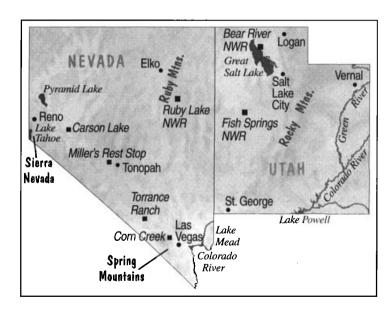
WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A male Black-throated Blue Warbler visited FC.R.P. 15-16 Dec (KPa, m. ob.). Single Common Yellowthroats were at Pueblo 10 Dec and 2 Jan (BKP) and at F.C.R.P. 15 Dec (BGo, m. ob.). A male Wilson's Warbler was also at F.C.R.P. 1-16 Dec (KPa, m. ob.). Rare in winter, a Green-tailed Towhee was at Two Buttes Res. 19 Dec and 2 Jan (DAL) and another at Parker R.P., Douglas 20 Feb (GW). A Clay-colored Sparrow, representing Colorado's 2nd winter record, wintered at Lamar (DAL, m. ob.). A Field Sparrow was at Runyon L. in Pueblo 21-28 Feb+ (RMi). Wintering Savannah Sparrows included singles at Rocky Ford 9 Dec (BKP, MJ), at Fort Lyon 27 Dec (BKP, PGa), and at Lamar 13 Jan (MJ). Golden-crowned Sparrow was at Wray 6 Jan (TL, JBF, JBn). McCown's Longspurs wintered in larger numbers than normal in se. Colorado, especially in Bent and Kiowa. An ad. male Chestnut-collared Longspur was in Kiowa 13 Jan (BKP, MJ). A Black-headed Grosbeak stayed at Naturita, Montrose 1-19 Dec (CD, BW). Yellow-headed Blackbird reports included 2 in Bent 26-27 Dec (DN, JTh), one near Barr L. 19 Jan and 18 Feb (TL), and one near Rocky Ford 21 Feb (SO). A female or imm. Purple Finch was at Naturita 2 Dec (CD, BW) and another at Lamar 17 Ian White-winged Crossbills invaded (DN). Colorado this season. They were in Las Animas, Bent 31 Dec-6 Jan (DN, m. ob.), up to 22 in Ft. Collins Jan-10 Feb (JMm, DAL, m. ob.), and 6 in Golden, Jefferson 29 Jan (DSc). In Wyoming, 6 White-wingeds were in Cheyenne 12 Jan (DF, JBF). Common Redpolls in Wyoming included 27 at Coal Mountain, Natrona 15 Dec (J&GL), one near Casper, Natrona 31 Dec (GL, BS, CEM), and an ad. male at Ft. Laramie, Goshen 12 Jan (JBF, DF). Common Redpolls also invaded s. into Colorado, with reports from Boulder, Rio Blanco, Eagle, Yuma, and Weld.

Observers (contributors in boldface): Larry Arnold (LA), Jason Beason (JBn), Jim Berry (JBy), Sherry Chapman (SC), Robert Carlson (RC), Coen Dexter (CD), Ruth Dick (RDi), Stephen J. Dinsmore (SJD), David Elwonger (DE), David C. Ely (DCE), Norm Erthal (NE), Doug Faulkner (DF), Joe B. Fontaine (JBF), Nelda Gamble (NG), Peter Gaede (PGa), Peter

Gent (PG), Bob Govcoolea (BGo), Nancy Hardcastle (NH), Thomas Heinrich (TH), Dona Hilkey (DH), Rachel Hopper (RH), Dave Jasper, Mark Janos (MJ), Dave Johnson (DJ), Tina Jones (TJ), Bill Kaempfer (BK), Joev Kellner (JK), Nick Komar (NK), Gloria Lawrence (GL), Jim & Gloria Lawrence (J&GL), David A. Leatherman (DAL), Tony Leukering (TL), Roger Linfield (RLi), Marcia Maeda (MMa), Joe Mammoser (JMm), Bill Maynard (BM), Jack Merchant (JMe), Christian E Michelson (CEM), Tina Mitchell (TM), Rich Miller (RM), SeEtta Moss (SMo), Duane Nelson (DN), Ric Olson (RO), Stan Oswald (SO), Ken Pals (KPa), Brandon K. Percival (BKP), Kim Potter (KPo), John Prather (JP), Dave Rubenstein (DR), Scott Rashid (SR), George San Miguel, Bill Schmoker (BSc), Dick Schottler (DSc), Larry Semo (LS), David Silverman (DSi), Bob South (BS), Steve Stachowiak (SSt), Kip Stransky (KSt), Hustace Scott (HS), Janeal Thompson (JTh), John Vanderpoel (JV), Glenn Walbek (GW), Christopher L. Wood (CLW), Brenda Wright (BW), (DW), John Yaeger (JY), Mark Yaeger (MY).

