



2014 Convention Recap

By Concetta Ferragamo

The 2014 American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. (AFA) hosted the 40th educational convention in Portland, Oregon, the City of Roses, with much anticipation and great success. Bird lovers traveled from across the globe to gather together for this amazing educational meeting of the minds. Even Portland's Mayor, Charlie Hales, welcomed the AFA to the city of Portland. His letter was featured in the convention program. Portland provided a wonderful backdrop for the convention as an entertaining and historical city with fun and unique opportunities for visitors to experience. Downtown Portland, in itself, offered us a multi-cultural experience with the famous food trucks and downtown concerts. If you are a fan of the NBC series, Grimm, you would recognize many different sections of Downtown used in their scenes. For the most part, we all took a little time to venture out and do some exploring.

The Holiday Inn and Conference Center serves many Portland conventions. The open dining area adjacent to the common conference area meant that attendees never had to really leave "conference central", and the wait-staff handled the conversational table hopping with grace and good humor.

Of course, it goes without saying, that the major topics of conversation amongst us focused on everything aviculture. The 2014 AFA convention, once again, covered all aspects of aviculture and proved to be another invaluable educational convention. Where else will you get an opportunity to pick and choose among 30 different presentations about aviculture?

Several Board members, Chairs, and volunteers arrived in Portland the Saturday before the convention to begin setting up for Wednesday's conference kickoff. With the arrival of the AFA truck and store merchandise, the tingle of excitement started to build. As the teams organized for set up, the level of excitement escalated and became contagious, even spreading to curious hotel staff and other non-conference guests. As the birds began to arrive and attendees checked in for the conference, a whole new level of excitement surged through the venue, and the anticipation became exhilaration.

The board members and committee chairs held the annual board meeting on Tuesday before the conference. All AFA members are always invited and encouraged to attend board meetings. When other members of AFA participate in board meetings,

it helps the board and chairs to stay connected and hear their input, which is always appreciated and often helpful as the board tackles projects. As the board meeting adjourned, a new buzz of enthusiasm permeated the conference site, and the smiles became infectious, no matter one's state of exhaustion, AFA officers tend to run on minimal sleep.

The conference kick-off started early Wednesday morning with the president's message to the House of Delegates (HOD). The annual HOD meeting is very important, for it is here that the leaders of the American Federation of Aviculture come together, make rules and regulations, have a meeting of the minds and get things done. Traditionally the HOD votes annually on rules and regulations, and sets the stage for the coming year with new ideas to be discussed, which culminate in new initiatives, rules, and regulations to be finalized at the following HOD meeting (to be held in Chicago of 2015).

President, Nancy Speed's message to the HOD, to be carried on to the entire AFA membership:

AFA President, Nancy Speed, introduced the board and the chairs to the HOD and then delivered an inspiring and motivating message to us all. She went over the program of the convention and praised the HOD for serving as the management of the AFA. Nancy reminded the attendees of the 2014 convention theme, *Protecting the Future of Aviculture*, and why it is so important that we stay focused on the future. Nancy motivated the members of the HOD with the importance of their individual roles with regard to aviculture and with regard to their leadership responsibilities to their assigned





areas of the nation. She went on to explain how the House of Delegates is the driving force and key organization in the United States working on behalf of aviculture (the keeping of birds). Nancy concluded that only through the hard work of the Board of Directors, Committee Chairs, and House of Delegates in the areas of education, conservation, disaster relief and legislative awareness would AFA continue to survive, which is crucial if we want to continue having birds in our lives. The future is bleak, and we must find a way to stand united for the sake of aviculture.

House of Delegates (HOD): Wednesday Morning

The House of Delegates comprises the elected and appointed board of directors and the appointed club delegates. This year at the HOD meeting, a discussion about the future of aviculture was a hot topic. We went over the importance of loyalty and membership to the American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. There was a lengthy discussion on how the Internet and social media can lead to a false sense of unity among bird owners across the nation and around the world. Granted, some social media is well run, and offers legitimate and reliable resources for people to utilize. Our own AFA page on Facebook is such a venue. The most common reason for not joining a reputable educational organization, such as AFA, is lack of funds to afford annual dues. It is unfortunate that economy is climbing back at a snail's pace, because these constraints hurt AFA membership as well as membership within AFA's affiliated clubs.



