Brilliant colors caught the eye of spectators once again, as AFA provided the backdrop for another SPBE affiliated LoryLeague Hookbill Show held during the San Antonio convention. The show—co-sponsored by the Triangle Bird Club and Feathering Crest Aviary—provided the opportunity for convention attendees to take part in a concurrent educational event, while returning live birds and a fabulous festivity of feathers back to the AFA convention. I had the honor of being asked back to judge the show a second time, this year presiding during the afternoon show.

A Chance to Train

Because entries were lighter than last year, I had more time to spend on educating the gallery, which I was asked to do. Usually, there is little opportunity to instruct or inform the audience, but this show provided an occasion to delve into examples of training birds for show. The demonstrations of cage training added a teaching element to the event, to an extent usually found in monthly club presentations.

Overall conditioning techniques and effective show cage training are the two components that are directly under the exhibitor’s control that lead to success when exhibiting parrots. Training birds for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing when exhibiting parrots. Training birds exhibiting for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometimes months in advance, and advice on 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months in advance, and advice on routine bathing for show starts weeks, sometime...
The Top Bench

My pick for Best in Show was a magnifi-
cent Umbrella Cockatoo with superb con-
formation that was in perfect condition. Once I got this cockatoo up on the perch and as he acclimated to it, he stood up—steady and fearless—and showed confidence as if he had been attending shows all his life, which made it commanding in its presenta-
tion on the bench. This impressive Umbrella also won Best Novice, having won the Novice sub-division earlier, and once perched, maintained his regal stance.

Second Best in Show went to an impres-
sive Abyssinian Lovebird with wonderful con-
formation and very good head quali-
ties—including noteworthy skull width—
that was in lovely condition. This male Abyssinian was steadfast, showing lit-
tle fear while presenting, though slightly more spraying to enhance its condition. This male was in lovely condition. This male was in good color. Just a little more spray-
ing to bring out its full condition, and more time in the show cage to make it more com-
fortable, would help this Parrotlet move up in future shows.

Third Best in Show was a wonderful Quaker (Monk) Parakeet with wonder-
ful size that appeared to have very good con-
formation. Unfortunately its deport-
ment at the time masked its backbone and a continual ruffling of feathers affected its condition during this show, which held it back. However, no doubt that this quali-
ity Quaker would continue to climb up the ranks with more spraying to tighten the feathers and cage training to encourage it to sit up to show off its wonderful lines.

Fourth Best in Show was another enchanting Umbrella Cockatoo with good con-
formation but a few minor condition-
problems that would have otherwise given the first place umbrella, a run for its money, with a little more cage train-
ing. This talented umbrella was voted the Lory League Award for “Audience Favor-
te,” for its fondness for performing numer-
ous summersaults and other tricks. A lit-
tle more spraying to enhance its condition would help this wonderful cockatoo climb even higher up the bench in the future.

First through Fourth Best in Show were all so impressive that any one of them could change position in future shows with per-
haps a little more cage training and spraying. Fifth Best in Show was a fabulous Quaker (Monk) Parakeet with wonder-
ful size that appeared to have very good con-
formation. Unfortunately its deport-
ment at the time masked its backbone and a continual ruffling of feathers affected its condition during this show, which held it back. However, no doubt that this quali-
ity Quaker would continue to climb up the ranks with more spraying to tighten the feathers and cage training to encourage it to sit up to show off its wonderful lines.

Sixth Best in Show went to a wonderful Lutino mutation Peachface Lovebird, in splendid color, which also won Best Junior Exhibit in the show. This Peachface had excellent size and shape, and was in very good condition, demonstrating that it was very well cared for. A box show cage would have allowed a better all around view than the pet cage it was in, presenting the bird in a more advantageous manner. The color was deep and consistent and overall, it perched quite steadily, making it an excel-

Seventh Best in Show was a very lovely Blue mutation Pacific Parrotlet that showed well through most the show and was in good color. Just a little more spray-
ing to bring out its full condition, and more time in the show cage to make it more com-
fortable, would help this Parrotlet move up further in future shows.

Eighth Best in Show went to a stately and nicely feathered Red-rumped Parrotlet with very good size. Just a little more show cage training to help it gain the confidence to sit up erectly, would no doubt enable this entry to show off its full backbone to dem-
strate all its qualities.

