Mt. Franklin. Leaders and their teams will fan out and spend the day counting as many birds as possible in their designated areas.

Novices and newcomers are welcome to join a team and sharpen their birding skills. All participants are asked to pay a fee which helps defray cost of printing the CBC results in AMERICAN BIRDS. This year, the fee is \$4 for the first count you take part in, \$3.50 for the second if you take part in two. On Jan 3, the day following the El Paso count, we'll have a count-down for both counts and a pot-luck dinner at the Garden Center beginning at 5:30 PM. Plan to come and enjoy good food and good company.

If you live within the EP count circle but can't get out on Jan 2, you can help by recording the birds seen in your yard. The Am. Robin or Cedar Waxwing in your yard may be the only one found that day. Also

(CBCs cont.)

record your sightings 3 days preceding and 3 days following count day; if a species isn't seen on count day, we can report the sighting as occurring during count week. Call Bob for more details if you plan to be a yard counter. Also contact the compilers if you wish to take part in the counts but are unable to attend the planning meeting Dec 14.

There is a list of neighboring CBCs on p.8 with the location, date and persons to contact if you wish to join that area's count.

FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

FEATHER LAKE/SOCORRO

SUN., DEC. 6. Meet at 2 PM, 9500 North Loop. We will check the birds at the sanctuary, then go down valley to the Socorro Sewage Ponds. Leader: Bart Rumaker (544-6432).

HUECO TANKS CBC

SAT., DEC. 19. Joyce Davis, compiler, (581-9470 h, 544-6772 w).

EL PASO CBC

SAT., JAN. 2. Bob Johnson, compiler, (751-0125 h, 757-1876 w).

BOSQUE DEL APACHE NWR, NM

SAT.-SUN., JAN. 9-10. Meet Sat at I-10 and Transmountain Rd. 7:30 AM. See thousands of Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes take to the air at sunrise on Sun. It's a sight you will always remember. Also, we should see the endangered Whooping Crane, water birds, pheasants and more. Leader: Anne Hussmann (584-4081). Call for details.

EP COUNTRY CLUB AREA

SUN., JAN. 24. Meet at 8 AM at the Crossroads Pond, Doniphan and Country Club Rd. We'll see some of our winter residents. Leader: Peggy Riede (833-4881).

FT. HANCOCK/TORNILLO AREA

SAT., FEB. 6. Meet at Feather Lake, 9500 N. Loop, at 7:30 AM. Bring lunch as we will not return until early PM. Leader: Bob Johnson (751-0125 h, 757-1876 w).

THE ROADRUNNER

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GIFT TO SANCTUARY

We gratefully acknowledge a donation to Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary from Charles and Jo Ann Black in memory of Orlena Dodson.

PAST FIELD TRIPS

Fourteen people visited the Crossroads Pond, Owen's farm and Randel's Pool on Oct 14. Forty-one species were identified including: Belted Kingfisher, Mt. Chickadees, Black Phoebe and Rufous-sided Towhee./JD/

On our proposed field trip to La Cueva in the Organ Mts. Nov 7, we found the gate locked. We then rerouted our outing to Leasburg State Park on the river above Las Cruces. The 8 members who went saw 3 mule deer and around 20 species of birds including a Belted Kingfisher and Yellow-rumped Warblers./TB/

It's a good thing the field trip to Oak Canyon in the Franklin Mts. Nov 15 was a birding and botanizing outing. Steady winds meant the plants were far easier to find than the birds. And Clark Champie's expert presence made it worth the 18 participants' while to concentrate on the plants anyway. Thanks, Clark, for an enjoyable morning./JS/

NEW EL PASO AREA BIRD LIST

A.C.T. IN EL PASO: A WILD WEEKEND

Enclosed with this newsletter is our chapter's holiday gift to you: the long-awaited 7th edition of the El Paso-area bird checklist. Almost 2 years in the making, it debuted Nov 14 at the Audubon Council of Texas meeting in El Paso.

The format, you've no doubt noticed, differs from that of previous El Paso-area checklists. The first 4 editions all used simple letter combinations to indicate a species' abundance and seasonal occurrence. The next 2 editions grew slightly more elaborate: they had columns for each season, with a bird's abundance during each season indicated by letter codes.



The new checklist completely abandons letter codes and instead uses a bar-graph format to display each species' status throughout the year. If you aren't familiar with this format, it may seem daunting at first. But once you get used to it, you should actually find it easier to use. And several orders of magnitude more informative.