Financial hardships cause people to step away from solid educational organizations such as the AFA. This hurts aviculture more broadly, as misinformation proliferates unchecked through less reputable (but FREE) alternative social media venues. There are so many groups online sharing and discussing incorrect or even dangerous (mis) information...and bird owners are believing and following it. These scenarios are hurting the solid and reliable organizations, hurting bird owners, and hurting the birds. Through misguided and misinformed social media and groups, aviculture is regressing, and poor husbandry and poor nutritional practices are popping up more frequently.

The HOD discussed how important it is for anyone who owns a bird to know about AFA and join. Members of the American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. have an opportunity when

encountering such misinformation, for we can help redirect fellow bird owners to legitimate and excellent sources of education... including joining AFA and never letting their membership expire. Bird people need us to speak up and literally invite them—people, clubs, groups, businesses—to join AFA. The future of aviculture is uncertain, and that is no secret. For the sake of our birds, we must reach out to others and encourage them to join AFA, so that AFA can continue to frame and influence the future of aviculture.

The HOD discussed some of the seemingly endless legislative challenges that are facing our membership one after another, in state after state. Second Vice President, Brent W. Gattis, discussed how the ESA and CITES lists, designed to affect conservation, are fast becoming legislative ailments that will be problematic for aviculturists around the globe. These issues point out the need for education globally, which is why being part of a national educational organization is so important. Remember, AFA was born in response to legislative issues in 1974. At that time, our government, responding to fear put thousands of birds to death; and was discovered that they acted within the parameters of the law despite the fact it was horribly legal. AFA was founded to educate law makers and to promote the development of laws that protect us and our birds. Legislative awareness among bird owners is necessary if we want a future that allows us to keep and foster, and love our birds.

Of course AFA is about more than legislative awareness. Education, disaster relief and conservation each hold a vital position in the discussion of keeping our birds. These are only some of the issues that highlight the importance of being a member of the American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. In a nutshell, anyone and everyone who owns a bird or enjoys having parrots and other birds in their lives will want to know about, and support AFA through membership or sponsorship.

With the President's permission, Membership Chair, Concetta Ferragamo, discussed the current membership statistics, and the value of the benefits that AFA extends to its membership, with the HOD. We then held a role play session, presenting scenarios on how to get bird owners involved with AFA and local clubs. It was pointed out that it has become too easy and comfortable for people to give the excuse, "I can't afford it" or "What is in it for me" or "I used to be a member and didn't see the need to rejoin." We covered several ways to handle these scenarios and provided some fresh new ideas on how to invite others to join AFA. Too many clubs have dissolved over recent years, which leaves bird owners with nowhere to turn except for those "interesting" Facebook and Yahoo groups, all of which are far too easy to access all day, every day. It is more important now, than ever before, to redirect these people to better, safer sources of reliable and legitimate bird



owning information. To the experienced bird owner, it seems mind boggling and more than a little alarming that novices are so easily taken in by incorrect information and are so willing to share it. As leaders of AFA and passionate bird owners, it is our duty as well as our responsibility to aviculture as a whole to help guide people to reliable information and the supportive friendships that are part of the AFA experience. During the session, flyers were handed out and AFAM2M perks were discussed. If anyone wants these flyers, please visit the AFA Facebook albums, AFA website, AFA Membership Chair, Concetta Ferragamo, or the AFA office. The flyers are available for all AFA members to utilize on behalf of aviculture. In conclusion of the membership discussion at the HOD meeting, **a challenge was made to the HOD for each HOD member to get at least 5 new or bring back expired members by the next convention.** Terry Timberlake, Melanie Allen and Regional Director, Georgia Hayes, and several others went into action right then and there. "Thank you ladies!"

The HOD meeting concluded with voting on by-laws and a motivational message to not be intimidated or shy but to speak up to the public. **The HOD are the leaders of the American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. and our great nation needs their leaders to guide the stray flocks to the primary national educational organization representing aviculture—AFA.** After the HOD meeting concluded, groups went on to an offsite trip to the Oregon Zoo and others stayed behind to prep for the President's Gala evening of events to commence at 7 P.M.

