

# Your Vote Makes a Difference



by Mary Ellen LePage, Leslie Gillis, and Bob Chambers

Each year the American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. (AFA) holds an election to fill vacant positions of voting members of the Board. The Board is the governing body of the corporation that sets the Policies and Procedures for the organization, does planning, oversees finances, and resolves issues. This elected Board consists of President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Secretary, Specialty Vice President, and a Regional Director from each of the 11 regions of the USA. Terms are two years and expire on alternate years.

Board members receive no compensation and no reimbursement of travel expenses. They graciously donate their time and work to support the American Federation of Aviculture because they believe in the need for this organization and recognize AFA's accomplishments with education, conservation, disaster relief and monitoring legislation.

The nomination and election process starts when the President appoints a chair of the committee. The Chair, Leslie Gillis, recruits committee members, contacts incumbents to determine if they wish to run again, tries to find AFA members willing to run for positions and sends a letter to each of the members of the House of Delegates to recruit candidates. AFA needs your help to identify good people that are willing to assume the role and responsibility of Regional Director. Currently several Regional Director positions are unfilled. Anyone willing to run for any position should contact Leslie Gillis at [SecretGardenAviaries@earthlink.net](mailto:SecretGardenAviaries@earthlink.net).

The committee collects biographies from each of the candidates, listing their qualifications and submits the list of candidates to the Board of Directors.

The ballot, the statement of the candidate's qualifications for the position, an envelope marked "BALLOT", an addressed envelope for returning the ballot and voting instructions are mailed to each delegate on or before June 1. Ballots must be postmarked by June 24 and received by June 30. Only delegates


that are current AFA members will receive a ballot. Only delegates residing in the region may vote for the Regional Director candidate in that region.

In order for your vote to be counted, you must follow the directions! Your ballot must be postmarked on or before the stated date or it is disqualified. In order to be counted, ballots must be clearly marked. Ballots not clearly marked will not be counted for the office for which the voter's choice shall be in doubt. No write-in votes will be counted. The committee chair and two or more members of AFA validate and count the ballots in such a manner that the voter's identity is not

the ballots are counted, first by region then for non-regional offices. If validation or ballots are in doubt, the Chair calls either the AFA attorney, Larry Ring, or the AFA Parliamentarian, Bob Chambers to help resolve the issue. Ballot counters sign and date documentation of each issue and its resolution and documentation is retained with the ballots. The chairperson and AFA members then count the votes.

If two or more candidates receive the same number of votes, a runoff election will be held. Runoff ballots are mailed by July 7, must be postmarked by July 25, and received by July 30.

Your Name  
Your Title / Your Club  
*Jane Doe*  
Street Number & Address  
City, State, Zip



American Federation of Aviculture  
Nominations & Elections  
c/o Leslie J. Gillis  
P. O. Box 853  
Madera, CA 93639

### Sample ballot outer envelope completed correctly

revealed with the ballot. In order to accomplish this, you put your ballot in the envelope marked "BALLOT", then put that envelope in the self-addressed envelope. On the return address portion of this envelope, you must print and sign your name and write your title (i.e. Delegate of Love Your Bird Club). All delegates may vote for non-regional offices, (President, Vice President. Etc.), as well as Regional Director for their region or Specialty Vice President if they are a delegate for a specialty organization.

Any member of the House of Delegates may attend the counting. The chairperson stacks all unopened envelopes to be validated, opened and counted. The envelopes are validated by checking the printed name and position held against the voter eligibility list supplied by the AFA business office. Once it has been determined that the voter is eligible, the outer envelope is opened and the inner envelope containing the ballot removed and placed with other ballots sorted regionally, and the process of validation is complete. Then the inner envelopes are opened and

The Nominations and Elections Committee Chairperson presents the vote count results to the President and Secretary. The President will release the election results after the Secretary notifies each candidate whether or not he or she won the election.

The Nominations and Elections Committee retains the ballots, return

envelopes and vote count documentation for a period of three (3) months from the annual meeting so that there can be a recount of the ballots if ordered by the Board of Directors and a verification of which ballots were counted. Any challenges to the election must be made in writing to the Nominations and Elections Committee and shall specify the nature of the challenge. The Nomination and Elections Committee shall investigate the validity of all contests and shall recommend disposition of the same to the Board at its next regular meeting. The judgment of the Board in all such matters shall be by a majority vote and shall be final in all respects. No challenge may be brought to an election after October 30 of the year of the election.

For the 2008 election, please give recommendations for electoral candidates. In the next few weeks you will be getting your ballot. Please vote! And please follow the directions so that your vote may be counted. Let's all try to build a strong board and strong AFA. Your vote is important. 