Great Basin



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The Great Basin is sometimes disparaged as a featureless and homogeneous "sagebrush sea." But no one would ever argue that the

weather is the same all across the Region. In southern Nevada, above-average temperatures may have benefited wintering hummingbirds. In southern Utah, though, it was colder than average, with very little precipitation. Precipitation was below average in northern Utah, too, but the northern Nevada snow pack was right about normal. This winter, several observers felt that local variation in ice cover and snow pack helped

to explain patterns of occurrence in species such as Tundra Swan, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Black Phoebe, and Northern Shrike. But this year's Common Redpoll invasion was attributable to meteorological and other phenomena outside our Region. And then there are always the flukes—totally unexpected sightings without precedent or explanation. The season's winner in this category was surely the Ruff that spent the last week of December at the Great Salt Lake.

Abbreviations: A.I.C. (Antelope Island Causeway, Davis, UT); C.L. (Carson L, Churchill, NV); C.C. (Corn Cr., Clark, NV); FB (Farmington Bay, Davis, UT); P.L. (Pyramid L, Washoe, NV); Q.C.R. (Quail Creek Res, Washington, UT); S.L.C.C. (Salt L. City Cemetery, Salt Lake, UT); S.L.R. (S-Line Res, Churchill, NV); S.R.P. (Sun R. Pond, Washington, UT). Christmas Bird Counts referred to in this report include the following: B.R. (Bear R., Box Elder, UT, 19 Dec); Elko (Elko, Elko, NV, 22 Dec); F.S. (Fish Springs, Juab, UT, 30 Dec); PL (Pyramid L., Washoe, NV, 1 Jan); S.G. (St George, Washington, UT, 29 Dec); S.R. (Silver Reef, Washington, UT, 15 Dec); T.M. (Truckee Meadows, Washoe, NV, 15 Dec).

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A rare Red-throated Loon remained at Minersville Res., *Beaver*, UT until 2 Dec (RF et al.). The only Pacific Loon reports were of 2 each



This adult Black-legged Kittiwake at Ivins Reservoir, Washington County, Utah 3–5 January 2002 afforded a second record for the state. Photograph by Rick Fridell.

at L. Mead, Clark, NV 20 Jan (MC, JCr) and at Q C.R. 1-3 Dec (RF). A well-studied Yellow-billed Loon (†JW et mult. al.; ph. JT) was at P.L. 21 Dec+. Horned Grebes at 3 Nevada locales were led by 5 at P.L. 8 Jan (JW), and single birds were noted at 3 Utah locales (v. o.). A Rednecked Grebe that showed up on the P.L. C.B.C. remained until 28 Jan (JW).

An American White Pelican lingered until 5 Jan at S.R.P. (BH). The mid-winter max. for American Bittern was 3 at C.L. 2 Feb (DSe). A surprising 18 Great Egrets remained for the T.M. C.B.C.. The good fall Cattle Egret flight was rounded out by a single bird at C.C. 4 Dec (TF, CT). A Green Heron was at Fallon, *Churchill*, NV 14 Dec (DSe), and a White-faced Ibis lingered for the F.S. C.B.C.