Ninth Best in Show was a wonderful Green Cheeked Conure who was in good condition overall, but has some missing flight feathers. No doubt, time to re-grow these feathers, along with further cage training to enhance its posture and deport-
ment, would help to show off its lines at future shows.

Tenth Best in Show was a splendid Canary-wing Parakeet with good propor-
tions, just a little down in condition, and its deportment, but undoubtedly will do well in future shows with more spraying and feeling at ease in the show cage.

Placing on the Bench

As I always explain to the gallery, bird shows are merely a snapshot in time, and those Quakers can change for moment to moment. In truth, bird shows are actu-
ally beauty contests at a given “moment in time.” This is because birds can change from show to show, from week to week, and even moment to moment.

Overall quality as judged by genetic con-
formation—and superb condition and deportment as reflected by the exhibitor’s work invested in show cage training, fre-
bquent bathing and top nutritional pro-
grams throughout the year—usually pro-
vide a bird with a high chance of scoring a win at shows. However, conformation is heavily considered as reflected in the show standard, and judges keep the genetic traits of birds in mind because the winners will often be bred and pass desirable traits onto their offspring.

It is not uncommon for birds to become tired and fatigued during a long show day, which can prevent an entry from appearing at its very best. We often see such problems as feathers being inadvertently drooped, ruined, or messed at the last minute that will affect both the condition and confor-
mation. Birds can refuse to perch, climb all over the cage, or simply not feel like “showing,” when perched in front of the judge, which prevents a bird from reveal-
ing its true size, proportions and shape that the judge needs to see at that “moment in time” on the bench. Conditioning prob-
lems from pin feathers, to missing feathers, to smearing droppings on feathers, or even birds bathing in the water cup—all occur. These factors must be considered when you take your bird to a show to be judged. No one bird wins every show, and not every bird will place at a show, but it doesn’t mean you don’t have a quality bird. A lot...
Dedication to Aviculture as an Industry

In addition to being the contracted AFA Business Office manager, Rick Jordan volunteers as the AFA CITES Committee chairman, Conservation and Research Committee chairman and sits on the AFA Membership Committee. His devotion to aviculture seems tireless and he often volunteers to assist in the preparation of AFA handouts or legislative matters and bylaw changes.

Jordan wrote the majority of the FOA courses, which were made possible by a grant from Pet Care Trust and the Schubot Exotic Bird Health Center, College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University. Other authors and contributors of the FOA courses include Barbara Heidenreich, Rhoda Shewokis, Jason Crean, Dr. Donald Brightsmith, Juan Cornejo, Jeannie Meisle, Lyrae Perry, Mart Schmit, Linda Seger, and more. The Fundamentals of Aviculture (FOA) are online courses that are offered exclusively through AFA and provide veterinarians and vet techs with Continuing Educational Units (CEUs). These educational courses are a great resource and highly recommended for anyone interested in birds, from the novice to the professional. Jordan and team are currently in the planning stages of FOA III which is expected to be released in 2014.

Childhood Memories Ignite Avian Interest

Jordan’s curiosity about avian breeding biology started in his youth. He reminisced about incubating eggs from doves, robins, pigeons and other species that he studied as a youngster. Through constant study of wild birds Jordan was able to witness developmental stages of the embryos—wild birds often discard undesirable eggs from their nesting sites.

Jordan said, “I studied and learned about eggs, birds, incubation, and biology. I used to watch with fascination the barn swallows in my grandfather’s barn as they built their nests of manure, mud and sometimes the string used to bind the hay bales together.”

As with most aviculturists, Jordan’s parrot passion began with an American Budgie. Jordan said, “I always loved my grandmother’s parakeet. At about age 10, my uncle bought me a parakeet and cage setup and my interest in caged birds probably blossomed from that little ‘keet.”

As Jordan grew up, so did his interest in avian biology. In 1978 Jordan joined the Air Force. He secured a bank loan and bought a wild-caught Blue and Gold Macaw (Carlos) as a pet. “My macaw arrived from the jungles with cut wings, a short tail and a ferocious attitude. I was petrified of that bird,” he said.

He decided to get creative and built a giant jungle gym in the only spare bedroom of the apartment that he rented. At the time Jordan was living off-base in Biloxi, Miss. His neighbors used to see him in uniform in the mornings as he headed off to work. They often inquired, “Do you have a pet duck or something. We hear a lot of honking going on from your apartment,” Jordan said.

Working His Way Up

In 1984 Jordan was discharged from the Air Force and