

## Full-Time Job In Raptor Project

By COLIN GUSTAFSON  
GREENWICH TIME

GREENWICH, Conn. (AP) – For Brian Bielfelt, a typical “day at the office” means spending eight hours in a lush backcountry meadow staring up at the sky.

A 25-year-old biology graduate from Florida, Bielfelt toils five days a week as Audubon Greenwich’s “hawk-watcher,” a three-month position in which he scans the horizon for migratory birds of prey, from hawks to eagles, falcons to vultures, part of a regional effort to monitor the health of Northeastern raptor populations.

“This is my office,” he said, motioning to the verdant trees lining the sanctuary at the Audubon Center of Greenwich on Riversville Road. “People take time off to do what I call a job: Observing nature.”

For three years, Bielfelt has spent every workday between late August and late November documenting a variety of raptors migrating south over the Audubon Center’s Quaker Ridge to escape the cold northern weather and access larger food supplies in warmer climates.

Since his observation began on Aug. 20, Bielfelt said he has documented more than 23,000 raptors, which, at roughly the halfway point in the season, is already higher than last year’s overall tally of about 20,000.

That said, the frequency of sightings on a daily basis can fluctuate widely depending on weather, wind direction and migratory habits of various species.

By mid-afternoon on Oct. 9, for instance, Bielfelt and a group of recreational birders had spotted only 22 raptors. Compare that to Sept. 18, when hawk-watchers spotted more than 13,000 broad-winged hawks in a single windy day.

According to Bielfelt’s latest count, the most abundant type of raptor flying over the ridge this season has been the broad-winged hawk, which has been spotted 18,701 times. Trailing in distant second and third places are the sharp-shinned hawk, with 2,285 sightings, and the osprey, with 667. There have also been more than 300 sightings of the turkey vulture and the American kestrel falcon.

Spotting and identifying these various species can be a challenge.

Soaring at more than 3,000 feet, many raptors appear as little more than black specks on a vast blue expanse, and when flying at a distance of three miles away or more, can be difficult to spot even with binoculars, Bielfelt said.

To distinguish the various species, he relies – not on feather coloration, as many backyard birders do – but on shape, size and behavior.

For instance, while both the bald eagle and the osprey share a similar black-and-white feather coat, eagles typically cut a flat frame by flying with their wings fully extended, while osprey resemble the letter “M,” because of the crook in their wings.

And while both eagles and osprey soar at high altitudes, another species, the Merlin falcon, flies “low and fast,” often dive-bombing for prey on the ground as it migrates south.

“Merlins are like the Porsche Carreras of the falcon world,” Bielfelt said. “They flap their wings so powerfully and move so quickly, they can swoop down and fly over the trees before anybody gets a good look.”

To document these flights, Bielfelt records bird sightings and weather patterns on a clipboard throughout the day. At dusk, he retreats indoors to transcribe his notes onto a Web site, www.hawkcount.org, which collects similar data on bird-watching spots across the country.

The site’s information allows wildlife biologists worldwide to document changes in regional bird populations and migration patterns over several years, often yielding insights into the health of a particular species or the conditions of a habitat, Audubon Greenwich Director Karen Dixon said.

Still, birding isn’t just for the benefit of scientists, but local leisure seekers, as well, Bielfelt points out.

“It’s an activity that’s accessible to pretty much everyone. We have people coming out to the center every day – students on college break, retired firefighters, people on their lunch break,” he said, adding that some die-hard birders from the area have called in “sick” for several workdays during peak season to spend time at the ridge. “They get ... what we call ‘hawk fever.’”

Backcountry resident Allison O’Toole, 32, who was one of about a half-dozen people with their eyes to the sky at Quaker Ridge on a recent Thursday, said birding with Bielfelt had given her “more of an appreciation of nature.”

“You never know what’s going to happen when you’re out here watching,” she said.

## FROM DAYS GONE BY

### 20 Years Ago

From The Files Of October 27, 1988

**’88** Pennsylvania voters will find much more than a presidential contest when they head to the polls on November 8. Democrat Michael Dukakis and Republican George Bush have most of the attention in their race for the White House. Five third-party candidates are vying for votes for president. They are Sen. Eugene McCarthy, Ron Paul, Lenora Fulania, David Duke and Edward Winn.

Jim and Jean Souders and Grant and Evelyn Souders of McConnellsburg spent a very enjoyable past weekend sight-seeing the beautiful fall foliage of the Great Smokey Mountains. They also attended the annual clogging contest at Maggie Valley, N.C.

Troy Buterbaugh earned his first-degree black belt on September 20 at McConnellsburg Cobra Karate School.

