

A Message from the President

By Nancy Speed

At times people ask, “What is AFA going to do?” “What happens to the money I donate?” “How would it help if I were a member?”



AFA is involved in many activities toward fulfilling our mission statement. Have you ever really studied our mission statement? Are we a bird breeder organization? Are we a legislative watch organization? Are we a conservation organization? Are we an educational organization? In truth, we are all these things—and more!! It isn't possible to choose one

aspect of aviculture on which to focus. Every aspect of aviculture relies on the others to survive.

Our Watchbird Editor, Mark Moore, produces an award-winning journal, each issue featuring a variety of species of birds. These journals are a great asset to any avian library and we have been working for several years to have them available free of charge in an online library for researchers and students of aviculture. We hope to have this project finalized in the very near future.

There have been several legislative issues that have demanded our legislative committee's attention. The states of California, New Hampshire and Florida have had legislative proposals that could interfere with bird keeping. Our legislative team offered insight and assistance when needed to help combat these potential problems.

The major legislative issue this year was the ESA (Endangered Species List) listing of the Blue-throated Macaw (*Ara glaucogularis*). AFA worked diligently to thwart efforts to avoid this listing because it will hamper captive breeding and the movement as pets, but we were not successful. There are fourteen more species that are under consideration to be listed in the future. AFA will continue to gather and present evidence to prevent ESA listing of these species. The next species could easily be your favorite pet or a species that represents an important part of your breeding program.

AFA awarded two conservation and research grants this year in partnership with The Schubot Avian Health Center, Texas A & M University; and Loro Parque

Foundation. Dr. Jill Heatley was able to investigate complete blood counts and causes of deaths in parrots in the Tambopata Region of Peru. Dr. Don Brightsmith was able to work on a population analysis of amazon parrots in Tamaulipas, Mexico.

The conservation committee just launched its Ears for Lear's campaign which will raise funds to help save the Lear's Macaw (*Anodorhynchus leari*) in the wild. Funds raised will provide supplemental crops of corn to the farmers in Brazil so they will not be forced to destroy the macaws now feeding on their corn fields.

Our disaster relief team immediately went into action to assist those in need as a result of the Oklahoma tornadoes and Colorado wild fires and floods. AFA members facilitated donations and organized efforts to help all of those suffering from these disasters.

One of our cooperative breeding programs, which allows for selected species to be legally imported to establish a breeding program, had its first successful hatch this year—a Blue-eyed Cockatoo (*Cacatua ophthalmica*).

Our convention in Raleigh, NC was a huge success. Educators from around the world came together to speak to our members about birds. Make your plans to attend our 2014 convention in Portland, OR in August.

Have you taken the AFA Fundamentals of Aviculture online courses yet? Don't let the name fool you, everyone can benefit from these extensive courses about birds, ornithology, physiology, aviculture, and pet bird care. Sign up today and take as long as you like to finish. All courses are self-paced.

What will AFA be doing in 2014? Much of that depends upon us. Members and volunteers are the life force of this organization. We will continue to work to fulfill our mission statement to ensure there will be a future with birds.

Remember that all of us together make up The American Federation of Aviculture!

In friendship,

Nancy Speed



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