Tundra Swans at 10 Nevada locales were led by 175 at Lemmon Valley Marsh, Washoe 28 Feb (FP); among four Utah reports, the highest tally was of 200 at F.B. 23 Feb (SC). Trumpeter Swans numbered up to 5 at four Utah locales (v. o.). Greater White-fronted Geese numbered up to 7 at six Reno area locales (v. o.), while reports from Utah included 8 at American Fork Marina, Utah 9 Dec (EH, KC) and 1-2 at Dixie Red Hills Golf Course, Washington 2 Jan-6 Feb (v. o.). Snow Geese at eight Nevada locales were topped by 2000+ at C.L. 16 Feb (DT), while reports from four Utah locales were led by 1000+ at Gunnison Bend Res., Millard 24 Feb (DA). A Blue Goose at C L. 13 Feb (NB, JT) was the only report. Ross's Geese numbered up to 20 at eight Nevada sites (v o.), but the only Utah reports were of single birds at S.R.P. 17-21 Dec (BH) and at Sun Brook Golf Course, Washington 27 Jan-6 Feb (RF). Two possible hybrid geese (Snow x Ross's) were at Idlewild Park, Washoe, NV 9 Feb (DSe).

Wood Ducks were noted at three n. Nevada locations (v. o.), while Utah reports came from S.R.P. 17-29 Dec (BH) and from La Verkin, Washington 27 Jan (RF). A drake Blue-winged Teal was an unusual winter visitor to Oxbow Park, Washoe, NV 8 Dec—12 Jan (AW et mult. al.; ph. MM), and a late Cinnamon Teal remained at Reno until 12 Dec (DM). A drake Eurasian Wigeon was at Reno 15 Dec+ (†TF et al.). Also at Reno was a hybrid drake Eurasian Wigeon x American Wigeon 20 Feb+ (JT et al.).

Greater Scaup numbered up to 8 at four Nevada locales and to 6 at four Utah locales (v. o.). Two Long-tailed Ducks were at A.I.C. 13-28 Dec (MSt et al.), and a single bird was at nearby F.B. 20 Jan (AN). All three scoters put in appearances in Utah, with a Black Scoter at A.I.C. 13 Dec (MSt et al.), 1-2 Surf Scoters also at A.I.C. 16 Dec-27 Jan (JB et al.), and a White-winged Scoter at Q.C.R. 18 Dec-12 Jan (RF et al.). Barrow's Goldeneyes numbered up to 4 at five Nevada locales and to 7 at four Utah locales (v. o.). The top Hooded Merganser count in Nevada was 20 at Virginia L., Washoe 16 Feb (TF et al.), and the best tally from Utah was 10 at Layton, Davis 26 Dec (HG). Red-breasted Merganser reports from five Nevada locales were led by 7 at P.L. 8 Jan (JW), while the only report for Utah was of a single bird at Q.C.R. 15 Dec (RF, KW).

RAPTORS THROUGH GULLS

Of Bald Eagles recorded at 11 locations in Nevada, 31 in the Carson Valley, Douglas 16 Feb was the top count (JW et al.); in Utah there were reports from 12 locations, including an impressive peak of 200+ at F.B. 16 Feb (SC). Single Red-shouldered Hawks were found at seven Nevada locations (v. o.), but the only Utah reports came from Cedar City, Iron 24 Jan (SS, PS) and from Washington Fields, Washington 2 Feb (SS). Single Merlins were widely noted this winter, with reports from 14 locales in Nevada and from nine in Utah (v. o.). Peregrine Falcons were found at three locales in Nevada and at four in Utah (v. o.).

The wintertime status of the Sora in the n. part of the Region is not well understood; this winter, the only reports came from the Carson Valley, *Douglas*, NV 2 Feb (JE et al.) and from Oxbow Park, *Washoe*, NV 16 Feb (TF et al.). Common Moorhen reports included: at least 3 near Fallon, *Churchill*, NV 2–17 Feb (DT et al.), one at Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, *Clark*, NV 12 Feb (TL), and one at Powell Slough, *Utah*, UT 8 Feb (EH). The only Sandhill Cranes were a flock of 9 at Overton, *Clark*, NV 10–16 Feb (PFo et al.).

Four Snowy Plovers were at Saltair, Salt Lake, UT on the unusual date of 20 Jan (JB, KB). One



Adult Little Gull (right) with Bonaparte's Gull (left) off Antelope Island Causeway, Davis County, Utah 13 December 2001. This bird provided only the second record for Little Gull for Utah and for the Great Basin region. *Photograph by Terry Sadler*.

of the first signs of spring in the Great Basin is the return of the American Avocet, and this year some 100 were already back at C.L. 13 Feb (NB, JT). Greater Yellowlegs are scarce but widespread during the winter months in the Great Basin; this year, there were reports from 5 Nevada locales (v. o.), as well as from the Utah locales of Great Salt L. Marina, *Davis* 10 Jan (BR) and Saltair, *Salt Lake* 20 Jan (JB, KB). An early Lesser Yellowlegs was reported from S.L R 16–17 Feb (DT et al.). A Spotted Sandpiper was at Reno 12–15 Dec (DM et al.) and again 20 Feb (AW).

