

A message from the President— Communication is key



James C. Hawley, Jr.
President

Of all the people who belong to the American Federation of Aviculture and are anywhere near a Techno/Digital Era person, I am not! I have gone into the 21st Century kicking and screaming.

But alas, I, too, now have used e-mail and I have even sent a text message (though it took me all day to do it). I am not a “blog-

ger,” but AFA is starting its own Facebook account. And, I still think “Twitter” is a term or technique my cardiologist uses.

My grandchildren use all of these methods of communication and *more*, in what we call the “Digital Era,” and their information moves very fast. It is very difficult for me to even try to keep up with the speed of this kind of technology, but I am trying to hold my own.

Aristotle broke down communication into three parts:

- a message
- a sender
- a receiver

That was more than 2,000 years ago, and it is still true today. It applies to all forms of communication. Oren Michaels, CEO of mashery.com, said, “People tend to interpret having the ‘right’ to express themselves online as implying a lack of consequences when they say stupid things.”

I had some thought while reviewing these methods of new communication and I would like to propose that All AFA members use rules of communication etiquette.

1. The responsibility for anything you write is yours alone.
2. Be honest and authentic.
3. Consider all who might be reading your post or e-mail.
4. Exercise good judgment and common sense.

5. Watch the “forward” button—don’t perpetuate an untruth or a lie.
6. Watch the “reply” button—as the message may not have originated from where you believe.
7. There should not be any need to be demeaning, inflammatory or offensive (after all, we are civil adults).
8. Remember to protect personal information, your own as well as that of others.

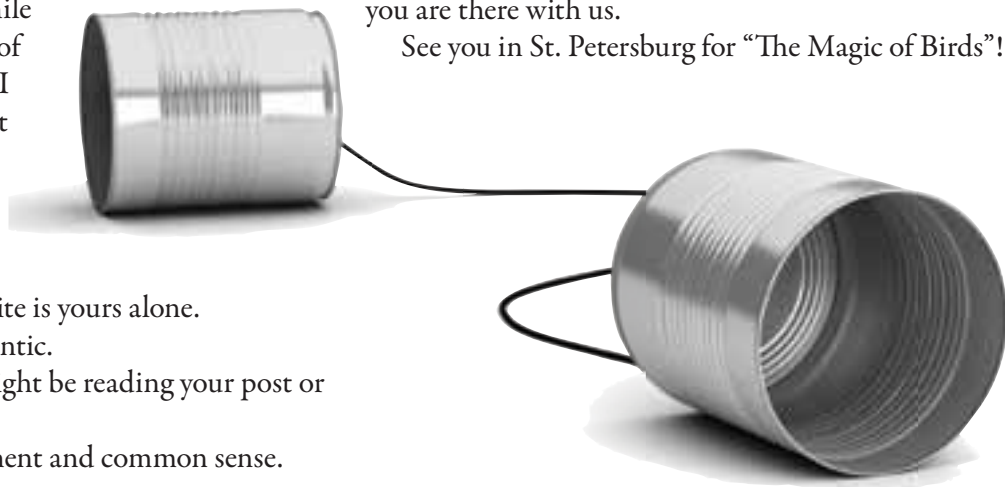
Right about now is the point where I bet you are thinking, “He should have stuck with the barnyard stories or maybe even tried a trip to the Land of Oz.”

But I do have a point to wind this down. An important use of effective communication is the teaching of skills and an increase of understanding (educating). Communication is a tool. Communication is and will always be essential to effective organizations. Communication should be clear and concise, yet also polite.

After communicating all of this to you, consider coming to St. Petersburg, Fla., on Aug. 4 for the American Federation of Aviculture’s 36th Annual Convention, where we will use the “face-to-face” and “hands-on” methods of communication. St. Petersburg is looking to be one of our most fun venues ever and an excellent speakers’ slate is lined up for you as well.

There are only a few conventions I have missed in the past 36 years and I know they were loads of fun. Don’t miss this one, it will be so much more fun if you are there with us.

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