Mrs. Maxine Barton of Crystal Spring and Ray A. Smith of Harrisonville are proud to announce the engagement of their daughter, Lori Rae Smith, to Mark Wayne McCullough, son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin McCullough of Monaca.

Mr. and Mrs. George Davidheiser of Pottstown wish to announce the birth of their first child, Lauren Michele, October 13. Mrs. Davidheiser is the former Julie Parsons.

Specials at the IGA: roasting chickens, 89 cents lb.; gingerbread, 59 cents; cucumbers, 4 for \$1; bananas, 29 cents lb.

Marriage licenses: Richard Eckels II, Fort Loudon, and Shawn Bair, Spring Run; Barry Mellott, Hustontown, and Monica Knepper, Hustontown.

Deaths: Earl Waltz Jr., Needmore; Alfred Keebaugh, McConnellsburg; Leroy Golden, Hancock; Guy Truax, Warfordsburg; Wallace Locke, Shade Gap; Richard Bradnick Sr., Fayetteville; Clair C. Wible, Three Springs; Betty Kerlin, St. Thomas; Betty Bard, Orbisonia.

### 30 Years Ago

From The Files Of October 19, 1978

**’78** A Hustontown area man escaped with minor injuries in a one-car accident on Saturday at Cove Gap in which a Mercersburg woman was killed.

Mark Seville of Hustontown was a passenger in a car driven by Nathan Barthalow, 29, of Mercersburg, which skidded on the rain-slicked highway and crashed into a stone wall while going east on Route 16. Barthalow and another passenger, Annabelle Harnish, 34, also of Mercersburg, were thrown from the vehicle after it struck the wall, then continued across the road into a tree with Seville still in it. All three passengers were taken to Fulton County Medical Center, where Harnish was pronounced dead on arrival and Barthalow was admitted in fair condition. Seville was treated and released.

The Waynesboro Knitting Co. became the new owners of the old Sagner Building on Lincoln Way West at a meeting last Thursday. The target date for takeover has been set for February 3, 1979.

A student pilot walked away unhurt from his Cessna 150 Monday after making a forced landing on a deserted McConnellsburg High School soccer field. Reyes Diaz, 37, Silver Spring, Md., was on the second leg of a cross-country training flight when he lost radio contact with a fellow flier in another plane during a severe rain and snowstorm over Tuscarora Mountain. Diaz said he was unable to determine his location and circled around McConnellsburg for about an hour Monday before his dwindling fuel supply forced him to start looking for an emergency landing site.

Specials at the IGA: bananas, 19 cents lb.; Jiffy cake mix, 4 for \$1; Bounty towels, 58 cents; jumbo roll; Tide, \$4.39, 10 lbs.

Deaths: Mrs. Mary S. Hourold, Paris, Ill.; Ronald Allan Cordell, Greencastle Annabelle Harnish, Mercersburg; John Betts, Sunbury; Anna Furlong Baker, Columbus, Ohio; Matthew R. Baker, Shippensburg; John M. Kendall, McConnellsburg; Ephriam Everts, McConnellsburg; Mrs. Martha Locke Hooper, Chambersburg.

Births at the Medical Center: a son to Mr. and Mrs. Shannon Barton of Hustontown on October 5; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Lynch of Hustontown on October 7; a son to Mr. and Mrs. David Stotler of Hancock on October 7; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Bloomfield of Chambersburg on October 9; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Roger S. McDaid of Hustontown on October 11.

### 40 Years Ago

From The Files Of October 31, 1968

**’68** On Sunday, October 27, Lisa MacDonald, Lynn MacDonald and Carolyn Walker received the God and Country Award at the regular service in the McConnellsburg United Presbyterian Church. Although the program usually requires a year to complete, Lisa, Lynn and Carolyn, as a group, were able to fulfill the conditions for receiving the award in nine months.

Mrs. Helen Ruth Kaylor, 32, and her 9-year-old daughter, Brenda Kaylor, of Shade Gap, were killed on Friday in a three-car crash which occurred on Route 30, two miles west of St. Thomas. Her husband, Samuel, 35, and another daughter, Wava Kaylor, 12, were seriously injured. The small foreign car in which they were travelling was demolished.

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Brant of Harrisonville quietly celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Edward Vensel in Bedford on October 20.

Recent births at the Medical Center: a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Ray Seville of McConnellsburg on October 21; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Mellott of Needmore on October 22; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Keefer of Mercersburg on October 25.

Men in service: Cpl. Thomas Hollenshead, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Hollenshead of Harrisonville, who recently returned from Vietnam, is now stationed at Cherry Point, N.C. He is assigned to the Organic Supply Section as a freight operation man.

