

A Convention to Remember

by Carol Brasaemle, Denver, CO

Our bags are unpacked, the souvenirs are put away, *Proceedings* are getting dog-eared, aviary routines get back to normal and, for some of us, the Slim-Fast is chilling in the fridge. Yet the sights and sounds of the 25th AFA Convention still replay and resonate in our minds. We met old friends and made new ones as we were treated to a feast of information and discussion.

The Adams-Mark Hotel was a real treat. An upscale hotel on Denver's 16th Street Pedestrian Mall, it was close to everything a visitor to Denver could want. Restaurants and sidewalk cafes beckoned us to sample fare from around the world, or sit out on balmy evenings and talk birds, or simply watch the world go by. The convention area was airy and spacious, with plenty of room to gather in small groups and chit-chat.

The Convention opened with the House of Delegates meeting on Wednesday morning. Newly-elected **AFA President Bob Berry** delivered quite a pep talk after business was conducted. By-law changes, primarily of the housekeeping-and-clarity type, were voted on, after which the Delegates heard and approved two proposals. One realigned boundaries in the north central, east, and south central regions to even out the number

of affiliated clubs being served by the regional directors. The north central region, which included only four affiliated clubs, was added to by placing Kansas and Wisconsin in that region. Mr. Berry also showed trends in price increases for various AFA services and discovered that club affiliation fees had not risen since AFA began in 1974. He asked for a moderate increase in fees and the House of Delegates agreed.

Wednesday afternoon convention attendees toured the Denver Zoo and had a bountiful picnic lunch at the Zoo. Members of the Bird World staff conducted tours into the area, but were upstaged by a pair of romantic rhinos along the way. Nevertheless, they recovered and proceeded to conduct some fascinating tours.

Avian veterinarians **Drs. Speer, Dalhausen, and Styles** gave us their unique looks at flock management, avian disease, and what a trip to the vet should be about. **Natasha Shischakin** from the Houston Zoo updated us on plans for the Spix's Macaw, and we were treated to information on recovery for the Socorro Parakeet, the Ultramarine Lory, and Sri Lankan species. **Mike Perrin** from South Africa covered Ruppell's and Cape Parrots, and speakers from the UK shared the European view of pellets and what constitutes quality avi-

Photo by Sheldon Dingle



At the Avian Adventure booth, owner Carol Frank, left, shows off her eclectic pets to Eileen Maher, a speaker from the San Diego Zoo. This was the only moment in days that Frank didn't have a cell phone in her ear.



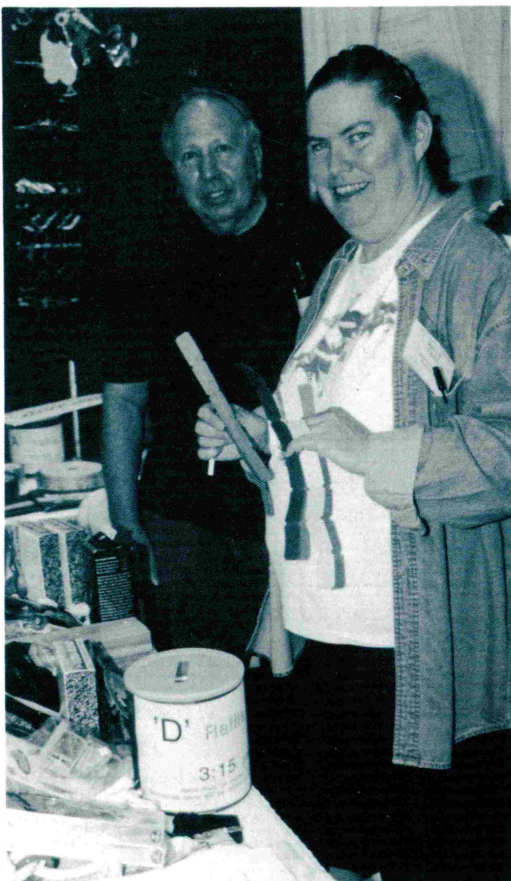
Linda and Larry Short racking up serious winnings at the Central City casino.