Three Long-billed Curlews at C.L. 17 Feb (DT) were the first of the year. An early or wintering Western Sandpiper was at S.L.R. 2 Feb (DSe). Wintering Least Sandpipers were found at seven Nevada locations, with a maximum of 30 at S.L.R. 2 Feb (DSe); there were reports from four Utah locations, with a high count of 10 at Utah L., *Utah* 2 Dec (EH, KC). A remarkable find was the **Ruff** that showed up on the B R C.B.C. and remained until 28 Dec (m. ob) Wintering Long-billed Dowitchers were at four Nevada locations, the largest group being 24 at Reno 12 Dec (DM). A Wilson's Phalarope was at A.I.C. on the rather unusual date of 25 Dec (ph, †DC).

A Little Gull was at A.I.C. 13 Dec (ph., †TS et al.). A Mew Gull was at A.I.C. 13–16 Dec (TS et al.), and another was at Bountiful Landfill, Davis, UT 10 Jan (DS, BS). Herring Gulls were reported from Nevada only at P.L., where the top count was 13 on the P.L. C.B.C.; there were reports from four Utah locations (v. o) Similarly, the only Nevada Thayer's Gull came from P.L. 8 Jan (JW), while there were reports from three Utah locations (v. o.). Ditto for Glaucous-winged Gull, with the only Nevada

report coming from P.L. 1 Jan—28 Feb (v. o.), but with reports from three Utah locations (v. o.). Two "Olympic Gulls" (Western x Glaucouswinged hybrids) were at P.L. 1–20 Jan (v. o.). Single Glaucous Gulls were found at F.B. 27 Jan—21 Feb (JB et al.) and at Bountiful Landfill, Davis, UT 27 Jan (DG et al.). Rounding out the gulls was a Black-legged Kittiwake at Ivins Res., Washington, UT 3–5 Jan (BSh et al.; ph., †RF).

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH WAXWINGS

At least 8 Anna's Hummingbirds wintered at three s. Nevada locales (v. o.), and 2 northerly individuals wintered successfully at Reno (ML et al). One or 2 Costa's Hummingbirds spent the winter at Pueblo Park, Clark, NV (RS). A Selasphorus hummingbird was at Reno on the

unusual dates of 5-17 Dec (†RB).

During the colder months, Lewis's Woodpeckers are uncommon but widespread in the Great Basin, and so it was this winter: there were reports of single birds from four Utah locales (v. o.), as well as from Nevada at Amargosa Farm, Clark 8 Dec (MC, JCr) and Logandale, Clark 17 Feb (RF, KCo). Easterly Red-breasted Sapsuckers were reported from Pahranagat N.W.R., Lincoln, NV 16 Dec (JC) and Red Rock Canyon, Clark, NV 26 Dec (CT et al.), and a hybrid sapsucker (Red-breasted x Red-naped) was at Overton, Clark, NV 16 Feb (JC). Williamson's Sapsuckers are rarely noted during the winter in the Great Basin, so it was nice to get reports from three w. Nevada locales 12 Dec-20 Jan (v. o.). A Northern (Yellowshafted) Flicker was seen at Stead, Washoe, NV 4 Jan (ph., †JT), and hybrid flickers (Yellow-shafted x Red-shafted) were noted at Rancho San Rafael Park, Washoe, NV 9–16 Feb (ph. MM, †TF et al.) and at Reno, Washoe, NV 20 Feb (†FP).

The status of Black Phoebe in n. Nevada is complex, to say the least: it is scarce in the spring and summer, somewhat more common in the fall, and generally absent in the winter. But this pattern is quite variable, and this winter there were reports from eight n. Nevada locales, including 3 on the T.M. C.B.C. Three Vermilion Flycatchers were at St. George, Washington, UT 29 Dec-9 Jan (v. o.). Northern Shrikes numbered one or 2 at four locales in Nevada and at five in Utah (v. o.). Large flocks of American Crows were reported from various locales in s Nevada and s. Utah (v. o.), and several observers have commented on the apparent recent increase of the species in the s. part of the reporting Region.

