

# A Message from the President

By Nancy Speed

It was with great pleasure that AFA hosted its 38th annual conference in the grand city of San Antonio, Texas. I was delighted to see all the diverse and wonderful activities offered to youth groups, first-timers and veterans alike. We welcomed the 4-H participants, bird exhibitors, local bird club members as well as the membership at large, for several days of education and fun.



The display of the "Golden Macaws" was the highlight for everyone to see for the first time. And, wasn't that enclosure provided by

Dr. Benny J. Gallaway and LGL Animal Care Products just amazing?

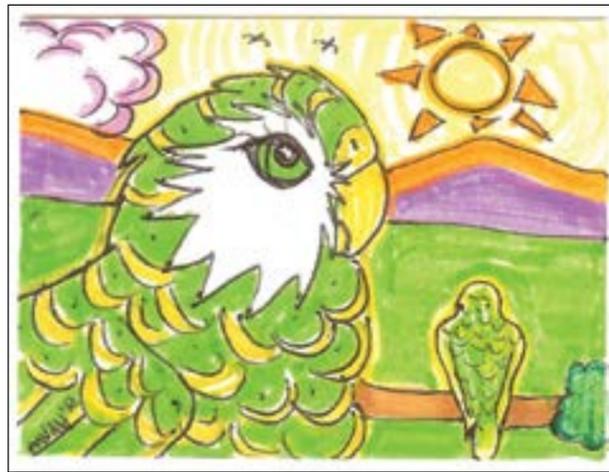
With the generous support of our vendors, sponsors and general membership, we hosted quite a memorable event. From the very touching keynote address presented by Wayne E. Smyth to the final banquet festivities, we all left with a rejuvenated sense of responsibility and dedication to the birds we love so much.

In this age of the Internet, we often forget there are members out there who will never have the opportunity to attend a convention, be a participant in an online group or form friendships with members as easily as the rest of us can.

Those without a computer or internet access support AFA in what many consider an old fashioned way—they pay their membership dues and share with others what they have learned by reading the *Watchbird*.

The week immediately prior to the annual HOD meeting and convention is usually a stressful time for me, and this year was no exception. During that week, I received a letter from a member addressed to "President of AFA." Victoria's letter was very inspiring and in it she expressed her gratitude to the dedication and loyalty of those actively involved in AFA and to our publications committee for the quality of the *Watchbird*.

She was very excited to read about the Kakapo (Volume XXXVIII) and decided to share her newfound knowledge of this bird by hand-drawing more than 200 note cards with a message of their plight and leaving these cards in random locations for others to find. She calls this her "Kakapo Crusade." Victoria added that even though



she and her husband (who is a veteran) were home bound, she had never used a computer.

Her efforts on behalf of the Kakapo are a way for her to be more connected to "the real bird world." Thank you, Victoria.

Our annual HOD meeting and conference will continue to be an exciting and educational event. For many of us it is a tradition. But, there are many members who are no longer able to attend or who may never have an opportunity to attend. Those members continue to be a vital and important part of this organization.

Thank you for supporting AFA with your membership dues and donations. You will help ensure there will be a future with birds!

