

Remembering Marion Packer

by Patricia J. Chinnici

**Marion Joan Packer,
An AFA Life Member, 1934—2010**

I first met Marion at the first bird club in Reno, the Northern Nevada Cage Bird Society in the late 70's. She would always sit over to the side at the meeting, never saying very much. But as time went by we became friends. When we heard that a new bird club, Reno Area Avian Enthusiasts was forming we both joined and were founding members and on the club's Board of Directors.

Marion introduced me to AFA and I was hooked. For many years we went to all the conventions together no matter where they were held. She never missed one: even with a broken ankle and dragging an oxygen machine she went to the convention. If any convention was near an import station we would go check it out, and we usually brought a bird back home with us.

Marion bred many species of birds, starting with fancy chickens, button quail, doves, pheasants and other types of birds, then she discovered a Moluccan cockatoo named Jacko and then a mate for him named Galaxy. That's when her cockatoo breeding took off! She bred every type of cockatoo with the exception of the Gang Gang, but the love of her life became breeding the Philippine Red Vent Cockatoo, which she bred to the third generation. Marion raised many types of parrots, including African Greys, Caiques, Amazons, Eclectus, Cockatiels, Canaries and many others.

Marion left her estate for the care of all her birds and for the continuation of breeding the Red Vent Cockatoo in the very capable hand of Walt Frey.

Not many people knew Marion was a "rock hound" and a member of the Gem and Mineral Society of Reno. She made beautiful jewelry and donated some of her lovely sets to the AFA raffles. She worked with many types of metals and



precious stones; one set she made that was her favorite was of lavender jade.

Marion also designed and made gorgeous Amulet purses and each had a different design



on the side (I was lucky enough to win one that she donated at one of the AFA raffles). Even the chains on each purse were designed and made by her.

Marion was a multi-talented person and a fount of information on breeding and raising birds. She was my mentor and I and many others learned so much from her.

Fly free with your beloved cockatoos, old friend!