Specials at the IGA: pancake mix, 29 cents, 2-lb. box; Heinz ketchup, 23 cents; sauerkraut, 19 cents; Carnation evaporated milk, 15 cents.

A busload of local people left the courthouse square on Monday for Pittsburgh to attend the Nixon Rally in the Civic Arena in that city. The chartered bus trip was sponsored by the Fulton County Republican Committee on a “first-come, first-served” basis.

Mrs. John Greathead accompanied fellow publisher Paul Chalfant of the Waynesboro Record-Herald and his managing editor, Robert Baugher, to Pittsburgh on Thursday to attend the annual convention of the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers’ Association, held at the Pittsburgh Hilton from Thursday to Saturday.

Approximately 150 people attended the dedication of the new Pennsylvania State Police substation for Fulton County last Tuesday, with more than 100 others visiting the barracks during the afternoon and evening to inspect the new quarters.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Dean Brant of McConnellsburg announce the engagement of their daughter, Helen, to Richard Lyle Duf-

### MEMORY JOGGER



This week’s Memory Jogger, submitted by Robert Keefer of Big Cove Tannery, pictures the 1938 Ford race car he built and owned. The car was driven by Jim Chestnut and was raced at Hustontown, Saxton and Huntingdon speedways and held the speed record at Hustontown with several wins and trophies.

fey, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Lyle Duffey of McConnellsburg.

Deaths: Ira E. Douglas, Hagerstown; James S. Garland Sr., Hancock; Della Helsel, Huntingdon; Dora E. McGowan, Burnt Cabins.

### 50 Years Ago

From The Files Of October 30, 1958

**’58** Friends here of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Luparello of Fredrick, Md., were sorry to learn of the death of their infant son, Thomas J., on Monday.

A total of 174 loyal Republicans gathered at the firehall last Friday evening for the annual GOP banquet and rally.

Oscar Keefer, building contractor, has been awarded the contract to build a new post office building in McConnellsburg. It will be located across the street from the firehall and will remain the property of Mr. Keefer, but will be leased by the post office department.

Despite all its previous surgical work, two “firsts” were performed at the Medical Center last week. The first was a thyroidectomy (removal of a goiter); the second was a delicate three-hour female operation. The operations were performed by a Chambersburg surgeon who is a member of the hospital’s consultant staff.

Doris Duvall of Crystal Spring won a national award at the Chambersburg School of Business last week for typewriting at the rate of 39.3 words per minutes.

Squire U. Frank English, 52, Huntingdon, is a patient in the hospital there for treatment of sciatic rheumatism. A retired state police sergeant, he was formerly stationed at the McConnellsburg substation.

John C. Baumgardner, son of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Baumgardner of Cambridge Springs, was killed in a traffic accident in Erie County last Wednesday. The elder Mr. Baumgardner was formerly a game protector in Fulton County and is now superintendent of the state’s Western Game Farm.

Births at the Medical Center: a son to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Fischer of Crystal Spring on October 22; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Foreman of Breezewood on October 24; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. George R. Rohrer of McConnellsburg on October 24; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Buterbaugh of McConnellsburg on October 25; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Chester McQuait of McConnellsburg on October 26; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Rohm of Amaranth on October 26; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hann of Needmore on October 26.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bivens, whose golden wedding anniversary fell on October 22, celebrated the occasion at the firehall on October 19.

Death: George Alexander Buterbaugh of McConnellsburg.

### 60 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 4, 1948

**’48** Births: a son to Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Lane of McConnellsburg on October 16; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Bivens of Needmore on October 17; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Ray Souders of Webster Mills on October 17; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Keebaugh of McConnellsburg on October 19; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Scott Buterbaugh of McConnellsburg on October 22; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Wilds of Fort Littleton on October 25; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Loyd Seville of Cito on October 26.

In one of the greatest surprises in the history of presidential elections, Harry S. Truman was returned to the White House on Tuesday.

Miss Greta Truax, manager of the local Pen-Mar Grocery Store, has purchased the Seibert Young Store at Wells Tannery which she will open on November 11. Manager of the local Pen-Mar for 13 years, she will continue in that capacity until the first of the year when Don McQuade will take over those duties.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hoch of Mercersburg announce the birth of a son on October 28.

Frank A. Schenck, 33, of Wells Tannery, was seriously wounded on Monday, the opening day of the small game season. Shot by another hunter, his right arm was so badly shattered that surgeons at Huntingdon Hospital amputated the limb just above the elbow.

Funds collected to date for the new Fulton County Medical Center now stand at \$60,400.