In friendship,  
Nancy Speed

Drawings by Victoria Wayne



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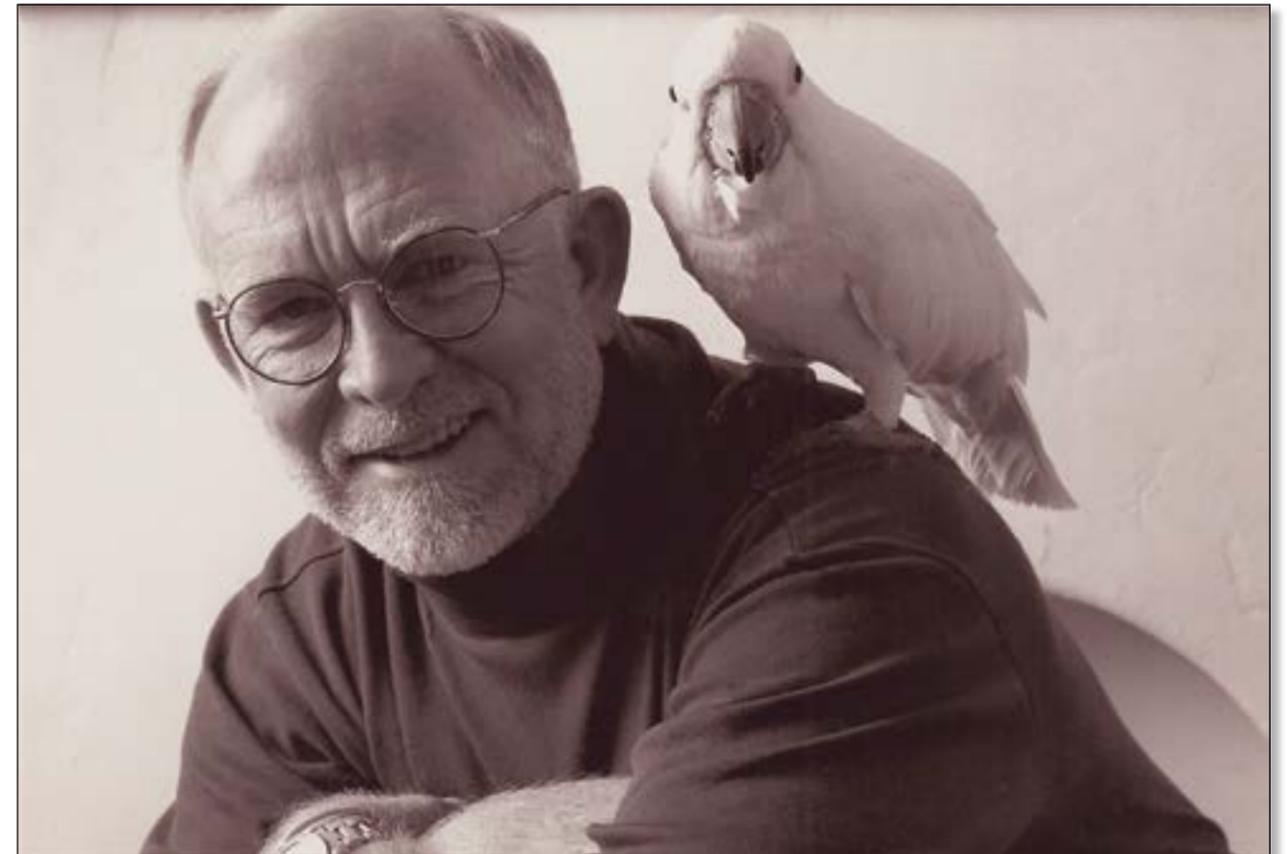
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*In memory of* **Wayne E. Smyth**



Jan. 12, 1942–Nov. 25, 2012 | Goodbye, our dear friend. You made the world a more colorful place.

*In memory of* **Robert Dean Queen**

July 25, 1945—Sept. 22, 2012

Robert “Bob” Queen, 67, died on Saturday morning, Sept. 22, at Vista Hospice Center in San Antonio, Texas after a brief battle with brain cancer.

Bob was born to Emily and James Queen in Monterey Park, Calif., in 1945. He lived most of his life in Riverside, Calif., where he retired from the Riverside City Fire Department after 35 years of dedicated service, receiving both the California State Firemen’s Valor Award for Heroic Acts as well as a proclamation from the City of Riverside for Excellence and Dedication.

He was residing in Blanco, Texas, where he fulfilled his love of animals as co-owner of the highly respected Queen’s Pride Aviaries.

He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Virginia “Ginny” Queen, of Blanco; his son, Robert Queen Jr., of Springfield, Va.; two grandchildren, Alec and Allison Queen, also of Springfield; and one brother, James Queen of Rosemont, Calif.

At his request, no memorial service was held, but the imprint he left in the hearts and minds of those he left behind will be remembered.