

San Francisco Regional Convention a Smashing Success!

by Lee Phillips

The warm and gracious hospitality for which San Francisco is justly famous was nowhere more evident than at the AFA Regional Convention February 16-18 for which the host chapter, Western Bird Breeders Society, under the leadership of Ms Pat Barbara as chairman arranged sparkling activities. With attendance figures topping 500, the careful planning and enthusiastic response of the host chapter resulted in a net profit for AFA of \$6,000.

Early arrivals to the convention at the San Francisco Airport Hilton were treated to a tour of Sonoma Bird Farm with its 175 indoor flights and interesting collection of birds followed by an invitation to Pat Barbera's home to see her 30 cockatoos. On Friday evening the Western Bird Breeders Society hosted a delightful buffet supper for convention guests.

Despite heavy rain on Saturday morning, Mary and Jim Coffman opened their lovely home, gardens and aviary to convention visitors and served coffee and pastries. The group then moved on to Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence Swan's "Kingdom of Cooch Nahai" with its innovative aviaries of tubular wire flights suspended in and between the trees. For all of these trips transportation was graciously provided by members of the Western Bird Breeders Society.

The Board of Directors' meeting began promptly at 1:00 p.m. with President Dick Baer presiding. Thirty-nine delegates from a dozen states were present and AFA business was conducted quickly and smoothly.

Among the items discussed and passed was the plan that no proposed budgets of officers and committee chairmen will be considered at the annual business meeting which have not been received at the Home Office at least two months prior to that meeting so they may be reviewed.

Also, that an alternate delegate to the Board of Directors' meetings must be a member in good standing of the group that person represents and that a letter of authorization from the club president must be presented or a phone call made to the President or Secretary of AFA authorizing the representation.

It was moved, seconded and passed that each committee shall formulate guidelines on its mode of operation and submit these guidelines to the Board for review.



Passed unanimously and with a round of applause was the motion made by Pat Barbera and seconded by Charlotte LeDoux that the **WATCHBIRD** staff be commended for its continuing efforts in producing truly outstanding magazines issue after issue.

At the request of the President, Rex Kennedy made the motion that the AFA administrative regions be re-organized to make the State of California a region unto itself; to maintain the remainder of the present Western Region as such with the addition to the State of Utah; to combine the present North Central and South Central Regions, less Utah, into one Central Region; and to leave the other three remaining regions unchanged with a re-designation of the name of the Midwestern Region to the more appropriate title of Mideastern Region. After some discussion the motion was carried.

Finally, upon a suggestion from Joe DeAguiar, who was unable to be present, it was moved, seconded and passed that a building fund be started with a goal of having our own building to house the Home Office.

With the business meeting concluded, delegates and guests moved along to a no-host reception to meet new friends and greet old ones. Later in the evening a large contingent of conventioners visited some of San Francisco's famed night spots for a happy evening's entertainment.

On Sunday morning the action started early with a splendid bird mart comfortably housed in a large room and convention guests alternated between the commercial exhibit and the two large auditoriums in which speakers held forth. Among the speakers were Tina and Ralph Small, Dr. Chuck Galvin, Robert Mock and Dale Thompson, who graciously filled in at the last minute and presented not one, but two programs.

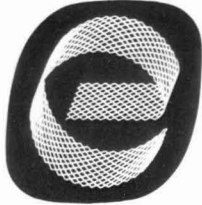
Almost 400 persons attended the banquet on Sunday which was preceded by a cocktail hour and bird auction. They enjoyed a delicious meal and watched Joe Carvalho put his bird through an interesting training session. Dr. Baer spoke to the group stressing the need for unity and strength in our organization and, most of all, the need to increase our membership. He stated "AFA has increased its membership over 50% since December, 1978 and the number of affiliated clubs has increased to 73 — an addition of more than 22%. Further, 1979 has seen AFA establish a home office, arrive at an agreement with USDA on a Newcastle Disease control policy, stopped the slaughter of smuggled birds and we're pushing the Department of the Interior in relaxing its restrictions on domestic-bred endangered species and we effectively opposed a ban on the import of psittacines." He further stated that AFA was largely instrumental in getting the quarantine stations re-opened after they had been shut down and we have established a sub-committee on Cage and Aviary Birds in the United States Health Association. He continued, "We have revised our by-laws and taken the first giant step toward establishing a national registry of uncommonly-bred birds and promoted their captive propagation."

At the conclusion of his remarks, Dr. Baer received a standing ovation from the convention guests.

Replacing Dr. Jean Delacour who was unable to be present because of illness, Dr. Lawrence Swan, professor of biology at the San Francisco State University, spoke with great wit on "Aviculture is For the Birds". A raffle concluded the evening's events.

Early Monday morning some members of the convention left for an interesting bus tour of San Francisco highlighted by a behind-the-scenes visit to the Aquarium arranged by Dr. Swan. Others stayed in the hotel to attend workshops conducted by Hugh Wilson, Charlotte LeDoux, Vern Denton, Hank Johnson, Glenn Mitchell and Jerry Jennings.

As convention guests departed they took with them fond memories of a most successful convention, greater knowledge of birds and rekindled enthusiasm for the benefits engendered by AFA •



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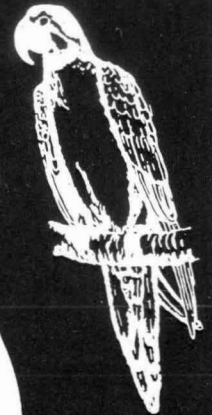
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