The Sixteenth Annual Convention: A Perspective

by Dick Ivy
Yorktown, Virginia

If one word was required to describe AFA’s 16th annual convention, it would be ‘challenge’!

It was the challenge of serving the faithful AFA supporters while being dealt high hotel, food and program costs in the shadow of the nation’s capitol, the challenge of trying to work in the strictures of a new by-laws, and making democratic compromises and decisions during a hot and muggy August week and a fire-damaged heat-air control at the Hyatt Regency at Crystal City, Virginia, poised on the busy I-395 artery that pumps commuters into the heart of Washington, D.C.

Conventioners were plied by animal rightists and naysayers, and informed by members of the working group of their plans for suggesting legislation restricting the entry of wild-caught birds into the U.S.

A lack of enough officers to maintain a continual quorum to conduct business resulted in only a few hour’s worth of business, and less time than that with the House of Delegates, and with the skills of AFA-spawned avicultural support over the years being challenged at the national level by some, most of the 300 or so conventioners nevertheless returned home Sunday, August 13, with things to do from educational seminars, talks in the hall, the hospitality room, and the hotel restaurant.

The new president, conservation research committee chairman Jack Clinton-Eitniear of Texas, with a slate of many energetic first-timers from the AFA support ranks, promised to correct the problems of the by-laws to make the business meetings run smoother and to provide new support to its member clubs and state coordinators. New and reelected board members met Saturday night, and Eitniear conducted an open forum with AFA members early Sunday morning to answer questions and receive suggestions, an activity he hopes to continue at the mid-winter meeting in February. Among the by-laws changes is to be a restoration of voting rights for committee chiefs, state coordinators, and club delegates.

Veteran AFA workers maintained that the by-laws did not restrict votes, but did not specifically state the right, leaving it open to the interpretation of the president. Whatever, the amendment will correct that, and members of the House of Delegates will soon receive a ballot with several amendments for change.

Avian research coordinator DVM Susan Clubb got her approvals for sizeable grants for veterinary research projects. Decided was rejection of funds designated for avian projects not approved or open ended by AFA. For specified grants, clubs should donate direct to the foundation where the grant will be used.

General donations to the Avian or Conservation Research funds are accepted. Some research funding by AFA, Clubb said, completes the requirements for funding for submitted projects, especially for those involving student research assistants. AFA does not accept checks written to persons, but rather to institutions.

The convention had fine speakers from America and abroad with the latest techniques in aviculture, updates on veterinary research and practice, and directions of avian activity. There were free seminars on Saturday and Sunday, from tips on how to have a healthy bird by Dr. Rose Ann Fiskett to canary answers presented by Loren Wilson of Wilson’s Parrots.

The commercial room had the largest congregation of sellers in AFA

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Also, we have an advertisement for AUS BIRDKEEPER, a magazine for bird enthusiasts, offering regular color features and articles on all popular cage/aviary birds written by top breeders/aviiculturists from all over the world. Also, veterinarian reports and tips. Everything for the Birdkeeper.

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said she never saw so much rain, and 
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truth will win and cool heads prevail. 
Hot and wet in and out of the conven­ 
two of the days were its cause. It was 
Hearts were made glad by winning 
raffles, buying birds and aviary 
items, past the display of the winners 
and other fine entries of the 1990 
photo contest at the exhibit hall entrance. 
They also had to pass Ann 
Clevenger of San Diego, California, 
passing out information about next 
year's convention there at a hotel 
arranged by convention chairman 
Dick Schubot. 
Stuffed turkey was on the banquet 
menu, and convention chairman Tom 
Marshall (who else) sang a delicious 
ode to departing president Phyllis 
Martin. First breeding awards and Avy 
awards were presented by Dale 
Thompson, and retiring officers were 
cited for their devotion to aviculture 
and AFA. 
Specialty societies met, and the 
African Parrot Society, organized by 
Isabel Taylor of North Carolina and 
Randy Carg of Iowa, had its first 
meeting Thursday night, attracting 29 
for their slide show. Other things 
were happening as well. Starr 
Kirchoff of Portage, Michigan, avid 
AFA supporter and legislative coor­ 
dinator of Bird Clubs of Michigan, 
whooped it up on receiving a Fax at 
the hotel informing her of a favorable 
decision concerning breeders selling 
birds not compatible with the breed­ 
ing program in a proposed state act. 
Hospitality, hindered by a no cork­ 
ing rule of the hotel, was nevertheless 
conducted deliciously by the 
National Capital Bird Club, Maryland 
Cage Bird Society, Inc., and Bird 
Clubs of Virginia by the members of 
the Peninsula Caged Bird Society of 
Newport News. 
Hearts were made glad by winning 
raffles, buying birds and aviary 
appointments, and finding new direc­ 
tions. Tom Adams of Pennsylvania 
was ecstatic as he shopped at the 
exhibit hall with $1,000 AFA dollars 
won to spend at commercial booths. 
A total of $975 was won to spend 
there by four other lucky winners. 
One member from Salt Lake City 
said she never saw so much rain, and 
two of the days were its cause. It was 
hot and wet in and out of the conven­ 
tion, the pressure is on to guide our 
futures, but as the old saying goes, 
truth will win and cool heads prevail. 
Let us meet the challenge on all fronts 
with the officers you have chosen to 
conduct national avicultural business 
and convene in San Diego with fresh, 
new accomplishments.  

Current President and past Conservation Committee chair Jack Clinton-Eitniear receives a limited edition of Tony Silva's book on endangered parrots from Silvio 
Mattacchione. The book, donated by Mattacchione and Silva, is valued at $1,000 
and will be raffled off at the winter meeting. See special envelope insert, this issue, 
for raffle tickets and information.

First breeding awards went to (from right): Chelle Plasse (Long-tailed Cissa), jerry 
Jennings (Choco Toucan, Collared Aracaris), Phyllis Martin for Jan van Oosten 
Salvadori's Fig Parrot, Musschenbroek's Lorikeet), Eric Peake for Joan Davis (Great 
Billed Parrot), and Kevin Clubb (Fiery-shouldered Conure). Not pictured is Michael 
Atkinson (Edward's Fig Parrot) and Bill Lasarzia (Desmarest's Fig Parrot).

Phyllis Martin, past president, 
received a Cuban 
Macaw print 
from the Board 
as an expression 
of their apprecia­ 
tion for her 
efforts over 
the years.