

A Message to the Membership

By Jamie Whittaker

When you are watching your adult pairs preen and work together on their nest; when you find those newly hatched chicks in the nest box or watch that new life emerge in the incubator; when you see those young birds take that first flight; when you play with your bird in the living room or watch your birds at play; when you are struck with the sudden realization that birds are a part of you, that there are feathers in the depths of your soul—be thankful to the people who made this all possible.

It is an exciting time for aviculturists in North America. It is important that we remember that it was the dedication and hard work of aviculturists that made it possible.

Not long ago, a group of individuals asked the questions, “How can we keep all this knowledge from disappearing? What can the AFA do to insure that the trials of the past are not repeated as errors of the future?”

The mission statement of the AFA says:

“The mission and purpose of AFA is promote the advancement of aviculture through educational programs that enable better husbandry, management, and living conditions for exotic birds; promote avian research and conservation of exotic birds; keep our members aware of legislative issues that affect aviculture and aviculturists and keep legislators aware of the need for fair and equitable regulations.”

How does AFA fulfill that mission statement? How can AFA be relevant in the world of aviculture in the future? These questions were pondered and discussed at length.

A few dedicated individuals took the challenge on behalf of AFA and the results are the Fundamentals of Aviculture courses.

The next problem to solve was how to make this course available to the maximum number of people. That was answered by offering the course online as a self-paced course.

The Level I course, which was released in 2007, was well received by both beginner and experienced aviculturists.

The Level II course was released on May 1, 2011. There were more than 100 enrollees in the first 48 hours and more register every day.

We, all of us in aviculture, owe a debt of gratitude to the people who made this happen. They all had birds to feed and care for, but managed to take the time to put their knowledge and experience on paper.

If you are one of those pioneers in aviculture, know that many are deeply in your debt.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors of the American Federation of Aviculture and of the membership, and of aviculturists and on behalf of the future of birds in aviculture,

THANK YOU

Benny Galloway Ph.D.; Rick Jordan; Barbara Heidenreich, Robin Shewokis; Donald Brightsmith, Ph.D.; Juan Cornejo; Jason Crean; Jim C. Hawley Jr.; Jeanine Meisle; Lyrae Perry; Matt Schmit; and Linda Seger for your hard work on the Fundamentals of Aviculture I and II.

Also, thank you to the Pet Care Trust and the Schubot Exotic Bird Health Center at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University for their contributions and support.

We thank you all for your contribution to the future of the aviculture and to the future of birds!



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