



## Remembering

### RAMON P. NOEGEL *"Tell Me Something Good"* 1933–2014

By Beth and Dwight Greenberg

Aviculture has lost another of its own. Rev. Ramon Noegel was promoted to the higher life on April 25th 2014. He was 80 years old.

At a very young age, his mother Ruth Noegel, instilled in him a love of reading and animals. He was born to aviculture over 70 years ago as his mother, Ruth, was an avid aviculturist. From the beginning Ramon studies and intuition kept him in the forefront of aviculture.

Rev. Noegel earned a degree in sacred literature from Holmes Theological Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina, and was a 32nd degree Mason and Scottish Rite. He built five churches in Florida, located in Sarasota, Bradenton, St. Petersburg, Lakeland, and Tampa.

Ramon brought many innovations to aviculture, holding 21 AFA AVY Awards, of which 19 are for First World Breeding Awards of parrot-type species. One such innovation was the Noegel cage, sometimes called the California breeder cage. His love for all wildlife has led to breakthroughs in captive breeding and management of not only psittacines, but also both species of giant tortoises (Galapagos and Aldabras) along with many endangered Caribbean iguanas. He was world renowned and a legend in conservation of these rare and endangered animals and spoke throughout the world at aviculture societies. His achievements included the largest herd of giant tortoises in the world and had produced more than any other institution. He holds the World record of the largest tortoise (The Guinness Book of World Records 1996 page 32).

He paved the way for the initial field research on many of the islands including his life-long dedication and love of the Caribbean Amazons, especially the Cuban Amazon. His techniques of aviary management of long-term captive flocks of endangered species, i.e.: The Saint Vincent Amazon, proved beyond dispute that conservation through captive breeding was a successful tool preventing the extinction of a given species.

As every aviculturist that knew him will tell you, he was always promoting and encouraging them to improve all aspects of their love of bird keeping.

Ramon's home is a private museum of antiques and oddities, many of which was collected through his travels abroad.

Through his philanthropic work he helped countless individuals and he will be profoundly missed.

Beth and I met Ramon (and Greg) during the 1st World Parrot Breeders conference held on Tenerife in 1986. We were very much novices when we met. Ramon, always the gentleman, made us feel that our insight on aviculture was not only valuable but very useful. During that meeting of no more than 10 minutes he planted a seed in Beth and I that has charted our course over a lifetime.

Our relationship drew very close when we moved to Florida from England and we retired from the Air Force. We spent many a day over lunches at the Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City talking about every imaginable subject.

Ramon was much more than a mentor, he was a dear dear friend who Beth and I will miss deeply. I have countless stories of his generosity and great sense of humor but now is not the time for those.

If pressed to say just one thing about Ramon, we would have to say if you looked up the definition of pure love you would see Ramon's picture next to it.

This encapsulates Ramon:

*It matters not how straight the gate, How charged  
with punishments the scroll.*

*I am the master of my fate:*

*I am the captain of my soul*

*(William Ernest Henley.)*

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