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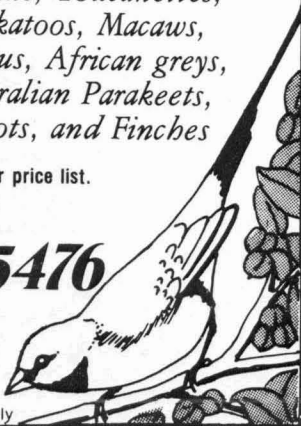
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The President's Comments

by
Lee Phillips

(Delivered at the Dr. Val Clear Luncheon at the National convention in Orlando, Florida)

I have been asked to speak to you about the future of A.F.A. My personal goals for A.F.A. and my hopes for its future are so similar that it is difficult for me to determine where my goals end and my hopes begin.

First of all, I hope that A.F.A. will enjoy a growth in the near future to bring its membership over the 25,000 mark and that we will be an umbrella organization for *all* aspects of aviculture: that the poultry, pigeon, waterfowl, game bird, raptor, rehabilitator, crane, canary, budgerigar, finch and psittacine fanciers and breeders will each be represented on our Board of Directors and in *The A.F.A. Watchbird*.

I hope that as we become more knowledgeable about the breeding of rarer species that we will save more and more of these from extinction. I would like to see each serious aviculturist breed one species for conservation — whether it is an inexpensive finch or parakeet now readily imported or a rare, expensive bird. If bird imports were terminated tomorrow and we were left with the species we now have, what species will you wish you had tried to breed? Get a foundation stock now and get started.

I hope that in the non-too-distant future this country would become known as a producer of avian species, not a consumer of avian species. We need to take a long, hard look at what we are doing to native populations of birds.

I think A.F.A. should continue to be aware of restrictive legislation but I feel we as aviculturists are more in jeopardy from state and local jurisdictions than we are from laws at the federal level. I ask each State Coordinator and individual aviculturist to be aware of what is happening at your State House and local government.

I hope that A.F.A. will be able to increase the number and amount of research grants we award and that our Conservation Committee will have the

Photo by Chuck Saffell, Snead Island, Palmetto, FL.



At the AFA 10th Anniversary luncheon, Friday, August 3, 1984, Dr. Val Clear, left, presented Lee Phillips an award for her inspired leadership as AFA's fifth president.

Photo by Larry McPhail, Fort Lauderdale, FL.



Lee Phillips presented three First U.S. Breeding Avy Awards to AFA's first president, Jerry Jennings, for his work with three different species of toucans.

Photo by Larry McPhail, Fort Lauderdale, FL.



AFA's second president, Lee Horton, was also a multi-award winner, setting records with the Fischer's lovebirds.

resources it needs. I intend to ask the corporations which are profiting from the use of this planet's resources: the lumber companies, paper mills, mining companies, petroleum companies, the bird importers and the retail pet industry to make a contribution to the conservation of avian species. I would like to see some of these contributions used for a study of exotic Newcastle disease and papovavirus and some used for field studies of threatened and endangered species.

It is a pleasure to report that at our annual Board meeting it was voted to explore the possibility of sending an observer to the Conference on Trade In Endangered Species (CITES) in Buenos Aires next year and partial funding for this project was approved. I would hope that ultimately our representative would be a member of the official delegation.

A goal that should be within easy reach is to have realistic figures for our Bird Census. I intend to ask the zoos, the commercial breeders and the successful private aviculturists to make a special effort to report their breeding successes so we will have a tool to use to respond to those who castigate us.

I feel that after A.F.A. has achieved a reasonable growth and affluence that we should have a professional lobbying arm based in or near Washington, D.C. to protect our interests.

I want to see us own our Home Office and have it computerized with terminals at the Membership Secretary, the Chief Financial Officer and the President. There is always the hope that we will have a professional executive to manage A.F.A. affairs.

I feel that the voluntary National Cage and Aviary Bird Improvement Plan would be a step forward for aviculture — if we do not regulate ourselves, others will do it for us.

I would like to see A.F.A. work more closely with allied groups in the fields of ornithology and conservation to exchange ideas and information and that A.F.A. would achieve the status it deserves.

Lastly, but by no means least, it is my earnest wish that at some time in the future ALL people dealing, breeding or handling birds would be honorable, law-abiding citizens.

Is it too much to hope that A.F.A. can achieve these goals? I think not. If each of us has the determination to do all that we can in our own particular area, I feel we can do it. We need your support. A.F.A. has passed the fledgling stage — we're ready to fly! ●



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