More than 200 Tree Swallows were seen along the lower Colorado R., *Clark*, NV 12 Dec (MS), the species reaches the n. limit of its winter range in far s. Nevada. Meanwhile, the first Tree Swallows for n. Nevada were recorded at Mason Valley, *Lyon* 17 Feb (DT). Two Northern Roughwinged Swallows remained at Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, *Clark*, NV until 9 Dec (MC, JCr), and 2 late Barn Swallows tarried at Q.C R 22 Dec (BH).

A House Wren remained for the Elko C.B C A Winter Wren at Pahranagat N.W.R., Lincoln 16 Dec (JC) was the only report for Nevada, but there were sightings at three widely scattered locales in Utah. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Overton, Clark, NV 16 Feb was early (JC). A Varied Thrush at Fruita, Wayne, UT 28-29 Jan (BW, DW) was the only one reported. Wintering Brown Thrashers were noted at C.C. at least until 21 Jan (MC, JCr) and at Stillwater N.W.R, Churchill, NV at least until 26 Dec (DSe, RSe) Bohemian Waxwings were noted at four Nevada locales, with a top count of 20 at Rye Patch Res, Pershing 23 Feb (DSe, RSe); the only Utah reports came from Mantua, Box Elder, where up to 8 were present 5-9 Jan (v. o.).

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

At least 6 Orange-crowned Warblers were as far n. as Reno on the mid-winter date of 23 Jan (TF, LW et al.), and a northerly individual was at Orem, *Utah*, UT 4 Jan (KC). Myrtle Warblers were noted at C.C. 4–8 Dec (TF et al.) and at Jordan R. Parkway, *Salt Lake*, UT 13 Feb (PF) An Ovenbird showed up in a Las Vegas yard 17 Dec and again 6 Jan (JBo), and an apparent Northern Waterthrush was at Bear R. Migratory Bird Refuge, *Box Elder*, UT 22 Dec (EC, JCo).

SAGulls of unquestioned Glaucous-winged Gull parentage occur every winter in the Great Basin. Most records are from the larger lakes in the northern parts of the Region, but sightings are possible anywhere. Some of these birds are obviously hybrids with Western Gulls. Others are not as obvious and have occasioned lively debate among area birders. One camp holds that almost all are hybrids ("Olympic Gulls"), while the other camp maintains that many are pure Glaucous-winged Gulls. The bird in the accompanying photograph appears to be a straightforward hybrid, but other individuals have proven more difficult (and less photogenic). Birders in Nevada and Utah are encouraged to make special note of wintering Glaucous-winged Gulls and/or "Olympic Gulls," and to try to help shed light on the interesting phenomenon of their annual dispersal inland.



One of two "Olympic Gulls" present on Pyramid Lake, Nevada this winter (here 16 January 2002), these birds raise the broader question of the "purity" of apparent vagrant Glaucous-winged Gulls, which were noted as far afield this season as Ohio and Virginia. Are hybrids with Glaucous-winged Gull more likely to vagrate than pure Glaucous-wingeds? *Photograph by Martin Meyers*.



The event of the season in the Great Basin was an incursion of Common Redpolls into northern Nevada and Utah (and beyond). These males were part of a small flock that visited an Elko, Nevada feeder, here photographed 30 December 2001. Photograph by Lois Ports.

A Rufous-crowned Sparrow was at Zion N.P. 6 Jan (RF, KCo). Three American Tree Sparrows on the Elko C.B.C. and 8 at Ruby Valley, Elko 19 Dec (KV) were the only ones reported from Nevada; in Utah, though, there were sightings at seven locales, including reports of double digits from several places (v. o.). Single Fox Sparrows were noted at three Nevada locales (v. o.), and one was at Mapleton, Utah, UT 17 Dec (BWi); none was identified to the level of subspecies. White-throated Sparrows were found at three spots in e. Nevada (v. o.), as well as at the Utah locales of Layton, Davis 1 Dec (WS) and Mendon, Cache 3 Jan (BA). It was a decent winter for Harris's Sparrow, with reports from four locations in Nevada as well as at four in Utah (v. o). Easterly Golden-crowned Sparrows were seen at the following locales: Rye Patch Res., Pershing, NV 17 Feb (JT et al.); Carson R. Diversion Dam, Churchill, NV 24 Feb (AW); and Red Cliffs Recreation Area, Washington, UT 4 Jan-7 Feb (RF, KCo).