Though it allows a great increase in information content, a bar-graph format requires extensive, detailed knowledge of an area's birds before it can be employed effectively. I want to thank my fellow compilers -- Bettie Roberts, Jeff Donaldson and Barry Zimmer -- for providing that knowledge. The checklist is a distillation of their wealth of experience with El Paso-area birds. It is also the product of long, long hours they spent making the list as accurate and informative as possible.

Finally, sincere thanks are due El Paso Natural Gas Company (EPNG), without whom the checklist would not have been possible. EPNG contracted for the typesetting and cover artwork, and its print shop did the printing. We're extremely pleased with the results and hope you are, too. Thanks, EPNG! /John Sproul/

Members from 1 New Mexico and 13 Texas Audubon chapters gathered in El Paso Nov 13-15 for the Fall 1987 Meeting of the Audubon Council of Texas (ACT). It was a weekend with no dull moments.

ACT met all day Nov 14 at the Garden Center in Memorial Park. The National Audubon Society's (NAS's) recent reorganization, fund raising for NAS's Southwest Regional Office, possible approaches for future selection of the Southwest Region's NAS board candidate and the direction of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.'s nongame and endangered species program all were discussed. ACT re-elected David Carson of Bastrop County Audubon its president, re-affirmed that completion of the Lower Rio Grande Natl. Wildlife Refuge is its top conservation priority and accepted the invitation of Frontera Audubon to meet next in the lower Rio Grande Valley May 6-8, 1988.

The weekend was a resounding success. Of course, it didn't just happen. A lot of people put in a lot of work behind the scenes to make things run smoothly. There was lodging to furnish, food to prepare, publicity to generate, transportation to provide, field trips to lead. Folks helping with one or more of these activities included Helen Barto, Ginny and Tom Baker, Betty and John Bowen, Jeannette Cole, Joyce Davis, Sarah Dodds, Robert Doss, Jane Fowler, Bob Johnson, Larry Jordan, Jo Nagel, Betty Pagel, Peggy Riede, Bart Rumaker, Ann Schultis and Madeline Vallari.

Hearty thanks to all, and also to the many additional chapter members who offered to help if needed. Special thanks go to Cleo Sims for taking care of the Garden Center during our full day there Saturday, to Jim Koschmann for an excellent presentation on the Thick-billed Parrot Saturday evening and to Clark Champie for leading the Franklin Mts. field trip Sunday morning.

Thanks are also due Black's Nursery, Blue Bell Inc., Commercial Sales, El

Paso Chile Co., Hussmann Ventures, Mountain Pass Canning, Payless Feed and Supplies, and Tony Lama for their donations of door prizes and souvenirs.

And extra-special thanks go to Nancy Wilson and Anne Hussmann for their roles in planning, organizing and carrying out the weekend's events. Nancy and Anne pulled out all the stops. Who else could come up with a 6-foot-tall papier-mache rooster to serve as unofficial meeting mascot? The contributions of many people made the meeting a success. The contributions of these 2 remarkable ladies made it truly a weekend to remember. /John Sproul/

EDUCATION NOTES

1987 SCHOLARSHIP: Do you live in Trans-Pecos Texas? Are you a teacher, scout leader, zoo docent, museum docent or otherwise active as an educator, or are you pursuing a career in education? Then you're invited to apply for an EP/TPAS scholarship to attend an Audubon Ecology Camp in 1988. Do you know someone else you think would be a good candidate? Let them know about our scholarship program, too, and encourage them to apply. The deadline for applications is March 1. For an application form, contact Jeanne French, 10925-B Sagebrush, El Paso, TX 79936 (915/592-1660) or John Sproul, 601 W. Yandell #25, El Paso, TX 79902 (915/541-6126).

LIBRARY EXHIBIT: Throughout November, an Audubon exhibit on preserving tropical rainforests graced the entrance to the Memorial Park branch library in El Paso. Thanks go to our ace exhibit-preparer Jeannette Cole for creating this attractive and educational display. /John Sproul/

FEATHER LAKE NEWS

Participants in the November workday at our Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary (9500 N. Loop Rd., 0.3 mi. n.w. of Americas Ave. in El Paso's lower valley) were Jeannette Cole, Joyce Davis, Pam Eckard, Jane Fowler, Anne Hussmann, Bob Johnson, Jo Nagel, Evan Nagel, John

Sproul and Nancy Wilson. Thank you, all. Upcoming work sessions take place Sun., Dec. 6 and Sat., Jan. 16. Come anytime between 8 AM and noon and lend a hand.

