

## New Board Elected

March 10, 2018

Last Tuesday was the Destin snowbirds' swan song, at least until next November. Jackie Roberson of Maine accepted the gavel as the new president and the 2018-2019 board was voted into place.



New Board (L-R) Mary Pierce, publicity director, Pete Sikkenga, treasurer, Linda Zukonik, member-at-large, Jackie Roberson, president, Ted Spring, 1st vice president, Dean Harper, member-at-large, Cindy Varnell, secretary, Jack Krasky, web master, Don Collins, 2nd vice president, Charles Cassell, past president.

It's never easy to say goodbye to our winter friends, but, thanks to the upbeat music of the Northwest Florida State College jazz band, the mood was far from somber. It also helped that many snowbird friends had an opportunity to share departing hugs, kisses and warm wishes a week earlier. On February 27, Elise Eggert of Wisconsin organized, what she called the "last hoorah" at Louisiana Lagniappe and nearly forty participants packed the private banquet room to celebrate.

Our hearts are full of gratitude as we bid farewell to the beautiful Emerald Coast. On behalf of all the snowbirds, thank you to Destin Mayor Scott Fischer and the City Council for welcoming us. Thank you to all the accommodation experts who housed us and the restaurants and food stores who fed us. We were entertained by your amazing local talent and we were well maintained by your spas and salons. Our health, our pets and even our cars were always in capable, expert hands. We found bargains in clothing, gifts and so much memorable merchandise. We golfed at your beautiful courses, often at discounted fees – thank you! To name our benefactors individually would take more than a single article, so we encourage our members who remain and even our non-snowbird friends to check out and support the numerous vendors who made our visit that much more enjoyable. They are all listed on our website at [www.destinsnowbirds.org](http://www.destinsnowbirds.org) under "vendors."

Special recognition, however, needs to go to Lisa Firth and her staff at the Destin Community Center, our Roost. They took care of everything from helping us park our cars to comfortably parking our bodies. Teresa Howard always had hot coffee and fresh donuts ready to nourish the flocks. Pat Markey, senior program coordinator, graciously invited us to join the locals for the Emerald Coast Senior Olympics and one of our own, Jared Smith of Indiana took home 14 medals, the majority were gold.





A special note of gratitude also goes out to deputy sheriff Kyle Corbitt who made us feel safe with his presence at every meeting.

Snowbirds have always put their appreciation into actions by donating time and treasure to local charities. A total of nearly \$8,000

was raised for Children in Crisis, The Harvest House, Northwest Florida State College and the local American Cancer Society. Additionally, various churches, hospitals and shelters were recipients of countless hours of volunteer work.



Jean Grieve of the American Cancer Society offers a certificate of appreciation to president Charles Cassell

Not all snowbirds sing the end-of-season swan song. Every year, it seems, the allure of the coast is too great for some to leave. This year, Ted and Andrea Spring will abandon their North Carolina nest and Charles and Kitty Cassell will relinquish their Virginia residency for permanent Destin dwellings. Thanks to a grandfather-clause in the by-laws, they can remain snowbirds for life. I, on the other hand, will migrate back to my northern nest. This is my last article of the season. It has been a privilege to work with the Destin Log and the Northwest Florida Daily News in sharing all the happenings inside and outside the Roost. I have a new, profound appreciation for the newspaper industry; the reporters, editors, proof readers and copy writers. Those on the receiving end of my gratitude know who you are. I look forward to working with you again next season.

Reminder: Storage lockers will be available for boxes, bicycles and those extra golf clubs each Saturday morning from 8 to 9:30 a.m. through March 24.

Safe travels home!

Mary Pierce, Publicity Director