Single Slate-colored Juncos at C.C. 4 Dec (TF, CT), on the Elko C.B.C., and at S.L.C.C. 2 Feb (GB, PF) were the only reports. A possible White-winged Junco was reported from Mendon, Cache, UT 4 Jan (RR). Single Lapland Longspurs were found at A.I.C. 21 Dec (TS) and at Golden Spike National Historic Monument, Box Elder, UT 5 Jan (GW, SW). A Snow Bunting was at A.I.C. 26 Dec-6 Jan (KL et al.).

An Indigo Bunting lingered at Mapleton, Utah, UT until 17 Dec (BWi). A few Great-tailed Grackles winter in n. Nevada, and this year there were reports of one on the Elko C.B.C. and a goodly 14 at Winnemucca, Humboldt 5 Dec (JW); in Utah the most northerly report came

from Lehi, Utah, where an impressive 27 were seen 20 Jan (BR). A Hooded Oriole at Las Vegas 23 Feb (RSc) was the only report. Some 310 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches made the Elko C.B.C., and several of the birds in the Elko area were determined at a later date (10 Feb) to be of the Hepburn's race (JW). Meanwhile, a small flock of Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches at Virginia City, Storey, NV 15 Dec (DH) was the only other report. Fifteen Black Rosy-Finches on the Elko C.B.C. were the only ones reported.

Common Redpolls staged the best invasion ever documented in the Great Basin Region. Sightings in Nevada included 4 at Elko 16-30 Dec (MP, ph. LP) and singles at Mogul, Washoe 17 Dec (†JA, GA) and at Spring Cr., Elko 20 Dec (PB). Utah sightings were as follow: one at Mapleton, Utah 17 Dec (BWi); one at Salt Lake City 20 Dec (JBi); one on the F.S. C.B.C.; up to 70 at Mantua, Box Elder 1-16 Jan (MSt et al.); 2 at S.L.C.C. 5 Jan (DJ); and one at Provo, Utah 27 Jan-1 Feb (MMo, RT). The big flock at Mantua apparently included one or 2 Hoary Redpolls 16 Jan (†DG). The only Evening Grosbeak reports came from Galena, Washoe, NV 2 Feb (LW) and from Summit Park, Summit, UT 27 Jan (JB, KB).

EXOTICS

Northern Utahans were delighted by the return

of "Pink Floyd," the beloved Chilean Flamingo of Great Salt L. This winter there were sightings of this hardy bird at Saltair 20-24 Jan (v. o.).

Observers: David Allan (DA), John Anderson, Gisela Anderson, Bob Atwood, Glenn Barlow, Joel Beyer, Kathy Beyer, Jack Binch (JBi), Nancy Bish, Jim Boone (JBo), Pete Bradley, Richard Brune, K.C. Childs, Darren Clark, Jack Cochran, Steve Coleman, Kristin Comella (KCo), Ed Conrad, Joseph Conrad (JCo), Jim Cressman (JCr), Marian Cressman, Jim Eidel, Ted Floyd, Phoebe Fowler (PFo), Rick Fridell, Pomera Fronce, Hugh Gillilan, Dana Green, Diane Horgan, Eric Huish, Bill Hunter, David Jensen, Tiffany Lance, Maxine Landis, Kent Lewis, Dave McNinch, Martin Meyers, Milton Moody (MMo), Anne Neville, Fred Petersen, Lois Ports, Mark Ports, Bruce Robinson, Ron Ryel, Terry Sadler, Mike San Miguel, Rick Saval, Rita Schlageter (RSc), Wes Segni, Dennis Serdehely (DSe), Rebecca Serdehely (RSe), Brian Shirley, Dennis Shirley, Bob Showler (BSh), Mark Stackhouse (MSt), Priscilla Summers, Steve Summers, Jane Thompson, Carolyn Titus, Dennis Trousdale, Robin Tuck, Ken Voget, Alan Wallace, Jack Walters, Gale Westerman, Sid Westerman, Kevin Wheeler, Barbara Williams, Bonnie Williams (BWi), Dan Williams, Larry Williams.



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