Feather Lake is currently open Sunday afternoons (3:30 PM to dusk), plus the first and third Saturday mornings (8 to 11 AM) each month. It will be closed for the Christmas and New Year's weekends, though. The upcoming schedule:

Sat., Dec 5 (AM)	Sun., Jan 10 (PM)
Sun., Dec 6 (PM)	Sat., Jan 16 (AM)
Sun., Dec 13 (PM)	Sun., Jan 17 (PM)
Sat., Dec 19 (AM)	Sun., Jan 24 (PM)
Sun., Dec 20 (PM)	Sun., Jan 31 (PM)

We can always use more volunteers to help greet visitors, answer their questions and look after the sanctuary during the hours it is open. If you can help, please contact Jeannette Cole (565-1957).

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

Want to help wildlife-rehabilitation efforts in the El Paso area? Our local rehabilitators have their hands full caring for injured critters. When they get a report of an injured animal found 'way across the county, they can't afford to drop everything and spend several hours traveling to pick the animal up. Would you be willing to help occasionally as a volunteer transporter of injured wildlife? Your assistance would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Helen Bigelow (882-2910) if you are interested.



OBSERVATIONS

October 19 - November 18

This month a symbol will follow the leader's initials to distinguish sightings: an "*" indicates a regular field trip, a "+" indicates a field trip with ACT members.

CP - Crossroads Pond
 EPCC - El Paso Country Club
 FL - Feather Lake
 H - Horizon City
 HT - Hueco Tanks
 MP - Memorial Park
 OC - Oak Canyon
 OW - Owen's farm
 RP - Randel's Pool

LOONS - FALCONS

Feather Lake was the location of many sightings: a Great Egret 11/8 (JS), 11/14 (JD+), Cattle Egret 11/14 (JD+), several Black-crowned Night-Herons 10/24, 10/31, 11/8 (JS), 11/14 (JD+), 2 Green-backed Herons 10/24, 11/8 (JS), 11/14 (JD+), imm. Snow Goose 11/8 (JS), 11/14 (JD+). Three Wood Ducks flew over RP 10/25 (JD). A female Common Goldeneye and a female Hooded Merganser were seen at CP 11/18(DT). A Cooper's Hawk was seen at OW 10/18 (PR). A Prairie Falcon was spotted at OW 10/24 (JS,JD) and at MBank downtown in early Nov (LJ).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

Lesser Yellowlegs were seen at FL 10/31 (JS), 11/14 (JD+). A Ringed Turtle-Dove was seen in a n.e. El Paso yard 10/24 (RW). A Common Ground-Dove was found at OW 10/24 (JS,JD). A female Ruddy Ground-Dove was observed at OW 10/24 (JS,JD) and a male 11/14 (LJ). A Barn Owl was spotted at CP 11/3 (BJ). A Burrowing Owl was seen n. of Montana 11/9 (JF). A Great Horned Owl was found at OW 10/18 (PR). A Western Screech-Owl was heard at RP 10/25 (JD*). An imm. Rufous Hummingbird was seen in an e. El Paso yard 10/21 (BR). Two hummingbirds (possible Anna's) were still coming into a Mt. Park yard 11/18 (JB). Two Downy Woodpeckers were seen on the Ft. Bliss golf course 11/2, 11/6 (EG).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A Black Phoebe was found at RP 10/25 (JD*). Scrub Jays were reported from several locations: UTEP 10/24 (AS), OW 10/25 (JD*), HT 11/15(TB+), Mt. Park 11/18 (JB). Mt. Chickadees were observed at various places: upper valley yard 10/25 (TB), RP 10/25 (JD*), OC 11/7 (JS), HT 11/15 (TB+). Red-breasted Nuthatches were found in H 10/22 (MG), MP 11/14 (JN+). A White-breasted Nuthatch was also seen in MP 11/14 (JN+). Brown Creepers were spotted at H 10/22 (A&MG), HT 11/15 (TB+). Cedar Waxwings were found at HT 11/15 (TB+). A Phainopepla was seen at EPCC 10/29 (JD). White-throated Swifts are still flitting around the MBank (LJ) and HT 11/15 (TB+).

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

A late Orange-crowned Warbler was spotted at OW 10/24 (JS). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen at FL 10/24(JS). Two Scott's Orioles were seen at OW 10/24 (JS,JD), 10/25 (JD*). A Rufous-sided Towhee was found at RP 10/25 (JD*), OC 11/7 (JS). Black-chinned Sparrows were seen in OC 11/7 (JS) and 11/15 (JS+). Lark Sparrows were reported at OW 10/24 (JS), 10/25 (JD*). Vesper Sparrows were also seen at OW 10/24 (JS,JD), 10/25 (JD*). A flock of Red Crossbills was found in MP 11/14 (JN+). Lesser Goldfinches were observed in OC 11/7 (JS).