The President's Gala

The President's message by Nancy Speed was warm and inviting as she welcomed the attendees of the 30th convention to join in on the festivities of the evening. AFA Secretary, Carol Woodson, had the registration table running smoothly as the attendees gathered around and mingled. The Raffle tables were set up, and the festivities were officially launched. The gala was held outside of the open concept restaurant which gave the ambience of the restaurant being part of AFA.



In the vendor room there was a beverage station set up with finger foods. For engaging entertainment, there were two stations set up for an Iron Chop competition and a Bling Your Cage Competition. Parrot Nation's, Patricia Sund, hosted the Iron

Chop event. Patricia Sund summed up the event, "The Iron Chop competition is a fun event where teams compete to make the most appealing, well-balanced, most nutritious and interesting plate of Chop. The plates are judged on taste, appearance, presentation as well as explanation of the ingredients and why they were used. One of the reasons I decided to create this event was so that people can learn to create Chop by actually making it. Once they make it, they realize it's not at all difficult to do, and it's far less intimidating than they realized." As one participant stated to me, "I so regret not entering last year. I learned so much from the competition just by making it and learning from the others on my team. And it was SO much fun!" To our entertainment and surprise, judges Georgia Hayes and Jamie Whittaker decided to taste the finished dishes. Even our AFA President, Nancy Speed, tried the chop dishes. Admittedly, I too, ate some of the leftovers and shared it among the guests. Of course, the bulk of the chop went to the birds that were attending the convention.



Iron Chop Winners

The Bling Your Cage competition is a piece of a Five-year study on how to keep your bird "psychologically" and physically well adjusted and satisfied while residing in an enclosure. There were four stations set up with an equal number of toys and the same size cages. The concept of a cage challenge is to understand moderation and placement. There are four levels of cage set ups: level 0 (no toys), level 1 (4–6 toys), level 2 (7–11 toys), level 3 (12–16+ toys). Keeping in mind, foot toys count, not all toys need to be or should be large toys. Level 2–3 is the goal. Having enough things to do while avoiding the "head bop" or "body slam" are very important and have an imminent effect on bird behavior and aggression inside and outside of the enclosure. There was a hand out offering tips and showing examples. "Some birds are intimidated by colorful toys. Some birds are bored with neutral colored naturals. Some birds like having them both. One thing is for sure, don't assume that your bird doesn't like toys. It is our responsibility as bird owners to figure out what our bird(s) want and need."



The four teams put their talents to work and themed out fantastic cage set-ups. Judges Robin Shewokis and Concetta Ferragamo had a difficult decision to make when having to choose 1 team. Each team had to explain what bird would go in the cage, describe why the toys were chosen and explain the reasoning of the placement of the toys. The winners of the Cage Bling Competition were: first time AFA attendees, Charlie Gondor (AFA Specialty Director), Denise Morris (pet owner), and AFA convention veteran Adrienne Mock (pet owner). After the prizes were awarded and the bar closed, the evening came to a close, allowing attendees six or seven hours of rest before the three days of solid presentations were to commence.



Bling Your Cage Winners

Convention Speakers: 30 presentations within three full days, starting at 8 A.M. – 9 P.M. daily

The presentations at the AFA convention are all selected and voted on by the speaker committee prior to the convention. The chosen speakers are professionals in the industry from all over the world. The 2014 speakers were equally informative as they were impressive. The speakers were **Patricia K. Anderson, PhD** presenting her talk called, *An Anthropological Perspective on the Human-Avian Bond*. **Alycia Antheunisse** (AFA Western Regional Director) did a presentation called, *Hand-feeding: The many techniques to hand rearing parrot chicks*. **Ashle Antheunisse** presented a talk and demonstration of Handfeeding Lories in the Junior Avian Youths workshops. **Nyla Copp** presented a talk called, *Out on a Limb*. **Jason Crean, MA, MS** (AFA Mid-eastern Regional Director) presented a talk titled, *Zoo-trition: Going raw in your*



