

A Message from the President

By Jamie Whittaker



I hope you were at the conference this year! If you weren't there you missed a lot. US Fish and Wildlife came and gave a presentation about the permits that they issue. They answered some questions from our members and have promised to return. Marshall Meyers was very informative at the Friday night legislative session. If you don't know who Marshall Meyers is, google him. We are very fortunate to have him working with us. Buddy Waskey flew his macaws for us on Saturday before the banquet. There was the huge group picture of the blue hair crowd supporting Laney Rickman and the Blue-throated macaws. Carol had some feathered helpers at the registration desk and there were adorable Golden conures posing with attendees. We had some very nice artwork in the silent auction. Such a fun event full of education, shopping, birds and bird friends. If you weren't there, you missed it. Next year make sure you are in Tucson, there is no point in missing another great event.

This has been a very busy year, on the conservation and the legislative front. I keep talking about putting aside differences and focusing on working together for the birds. This is going to become even more critical in the future. The grassroots movement can be successful and that is our goal for making a difference in the future.

AFA is an educational organization, we can educate our members on how legislation affects them and how to approach your lawmakers so that your birds can safely stay in your home. We can educate the lawmakers about the unintended consequences of legislation introduced to "protect" our birds. In order for us to be effective we have to have local people willing to attend hearings and meet with legislators.

What can we do? Pay attention to any law or regulation introduced at the local or state level and alert Genny Wall, AFA Legislative VP as soon as you hear about it. GWlawco@aol.com. How can you make sure you hear about it? Many counties and cities have a way to register to receive this information. You can also go to google.com/alerts and create an alert through google. The directions are there step by step. In your keywords include words like legislation, regulations, exotic animals, exotic birds, parrots, endangered species. Google will then send you an email with a link to those things as they are announced or published.

The African Grey has been moved to the CITES I list. It remains to be seen how that will affect us in the US. This move will affect the legal trade between countries. There are large breeders in Africa that will be greatly affected.

It is that time of year again, a time when we make those end of the year donations to organizations that we support. Please consider adding AFA to your list. AFA has been supporting aviculture through education, conservation and legislative awareness for 42 years. If you have the time to volunteer let us know. You can write to me, President@AFAbirds.org or Jason Crean VP1@afabirds.org or Georgia Hayes VP2@afabirds.org and we will find a way for you to help.

Finally, if you have any suggestions or questions – we really want to know!

Thank you for your continued support!

Jamie Whittaker