IN MEMORIAM

David Alan Cutler
5 June 1925–16 September 2004

And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

— John Masefield

David Alan Cutler was a Regional Editor for *North American Birds*, and its antecedents, from the Winter 1959 issue until the last issue of 2004, a tenure unsurpassed by anyone. His contributions were largely as a compiler, as first drafts were mostly written by fellow editors, including Frederic R. Scott, P. A. Buckley, Robert O. Paxton, P. William Smith, William J. Boyle, and others. For forty-five years, he excelled as a facilitator between birders and editors in the Middle Atlantic Coast Region, which in 1978 was reconfigured as the Hudson-Delaware Region. In 2002, he and Bob Paxton initiated a funding campaign for the journal, “The Friends of North American Birds Fund.” An expert on paper, printing, and publications, Dave brought his professional experience to bear on a magazine that needed revitalization, a better production process, and an influx of funds. On top of these efforts, Dave was its most generous financial contributor as well.

Dave's parents raised the family in a tough section of West Philadelphia; his father was a police detective and his mother worked as well. As a young teen during the Great Depression, Dave used to sell vegetables, with much success, out of a push-cart in his neighborhood. While in the boy scouts, Dave and his brother Herb were inspired to become birders by a scoutmaster whose name is now lost. Soon afterwards, birding mentors took them on car trips to Delaware, the start of their long association with the First State. In 1943, Dave lied about his age and volunteered for the Navy, initially as a “Seabee” (Construction Battalion) doing construction and underwater demolition. He transferred to the Naval Air Cadet Academy gunnery school, becoming an avia-ton crewman. Later in World War II, he was an instructor teaching instrumentation on aircraft carriers. Like many of his, the “greatest” generation, he did not talk about his service experience. Neither did he talk about his last illness, unless pressed.

Following the war, Dave attended the University of Denver and graduated with a degree in chemical engineering. In 1951, he began working for Triangle Publications in Philadelphia, run by publishing magnate Walter H. Annenberg. Triangle’s publications included *TV Guide*, *Seventeen*, and the Philadelphia *Inquirer*. Dave rose to become director of engineering at Triangle's rotogravure plant and later the plant manager. Because of his success with rotogravure, he introduced the process, on a contract basis for Triangle, to Brazil and the Soviet Union. In 1971, Dave started his own business, David Cutler Industries, which revolutionized the commercial paper recycling industry. For his last 32 years, this was the dominant activity of his life. He was devoted to converting the printing industry to his unique approach to paper recycling and thus helping conserve our natural resources. Quite aside from this altruism, David Cutler Industries is a successful business as well. Dave's son, Darryl, carries on as the company President.

I met Dave on December 23, 1956. On that day, my parents rose at 3:00 a.m. to drive me to the house of a man I had never met. Dave had decided to take an unknown kid with him on his Christmas Bird Count at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. He was a mentor and friend ever since to me and to many others. The Cutlers—Dave and his brother Herb—compiled the C.B.C. at Bombay Hook from 1946 through 1994, assisted in later years by Winston Wayne and Andrew Ednie. But their claim to fame and notoriety lies in pioneering the legendary Big Day adventures in the Delaware Valley region beginning in the 1940s. These “May Runs” soon became an excellent forum for Dave's skills and boundless energy as an organizer, motivator, and competitor. Days of advance work and scores of phone calls preceded each one. He was the quintessential...
was once featured in Time magazine (2 June
porter stuck in the back of our station wag-
with chewing gum. Daveg May Run team
vigilante rammed our car repeatedly with his
Massage Parlor (a euphemism) in Wilming-
-Baysbreasted, huh?"). In 1976, we were de-
year, Dave and I did most of the run using
puzzled as a waitress might have been,
would be only slight exaggeration.
recent decades was limited to Dave's beloved
on the entire time!
nesting gambit in some restaurants was: "We're
ing and occasional horseplay). Dave's open-
benefited from Dave's impressive business
chancery and organizational skills; and yet
these events were always great fun, with fa-
vorite diners, refugees, and personalities
along the way (not to mention creative driv-
ning and occasional horseplay). Dave's opening
 gambit in some restaurants was: "We're
hurry; we're birders." Service was fast:
puzzled as a waitress might have been,
Dave's personality always won the day. One
year, Dave and I did most of the run using
mobs accents ("Youse got a problem wit da
Bay-breasted, huh?"). In 1976, we were de-
tained by area police outside the Spirit of '76
a Charter member of the Delmarva Ornitho-
tions to field ornithology. In addition, he was
K. Potter Award for outstanding contribu-
tions of the Academy of Natural Sciences of
Philadelphia. When as a young teen I wanted
to join, one of my father's stuffy old
friends refused to sponsor me, considering
me too young. That is the sort of attitude
Dave never espoused: he was always the wel-
coming mentor, friend, and supporter, espe-
cially for young birders. When the campaign
to admit women to the D.V.O.C. got under-
way, Dave voted the right way the first time
(but the ladies lost 2:1) as well as the second
time a few years later (when, to his delight,
they won 2:1). A member of the D.V.O.C.
since 1944, Dave was a Fellow and Life
and was made Honorary Member in
1968, he was recipient of its Julian
K. Potter Award for outstanding contribu-
tions to field ornithology. In addition, he was
a Charter member of the Delmarva Ornitho-
sociological Society, a member of the American
Ornithologists' Union since 1952, and a
member of the Wilson Ornithological Soci-
ety since 1963. His publications, mostly in
the journal Cassinia, included papers on
Aubudon's Shearwater, Black-headed Gros-
beak, Pink-footed Goose, Brewer's Blackbird,
Brant, Indigo Bunting, Cattle Egret, and
Glossy Ibis.
Beyond his fondness for birding his home
turf, Dave had a tradition of Central Ameri-
can trips, from Mexico to Panama. In the
1950s, before there were useful field guides,
Dave and Herb essentially made their own
Mexican field guide using their own draw-
ings and information they gleaned from the
Academy of Natural Sciences collections and
from its resident ornithologist James Bond
(whose name became the inspiration for the
Ian Fleming's 007 books). Even Emmett
Riehl Blake's Birds of Mexico (1953), appear-
ing after their earliest trip, was not terribly