Exotics

A lone Green Parakeet was seen flying near RP 10/25 (JD).

OBSERVERS: Tom Baker, Anne Bowman, Janet Brockmoller, Joyce Davis, Jeanne French, Madeline & Al Gavit, Ed Gilboe, Bob Johnson, Larry Jordan, Jo Nagel, Peggy Riede, Betty Roberts, Ann Schultis, John Sproul, Dennis Taylor, Ray Waite.
 /Joyce Davis, Observations Editor/
 (581-9470 h, 544-6772 w)



We wish you a Merry Christmas

ELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee is seeking your nominees for the positions of president-elect, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and 3 elected directors for the Jan election. Please call in your suggestions to Helen Barto (755-4744), Betty Bowen (584-6750) or Jane Fowler (598-2448).

T-SHIRTS

As a fund-raising activity, we will be selling t-shirts to members of the Trans-Pecos chapter and other interested groups. We need a good design and invite you to submit either a design or the idea for a design to Larry Jordan (833-5969, 732 Brisa del Mar, 79912).

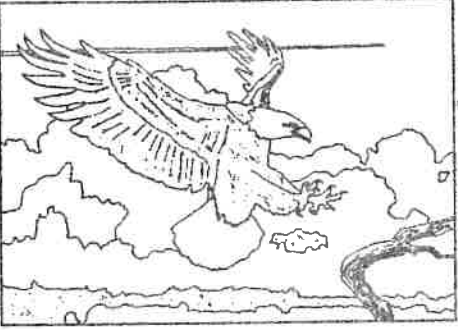
**Audubon Adventures Grows
By Leaps and Bounds,
New Education Networks Expand**

As of October of this school year, *Audubon Adventures* reached a high-water mark in enrollment, with more than 6,000 youth clubs signed up. More than 200,000 students are expected to participate in the program within the current school year.

At the same time, two newer education initiatives are gaining momentum. An inner-city network is growing in New York City and in major urban areas of New Jersey and Connecticut. Inner-city teachers of grades 3 through 6 have been participating in open-space workshops led by Audubon educators. The workshops are being directed at key teachers—those in charge of curriculum or who teach other teachers. Audubon's approach is to integrate environmental education and natural history with language, math, and other skills. Eventually, this program will expand to other regions of the country.

Also shaping up is a major network of native American reservation schools. Twenty-four tribal schools and more than a thousand Indian children are already enrolled in the *Audubon Adventures* program for the current school year. Plans for building this network include preparing materials specifically tailored to native American children.



Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.

1987 Nongame Stamp \$5.00

YES, I want to help support the nongame wildlife and endangered species programs of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Please send me:

	Qty.	Each	Total
1987 Nongame Stamp		\$5	
1986 Nongame Stamp		\$5	

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RUMMAGE SALE A SUCCESS

Our chapter deposited almost \$630 in the bank thanks to all the people who donated time, rummage or both to this year's sale. Those hauling and selling items were Bob Johnson, Larry Jordan, Anne Hussmann, Nancy Wilson, John Sproul, Tom & Ginny Baker, Bart Rumaker, Jane Fowler, Sid Shepperd, Joe Guinn, Peggy Riede, Jo Nagel and Jeannette Cole. Our thanks to Larry, Ways & Means Chair, for organizing and coordinating the sale.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

EPTPAS wishes to extend a warm welcome to new members: Cris Ragan Burns, Mrs. B. Cialone, Miss K. Gales, Steve Jameson, Ward L. Koehler, Maj. Ron Miller, Ben M. Zarate. Transferring into the chapter are Ola V. Olsen, Jeffery M. Sellek and James Zabriskie.

AMERICA'S RAIN FOREST GOES TO PULP

Still largely wild and pristine, North America's last temperate rain forest blankets the rugged coastline of Alaska's southeastern panhandle. Incorporated into the 17-million acre Tongass National Forest, spruce and hemlock often 800 years old shelter an area of incredibly abundant wildlife and unparalleled scenery.

Despite these rare qualities, current federal law and Forest Service contracts with two southeast Alaska pulp mills mean the continuing destruction of hundreds of thousands of acres of virgin timber. Ironically, American taxpayers fund the chainsawing. Because of the terms of their 50-year contracts, stumpage rates paid by the mills are only a fraction of the timber's value. In addition, the federal government annually spends around \$50 million to build logging roads and prepare sales for the two mills, one of which is wholly Japanese-owned.

