

A Message from the President

By Nancy Speed



It seems like just a few days ago we were enjoying ourselves in Portland talking with old and new friends and enjoying all the festivities involved. It was a grand conference and I believe was enjoyed by everyone.

One of the most popular items was the walk-through aviary (complete with birds) furnished by Julie Corwin (AFA northeast regional director). The bird show was also held there. Did any of you happen to see the 3 kidlets tagging along and wonder about them? As busy as Julie is working for aviculture and AFA, she made the decision to adopt her three grandchildren when their future was clearly in jeopardy. She gives it her all, whether it is for AFA or her family. We are indeed fortunate to have her as part of this organization.

Today, as I prepare this message, the colorful leaves outside are swirling furiously in the frigid wind and the ladybugs are entering the house through every nook and cranny. The seasons are changing and this means it is time to prepare for inclement weather.

I have spent the last two weeks preparing the aviaries for the winter. I did not fall off the ladder but did suffer a few minor injuries from the stapler. I knew all the tools should be off the ladder when it was moved, but was still very surprised when the stapler fell 20' and landed on my ankle. To add insult to injury this is the same stapler that smashed two of my knuckles.

With much effort, the birds are secure from the wind, rain and cold. The greenhouse heaters have been serviced and are keeping the temperatures in the aviaries at a tolerable level for humans and birds alike. The pig mats and fresh oat straw are out for the farm dogs. King, my elderly walking horse, had his teeth floated last week, and he and the other horses are already sporting a thick furry coat. Because of planning and preparation, I think we can handle what winter may bring.

AFA board members are working diligently to prepare the organization for 2015. In November, many AFA board members will attend the scheduled board of directors meeting in Houston, Texas. This is our budget meeting where our CFO, Brent Andrus, has the challenging task of preparing the proposed budget and presenting it to the board



for approval. Every item is reviewed line by line. Discussions are held; adjustments are made and the budget is voted on before other agenda items are discussed.

The budget is more challenging each year. During the 1980s revenue from a larger membership, more club affiliations and donations allowed AFA to fund programs that benefited many aspects of aviculture. A budget with diminishing income does not give us the ability to start new programs.

AFA has also been preparing to take action in certain legislative matters. The animal rights community has begun an aggressive legal battle with the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, essentially forcing them to add to the Endangered Species List many of the species we keep in our aviaries. The Golden Conure (*Guaruba guarouba*) was listed under the ESA from the law's inception without the proper investigation into its true status. Due to the extensive research prepared by Janice Boyd, PhD, AFA recently petitioned the United States Fish & Wildlife Service to provide the necessary scientific findings substantiating this listing or to remove it from the ESA listing.

The AFA exists because of members like you. Your support, through donations and participation in our conferences, as well as purchases from our AFA online store or leg bands, is essential to the organization's future planning and survival. I ask that you review the services and products the organization offers and keep AFA in mind when you review your holiday shopping list and potential list of worthy recipients for cash donations.

Every year I try to bring a new member into the AFA family by presenting them with a gift membership. That membership includes the outstanding AFA Watchbird journal. It is a win-win situation since a gift membership also supports the organization through increased membership income and reduces the costs of producing the award winning Watchbird. Clubs can sponsor a membership to a youth interested in birds. Plan to attend our educational conference in Chicago next year. Sign up and complete the Fundamentals of Aviculture courses.

We all need to be proactive in encouraging people to join and support AFA.

In friendship,

Nancy Speed



Photo by Shane Hancock

This ad cost \$20. But more importantly it helps the AFA and aviculture. Why...because a future without birds is no future for me...

Rick Jordan

www.hillcountryaviaries.com

Varietees Bird Shop

636-225-2473

info@vbirdshop.com

60 Meramec Valley Plaza
Valley Park, Missouri 63088

 **MDS**
Incorporated

Flexible Egg Candler—Candling without Handling **\$27.95**
Extra bright bulb on a 10"-flexible shaft to facilitate candling in the nest. Detects cracks in the shell and non-developing embryos. Operates on 2 "AA" batteries (included).

4422-C Replacement Lamp \$6.00
www.mdsvet.com • 1-800-435-9352

(561) 795-4878
Fax (561) 790-0059

RAINFOREST CLINIC
For Birds & exotics

3319 E ROAD
LOXAHATCHEE
FLORIDA 33470

SUSAN CLUBB, D.V.M.
susan@susanclubb.com
www.susanclubb.com