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1982 SCHEDULE FOR AFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

May 15th, 1982

Marriot Inn — Marina del Ray
 13480 Maxella Ave., Marina del Ray, CA 90291
 AFA Board meeting - 1 p.m.

August 4th thru 8th, 1982

Washington, D.C.—Washington Hilton Hotel
 9th Annual Convention, AFA Board meeting - Wednesday, Aug. 4th.

November 18th thru 21st, 1982

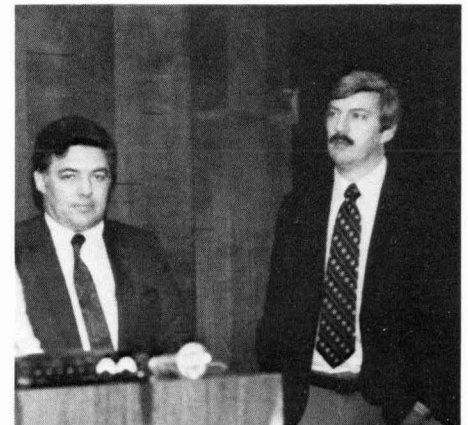
Pittsburgh Hilton Hotel — Gateway Center
 Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

NEWS

United States
 Department of
 Agriculture

Office of
 Governmental
 and Public Affairs

Mexican Parrots Can Bring Exotic Newcastle Disease To U.S. Pets And Poultry



Marshall Meyers, legal representative for PIJAC, introduced Dr. William Buisch, right, to a group of concerned aviculturists at a March 26th meeting.

WASHINGTON, Feb., 18—“It seems obvious that there are many birds of the parrot family in Mexico infected with the exotic Newcastle disease. It also is obvious that there are people on both sides of the border willing to threaten our healthy poultry and exotic bird industries by smuggling these birds into the United States.”

That's the opinion of Dr. Bill Buisch, the U.S. Department of Agriculture veterinarian whose job is to track down and eliminate any outbreaks of this devastating foreign disease of poultry and other birds.

Earlier this year, birds smuggled from Mexico brought exotic Newcastle disease into Florida and Colorado, Buisch said.

“And more recently,” he said, “inspectors with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service have identified

two more instances where the disease was brought into the United States with smuggled birds.

"The first case involved a 'sniffer' dog called into action when a nervous-appearing driver was stopped for inspection while crossing the border at San Ysidro, Calif.," Buisch said. "The dog called attention to the car's trunk. When opened it showed a normal-appearing spare tire.

"But when the tire was turned over, inspectors found the bottom side had been cut away and ten yellow-headed Amazon parrots were hidden inside. USDA veterinarians found these birds were infected with exotic Newcastle disease when swabs were examined at USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratory at Ames, Iowa."

The second case also happened on the Mexico-California border. U.S. agents spotted and chased several men trying to enter the country illegally. The fleeing men dropped burlap bags that contained 30 yellow-headed Amazon parrots. These birds were placed in quarantine at San Ysidro and several died before the "positive" diagnosis came back from the lab.

"In addition, there was a third case that involved a Michigan couple who bought a pair of yellow-headed Amazon parrots while they were on vacation in Monterey, Mexico," Buisch said. "They also got instructions on how to smuggle the birds back into the United States.

"They succeeded, but the birds got sick soon after the couple returned home. A local veterinarian submitted specimens to the USDA laboratory in Ames. The specimens are presently being tested for exotic Newcastle disease," he said.

"I doubt if people are going to stop trying to smuggle parrots into the country," Buisch said. "Therefore, we urge all bird owners—or prospective owners—to avoid so-called 'bargains' and thus help eliminate the chances of bringing the disease into their own flocks or aviaries."

Buisch said there are different forms of Newcastle disease—ranging from mild domestic strains to the highly virulent exotic or foreign strains.

Exotic Newcastle disease does not pose a health hazard to people who eat eggs or poultry products. However, Buisch said, some people who have handled infected birds have developed mild eye infections as a result of the exposure. ●

USDA Rejected One Out Of Every 30 Imported Cage Birds Last Year

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23—One out of every 30 cage birds brought into this country through commercial or federal quarantine stations last year was refused entry by U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors because the birds were infected with exotic Newcastle disease.

Dr. Sam Richeson, a veterinarian concerned with bird imports for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said exotic Newcastle is a highly contagious and deadly disease to poultry and other birds. Of 653,939 birds brought into this country, 21,383 were refused entry because of the disease.

Richeson said 25,277 birds were dead on arrival at the stations and another 82,711 died during the mandatory 30-day quarantine from a multitude of causes, including exotic Newcastle disease. These figures also include the deaths of large numbers of travel-stressed finches, Richeson said.

During fiscal year 1981, Richeson said, 2,174 personally-owned pet birds were brought into the country through nine special USDA import stations. Of these,

101 died during quarantine or were refused entry because of exotic Newcastle disease.

Another 2,491 birds were abandoned at the border or seized by U.S. Customs agents. Of these, 1,926 were held in quarantine for at least 45 days before being sold at auction or donated to zoos. The rest died during quarantine from stress and other disease conditions, including exotic Newcastle disease.

Exotic Newcastle disease is not a health hazard to people who eat poultry and eggs, Richeson said. However, it can cause a transitory eye inflammation or flu-like symptoms in people who handle infected birds.

Although exotic Newcastle disease affects all birds, it is most damaging to poultry and can kill all the birds in an infected flock. The disease will kill many types of pet birds, but others can become infected without showing any signs of the disease. These birds, Richeson said, can carry the virus and shed the infection—thereby posing a constant threat to poultry and other birds. ●

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