In May hearings, Audubon vice-president Brock Evans called upon Congress to support legislation, the Tongass Timber Reform Act, that would eliminate the subsidy and 4.5 billion board feet per decade cutting goal established under the Lands Act in 1980. The timber program resulting from these unusual provisions, according to Evans, destroys crucial habitat for a range of wildlife including grizzly bear, Sitka black-tailed deer, and five species of salmon. In addition, the thousands of acres of clearcuts and hundreds of miles of logging roads adversely affect the region's healthier resource industries -- commercial fishing and tourism.

Despite these devastating environmental consequences, Evans noted that the government has spent over \$287 million on the Tongass timber program since 1982. In return, the Forest Service has collected only \$32 million in timber receipts. Because of the combined fiscal and environmental loss, Evans asked Congress to cancel the Forest Service's unprecedented 50-year contracts with the two mills and to consider adding several prime scenic and wildlife areas to existing wilderness.

"Southeast Alaska is probably the least known part of that magnificent state, and yet, in the opinion of many--certainly myself--it is probably the most beautiful," Evans said. "It is clear that the economic future of southeast Alaska lies not in heavily subsidized timber operations which continue to lose money and jobs. The future rather is in tourism and the fishing industry, and a timber industry geared to a local, not a world, economy."

About half of the largest, oldest trees still stand on the Tongass. Virtually none of them are protected in wilderness. Your help is needed to ensure that some are protected for future generations. Please write your Representative and Senators and urge them to:

- 1) cosponsor the Tongass Timber Reform Act (H.R. 1516 in the House, S. 708 in the Senate); and
- 2) support amendments that would terminate the 50-year contracts and incorporate critical areas of old-growth into existing Tongass wilderness.

Write to:

Representative _____
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator _____
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

For more information contact:

Chris Finch, Southeast Alaska Conservation Council,
801 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, #301,
Washington, D.C., 20003
(202) 547-0141



NEW NWR ENTRANCE FEES

Audubon Specials Available on Tape

Chapter members may now buy National Audubon Society Television Specials on videocassettes for educational purposes. These hour-long programs can be used at special events, and they make a great addition to your local *Audubon Adventures* classroom library.

The available programs are: *Galapagos: My Fragile World*, *The Mysterious Black-footed Ferret*, *Condor, Ducks Under Siege*, *Common Ground: Farming and Wildlife*, and *On the Edge of Extinction: Panthers and Cheetahs*. The one-half-inch VHS cassettes are \$30 each (four for \$100), and the three-quarter-inch tapes are \$50 each. Contact WETA/TV, Education Activities, Box 2626, Washington, D.C. 20013. Or call toll free: (800) 445-1964.

Produced by National Audubon Society, Turner Broadcasting System, and WETA, these shows offer dramatic and exclusive scenes of the wonders and beauty of nature, including some of the world's rarest creatures. The specials stress the importance of conserving our natural heritage and protecting our wildlife and environment.

The Emergency Wetlands Resources Act that Congress passed in 1986 included a variety of provisions for increasing federal wetland-protection efforts. Under one of them, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is allowed to charge entrance fees at certain wildlife refuges, and Bosque del Apache is one of them. The fees may differ slightly among the refuges but will be no more than \$3 per person or \$7.50 per noncommercial vehicle. (At the Bosque, fees are \$2 per vehicle per day.) Thirty percent of the fee collected will pay for refuge operation and maintenance; the other 70 percent will go into the Migratory Bird Conservation Account for wetland acquisition. Persons with golden age or golden eagle passports, or duck stamps, don't have to pay the entry fee.

OTHER CBCs SLATED

	Location	Contact	
Dec 17	Alpine, Tx	John Schmidt	(915) 837-2983
Dec 19	Davis Mts, Tx	Pansy Espy	(915) 426-3999
	Roswell, NM	Shirley Brown	(505) 623-2134
		Sherry Bixler	(505) 622-0597
	Las Cruces, NM	Eleanor Wootten	(505) 522-8068
	Carlsbad, NM	Steve West	(505) 885-1153
Dec 20	Balmorhea, Tx	Frances Williams	(915) 686-9632
	La Luz, NM	Robert Jenness	(505) 437-3901
	Loving, NM	Steve West	(505) 885-1153
Dec 28	Peloncillo Mts, NM	Robert Scholes	(505) 557-2330
Dec 29	Ruidosa, Tx	Jodie Miller	(915) 467-2651
Jan 2	Guadalupe Mts, NM	Steve West	(505) 885-1153
Jan 3	Caballo, NM	Barry Zimmer	(915) 821-6737



Season's Greetings

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