

Some memories of the Thursday Birders from Walter and Allene Kleweno

Submitted by Allene Kleweno

We joined the Thursday Birders on January 10, 1991 on an outing to the Sandia Heights. Birders on that day included Tami Bulow, Marge Cromer, Howard Kimbrough, Helen and Joe Nai, and Cindy Harris.

Among other birders that we met on subsequent trips were Mary Hewett, Murray Honeycutt, Sally Burke, Sei Tokuda, Neil and Jean Dilly, Les Hawkins, Mary Lou Arthur, Sylvia Fee, Lannois Neely, Gary and Karen Boettcher, Dottie Bliss, and Bonnie Long.

Locations that we visited included Chavez State Park in Belen (which no longer is a state park), the bosque in Corrales, Isleta Marsh, the Manzano Mountains, Bosque del Apache, Capulin Springs, Tunnel Spring, the Rio Grande Nature Center, Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge, Water Canyon, Embudito Canyon, and Embudo Canyon.

Once a year, long-time birder Joan Phillips invited the Thursday Birders to her home at Shady Lakes. After birding the beautiful grounds with its stately trees and ponds with water lilies, we would join her in her home for goodies and coffee, which always was served in fine china cups. Every December, Marge Cromer and her husband Don hosted us with a lunch featuring their signature chili.



Allene Kleweno on a Thursday Birder tree-decorating outing in November 2001.

Photo by Walter Kleweno.

One time we arranged for a Thursday morning visit to the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science to view its bird skin collection. Afterwards, we hosted lunch at our home for the group. Another time when it was our turn to plan an outing, we made arrangements to bird the beautiful grounds at Los Poblanos.

One outing to the Sandia Mountains involved an interaction with the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department. Dottie Bliss and her husband were stopped by the sheriff because they drove a "hippy-looking" van and the sheriff was on the lookout for an older couple who drove such a van and who had been breaking into homes in the east mountains. Fortunately, Dottie could explain that they were with a bunch of birders and they were able to join the group.

A very special memory—for the Thursday following Thanksgiving—is when Walter and I planned to decorate trees for the birds at the Tijeras Ranger

Station or trees along old south Highway 14 in the Manzano Mountains. These tree-decorating outings often were followed by a pot-luck lunch at the home of Gary and Karen Boettcher.

Reminiscing about the Thursday Birders brings back memories of good times.