Casino Photo by Subterfuge and Trickery



The Rocky Mountain Society of Aviculture: Some of the members who were really helpful putting on the convention. L. to R., Carol Brasaemle, John Brasaemle, Carolyn Adair, Kevin Wirick, Glenda Pullum.

Photo by M. Jean Hessler



Kelly Tucker holds a winning ticket for the on-site raffle ... again.



AVY Awards Chairperson, Jeanette Rilling (left) presents an award to Sandee Molenda for the first breeding of *Forpus xanthopterygius flavissimus*, a subspecies of the Blue-winged parrotlet.

culture. **Dr. Alicia McWatters** was there sharing her thoughts on avian nutrition. **Steve Martin** spoke, and provoked us into a reality check of our beliefs about avian behavior. **Barry Wold** updated us on legislative issues.

The exhibit area was crowded with wonderful things for our birds and their well-being. Incubators, cages, feed, toys, manzanita play stands, artwork, holistic medicines, and the AFA booth kept attendees ogling their way through the area. The AFA booth was busy with sales of 25th Anniversary t-shirts (terrific), the new CITES Black Palm Cockatoo pin (gorgeous!), and slices of cheddar cheese brought from Cheddar, England by speaker **Daniel Shearing**. Notable exhibitors included **Gamini Ratnavira's** art, everything imaginable to care for your bird at The Birdbrain, a gentleman selling finches and softbills (including blue dacnis, a breathtakingly beautiful little bird), and the raffle, where outstanding bargains were to be had....if you were a winner! A number of specialty organizations were there sharing information about their species and their societies.

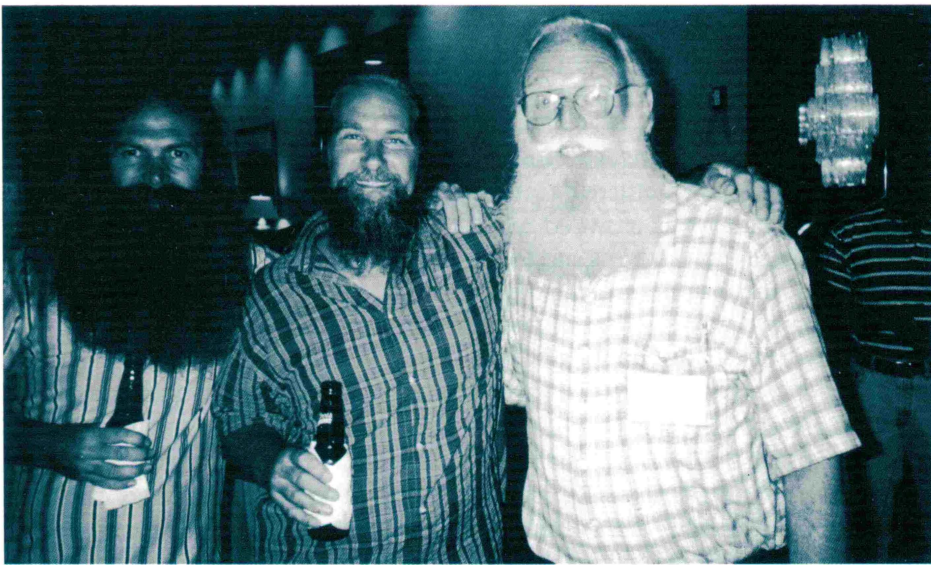
Casino Night was lots of fun as attendees boarded buses for the mountain town of Central City and enjoyed a prime rib dinner upon their arrival. After dinner, folks tried their luck at limited stakes gambling and slots, or roamed about this historical and restored Colorado mining center.

Folks showed up at the Friday night reception buzzing about what they had heard in specialty meetings. The African Parrot Society featured Mike Perrin and the Amazona Society featured **Jan Beatrous** on bird theft and prevention, to mention but two of the interesting programs provided. The reception, hosted by the Rocky Mountain Society of Aviculture, was held in an airy widowed and mirrored room with understated but effective avian decorations, a cash bar and a munchie buffet designed to please nibblers and the truly hungry alike. Conversation was lively and enjoyable.

