

## VOLUME 9, NO. 1 Spring 1991

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### An Avalanche of Mail

There are many ways that BCI members can support bat conservation. But surely one of the most creative was recently accomplished by Kerry T. Givens, an ophthalmologist, writer, and long-time BCI member from Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Many members may have seen his fine cover story on bats in the October 1990 issue of *Modern Maturity*. What they didn't see was the result!

In a six-week period, over 12,000 of the magazine's 22 million readers wrote to request more information about bats, breaking all past records for the amount of mail received in such a short period. Every day when Marianne Austin, BCI's Catalog and Mail Room Coordinator, went to pick up our mail from the post office, she found a "mail too excessive for box" note. After hauling a brimming bushel basket full of mail back to the office, each letter had to be opened, read, sorted, and coded for an appropriate response. There was so much mail, in fact, that to handle it all, BCI enlisted the help of a volunteer, a temporary employee, and an electric mail opener.

Meanwhile, all that mail had to be answered. Bryan Ockert, who in addition to being our resident computer whiz, handles all requests for general information, worked many overtime hours to make sure everyone received a timely answer (and we hope you understand if you didn't). Amy McCartney, Membership Coordinator, was overwhelmed logging in and responding to the many new members, who continue to join as a result of having read the article. To date, approximately 1,000 new members have joined.

Thanks to Kerry Givens, millions more people are aware of the importance of bats (although a few unbelievers wrote us about how misguided we were!). We deeply appreciate his creative contribution to bat conservation. All efforts to educate cannot help but have a positive effect on the future for bats and their habitats.



*Marianne Austin (center), is assisted by Byran Ockert (left), and Laurie Longman, a temporary employee.*

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