### 70 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 3, 1938

**’38** A wedding trip for McConnellsburg people was spoiled on Thursday when a Mississippi driver smashed into their car on Tuscarora Mountain, injuring two of the party. Miss Elizabeth Lodge, who was riding in a car driven by her fiancé, James Simon of Hopewell, suffered possible fractured ribs and her mother, Mrs. Sadie Lodge, suffered a cut on the left arm. The local

group was en route to Harrisburg for the wedding party. The driver of the other car was arrested for reckless driving and paid a fine and costs.

Brinton McClain of Waterfall suffered a broken leg on Saturday while attempting to crank a tractor. Young McClain, a senior at Hustontown High School and son of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse B. McClain, is now confined to Everett Hospital.

A surprise party was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ellis Secrist on Saturday afternoon in honor of the second birthday of their daughter, Janice.

Fred Hamil was winner of second place in the shot put and first place in the pole vault at Mercersburg Academy’s field day handicap events last Saturday. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Hamil of McConnellsburg.

Fulton countians in Everett Hospital include Calvin Mellott of Needmore for treatment of concussion and lacerations received in an automobile accident and Mrs. Alice Plessinger of Amaranth for a minor operation. Treated at the hospital dispensary were Mrs. Raymond Duval of Crystal Spring, X-ray of the neck; Robert S. Romig of Wells Tannery, incision and drainage of a finger; and Herbert Koontz of Needmore, repair of lacerations of the scalp received in an automobile accident.

In addition to the annual Halloween parade, the local firemen will sponsor a masquerade dance this year. The dance will be held in the local school auditorium on Monday evening and there will be an admission charge.

Two young Baltimore boys, 14 and 9 years of age, were taken into custody by local state police on Tuesday. The boys had run away from home and had started on a cross-country trip on “borrowed” bicycles. The boys and the bikes were all returned to Baltimore.

Among the native sons who have returned for the hunting season are Dr. Clarence Trout of Red Lion; Marshall Nace at Harrisburg and Thomas E. Sloan of York.

So far, the “News” hasn’t learned of any Fulton countians who were panicked by the “Martian war scare” on Sunday night, but hundreds of thousands elsewhere spent anxious hours Sunday night after the rocket ships were reported landing in New Jersey. This will no doubt go down in history as radio’s greatest hoax.

Death: William Wink of near Needmore.

Luther Chilcoate of Knobsville is driving a new Chevy.

Mrs. A.P. Fore and son, who had been living the past year in Ohio, have purchased the Smith property on top of the Mercersburg Mountain.

Harold Hamil of Knobsville has accepted employment with Ott Brothers of McConnellsburg.

The stork visited Mr. and Mrs. J. Bathlow of Burnt Cabins on Sunday morning, leaving a nice baby girl.

Mr. and Mrs. Ben Naugle have gone to housekeeping in the D.P. Bowman tenant house at Burnt Cabins.

### 80 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 1, 1928

**’28** Mrs. George C. Sipe returned home Friday after being a patient for four weeks in a Baltimore hospital where she underwent an operation for a goiter.

Leo Northcraft has treated himself to a new Ford roadster. Lucky turkey hunters in the Wells Tannery area so far are Levi Johnson, Sheridan Fessler and Clair and Fred Heckman.

Norman Strait of Harrisonville had the misfortune of fracturing his right arm on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Brant took dinner with Robert Brant on Sunday, helping to eat the wild turkey that Katherine killed. She killed one last year, too.

The ballots for the election on November 6 will be the largest in the state’s history. They will measure 22 by 38 inches.

Robert Strait and Susie Moore were wed October 16. Clarence Bender of McConnellsburg brought in a seven-pound turkey hen on Monday.

A surprise party was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Lynch of Laurel Ridge on October 20 in honor of Mrs. Lynch’s 38th birthday.

Mrs. George Hess of Needmore, vice chairman of the Democratic organization in Fulton County, was a McConnellsburg visitor on Saturday.

Born: a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Calvin L. Mellott of Sipes Mill.

A sumptuous dinner was served to 68 guests one day last week at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Sigel of Amaranth in honor of Mr. Sigel’s 71st birthday.

Oliver Metzler of Burnt Cabins left for Harrisburg on Monday to enter Beckley College.

A.G. Deshong has purchased 300 acres of land from the L.D. Oakman property along the Lincoln Highway and will open a filling station.

The Raker farms near the Bethlehem Church have been purchased by P.B. Foreman for \$3,000. The residence of the late John Raker in McConnellsburg has been purchased by John Stewart for \$1,250.

Dr. Beatty, state veterinarian, will start on November 5 to test all the cows in Taylor Township.