The awards banquet featured a pre-party hosted by Hagen, a silent auction, and an outstanding menu. Awards were presented to **Gary Lilienthal**, long-time AFA legal counsel who was involved in the Cooperative Working

Some nice people deserve a big **Thank You** for our great Denver 1999 on-site raffle donations:

- ACROBIRD
- AMR Laboratories, Inc.
- Aves Communications
- Avian Medicine Chest
- Boundaries Unlimited, Inc.
- Campus Cards
- Coastal Pet Products, Inc.
- Crazy Corn
- Creative Playcenters by Pat West
- Designing Health, Inc.
- Diana Holloway
- Featherbrains Gallery & Gifts
- Gamini Ratnavira's *Hidden Forest*
Art Gallery
- Green-Wing Bird Supply
- Harrison's Bird Foods
- Hartz Mountain Corporation
- Jim's Pet Depot, Inc.
- Just Parrots Magazine
- Lafeber Company
- Magic Zoo II - *Jewelry with Personality*
MDS
- Mountain Meadows Pet Products, Inc.
- Neiman Barkus Exotic Birds
- Neon Pet Products
- Parrot Jungle Inc.
- Penn-Plax, Inc.
- Perfect Perch Company
- Pet Power Inc.
- Presents for Polly Toys
- Quality Cage Company
- Rainbow Mealworms Inc.
- Scott Pet Products & Feeding Tech
- Sleepy Bird Creations
- Somerset Stations Inc.
- Swelland's Cage & Supply
- The Bird's Nest / June C. Hendrix
- The Higgins Group Corp.
- The Parrot-n-Perch Connection
- The Singing Goose



Naw, folks, these ain't old miners from the Rocky Mountains. These fine furry faces were imported to Denver from Orange County, California. L to R: Rocky Moonie, Jeff McConnell, Marvin Deueerd



Artist Gamini Ratnavira (left) obviously told a fine joke. Beth Greenberg, Dr. Walt Frey, and Daniel Shearing are having really good laugh.



Tom Stuart of Platinum Toy Works & Supply has a couple of well pleased customers on his hands. The great vendor's display hall contained something for everyone.

Group on the Bird Trade long before the WBCA was written, and his wife **Janet**, who for many years has monitored legislative/regulatory activities and has been a major contributor to AFA in Brief. **Jean Hessler** was honored for her graphic/layout work on *The AFA Watchbird* ever since its inception 25 years ago and for her avid support of AFA. **Aletta Long** has served on the AFA Board since 1989, after a long history of volunteerism and support. **Jim Hawley**, AFA's Chief Financial Officer, has voluntarily put innumerable hours beyond the call of duty and has been instrumental in establishing the AFA Endowment Fund. **Natalie Frumin-Weiss** was noted as AFA's link to the Internet, creator of the AFA Board Mail List, and the gal who monitors Internet doings. She has been convention registrar for the past six years, no easy task!


Finally, outgoing president **Gary Clifton** was honored, not only for having assumed the difficult job of president for the past two years, but also for his strong support of AFA for many years. A special thanks to these unsung heroes and to all who go the distance to make our AFA more effective.

The announcement of **Rick Jordan** and **Jean Pattison's** new book, *The African Parrots*, was greeted with enthusiasm. Rick is a well-known aviculturist and author of *Parrot Incubation Procedures* as well as *Handfeeding and Nursery Management* (with Howard Voren). Jean, known to many as "The African Queen," has devoted herself to African species and is known by many of us through her articles and speaking engagements. Jean and Rick have generously donated their royalties to the AFA. Their book will soon be available through the AFA Business Office.

Thanks to our convention planner **Sharon Rosenblatt Galler** and her assistant, **Kelly Davis**, AFA's 25th Anniversary Convention was one we won't soon forget!

Acknowledgements

Thanks to June DeCiocco, Don Winter, Kelly Tucker, Wanda Elder, Tani Smida, and Barry Wold for sharing their feelings about the convention.

Carol Brasaemle is the AFA State Coordinator for Colorado and a member of RMSA. 

And everyone had a grand ol' time. Can you find a grouch in the bunch?



Photos by Sheldon Dingle, Collage by Jean Hessler