avian diets. **Roland Cristo** (first AFA member from the state of California in 1974) presented a talk about, *Breeding Softbilled Song Birds*. Roland was one of the 2014 AVY award winners. **Kateri J. Davis** presented, *Introduction to Turacos in Aviculture and Introduction to Mousebirds in Aviculture*. **Barbara T. Dwyer** presented, *Can Enhancing the Welfare of Psittacines in an Avian Store Positively Affect Length of Time to Sale?* **Caroline Efstathion, MS** presented, *The Role of Disease in Parrot Conservation Efforts*. Caroline participated in the poster competition too. **Scott Golden** presented, *Parrot Finches in American Aviculture*. **Concetta Ferragamo, BA** (AFA Northeastern Regional Director) presented two Junior Avian Youths (JAY's) workshops. **Brent Gattis** (AFA 2nd Vice President) and **Alycia Antheunisse** (AFA RD) presented, *Preparing for Legislation 101*. **Debbie Goodrich** presented, *Parrots Gone Wild: The meaning of parrots in our lives*. Debbie also participated in the Junior Avian Youths (JAYs) Workshops with her performing parrots. **Ian Heap, PhD** presented, *Birds of the Australian Outback—Tales of a Bird Loving Aussie*. **Rob Horsburgh, BS** presented, *The Birds and the Bees, the Interrelationship with Honey Bees, Certain Birds and the Plants They are Dependent on*. **Sally C. Huntington** presented, *Hand Rearing: hatching to weaning*. **Nancy Ingram** presented, *A Breeding Trigger for Strawberry Finches*. **Tom Marshall, MED, MA**, (AFA past president) presented, *Parrots and the Theory of Co-evolution*. **Katy McElroy** presented, *Ten Years with Palm Cockatoos: Notes on breeding, management and pet quality*. **Alicia McLaughlin, DVM** presented two talks, *Aspergillosis in Birds: The fungus among us & Avian Atherosclerosis/Heart Disease: Prevention, diagnosis, and treatment*. **Ron Moorhead** presented, *What is Falconry?* **Chris Shank** presented, *Positive Parrot Training Using a Clicker*. **Robin Shewokis, BS** (AFA Massachusetts State Coordinator) presented *10 Things You Can Make with PVC in 15 Minutes or Less*. **Patti Strand, BS** presented, *Animals, Public Policy and the Animal Rights Agenda*. This presentation set the tone for the two other legislative presentations. **Genevieve Wall** (AFA Legislative Vice President & CA RD) and **Brent Gattis** (AFA 2nd Vice President) held a grassroots legislative workshop.

Specialty Clubs: where long distance clubs meet and hold sessions

The AFA convention serves as a meeting place for everyone involved with aviculture, which is ideal for specialty club's members to get together. This year six specialty





clubs held session: National Finch & Softbill Society, Lory League, International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants, Quaker Parakeet Society, International Parakeet Society and Lineolated Parakeet Society. Holding a session at the AFA convention provides the opportunity for Specialty Club members and non-members to attend and quite often join these clubs. Linda Rubin served as Specialty Director for many years, and due to health issues she stepped back. AFA thanked Linda for her years of devotion and dedication in more detail earlier in the year. Linda is a longtime member of AFA who set the tone on how to stay involved no matter what the circumstances for the sake and survival of aviculture. Charlie Gondor was elected into the position of Specialty Director and sworn in at the Saturday night banquet dinner. Charlie visited with each of the specialty clubs that attended the convention.

Junior Avian Youths (AFA JAY's) Workshops: AFA Kids-growing up

The education committee approved the second edition to the JAY's workshops. The 2014 workshop was pulled from the Fundamentals of Aviculture (FOA I) course and turned into a "kid friendly" interactive workshop. These JAY's programs can be used by AFA affiliated clubs for their youth programs and/or outreach programs. This year the local Oregon Boys and Girls Clubs of America sent groups of youths to attend the Thursday and Friday two hour workshops. Each workshop started with an interactive power point presentation which covered the FOA content presented by Concetta Ferragamo. Each attendee gets a certificate of completion which is signed by AFA Education Chair. After the main presentation, the JAY's participated in a hands-on, hand feeding lorikeets demonstration from our very impressive Junior speaker, Ashle Antheunisse. Then the JAY's saw a performing parrots mini show by Debbie Goodrich and her amazing flock. Debbie offers an educational talk with entertaining spin as the parrots roller skate, shoot hoops or throw garbage away. In conclusion of the two hours session, The JAY's toured Julie Corwin's (AFA RD) enchanting live bird walkthrough aviary. The smiles (children and chaperones) were worth all the hard work that went into the preparation to create these programs. The JAY's program was thankful to have Nick Pendergrass and Eric Carpenter to help with the computers and the workshops.



The 2014 Walkthrough Aviary: mirrors what one would imagine from a film set portraying a fairytale featuring parrots.

Julie Corwin (AFA Northwestern Regional Director) set up a most impressive live bird, walkthrough aviary. No statues in this aviary. This amazing set up took 16 people working together (literally) to erect this most impressive PVC construction, tarps, drapes, greenery, play stands, swings, cages and stunningly well behaved birds of all sizes and species. Julie was on hand to give talks about each and every bird in the live exhibit. Please look at the photos of this more impressive set up. Thank you Julie and team for bringing this amazing walkthrough aviary to the AFA convention. On a side note, Julie sets up this exhibit several times a year in the Oregon area to promote education about parrots.



Special Presentations

Poster Session 2014

Hematophagores mite load effects on the clinical pathology of nestling European Starlings, presenting author: Caroline Efstathion, MS.

Improving conservation of endangered parrots by the use of an integrated pest management scheme to protect nest cavities from invasive Africanized honey bees, presenting author: Janice Boyd, PhD.



Raffle Committee

Tiffany Latino and team pulled off daily entertainment with seemingly endless sets of anything and everything bird related. They did a great job of bringing us a variety of necessities and luxuries to fill our bird owning desires. The raffle committee works all year long to prep for the annual convention. They are the first to set up and the last to close down, ending at the banquet dinner after the live auctions close.



Raffle Winners 2014

3-Day

1. Lafeber Gift Basket:
Adrienne Mock
2. Celltei Shoulder Carrier:
Ticket # 207370
3. Coffee Carousel by The
Bird Shop: Shawna Augustine
4. Stamp Collection by The
Bird Shop: Norm Kirshen
5. Shop Vac by The Bird
Shop: Rockie Mooney
6. Celltei Lg Backpack:
Barbara Dwyer
7. Kennelsol Cleaning
Package: Georgia Fletcher
8. Carry-On Suitcase by The
Bird Shop: Nick Mooney
9. Framed Art by Georgia
Fletcher: Wayne Andrews
10. Feather Flower
Arrangement: Mindy Ha

11. Framed Pictures:
Jan Cheney
12. Rio DVD set by Linda
Nichelmann: Nancy Atkinson
13. Prevue Hendrix
Medium Wrought Iron Cage:
Tana Sutphin
14. Prevue Hendrix Small
Wrought Iron Cage: Lisa
McManus
15. Parrot Festival Registration:
Shawna Augustine
16. Rodie's Feed & Pet Supply
Gift Basket: Georgia Fletcher
17. A&E Java Tree Playpen:
Jane Johnson

Super 8

1. Rabbit Air Bio GS
SPA-625A Hepa Air Purifier:
Rene Srogus
2. Quilt by Sharon Garsee:
Jamie Whittaker

3. \$500.00 Hari Food Products
by Hagen: Nancy Atkinson
4. Ruby & Diamond Ring by
Georgia Hayes: Julie Corwin
5. \$500.00 Cash Card by
ABC Birds: Carol Woodson
6. 2015 Convention
Registration by AFA:
Alexandrea Culp
7. Surface 2 32GB tablet by
Mark E. Moore: Janice Boyd
8. AFA Conference DVD's by
AFA: Carol Woodson

Live Auction

- Coins by Mark Hagen:
Linda Nickelmann,
Amy Baker, Tim Thomas
- Diamond Ring by Pat
Chinnici: Mary Ellen LaPage
- Convention Art by Tony
Sanchez: Tim Thomas
- Reception Art by Tony
Sanchez: Alycia Antheunisse

- One of a kind engraved 40th
Anniversary Beer Mug &
Shot glass by Rockie Mooney:

\$100.00 Vendor Shopping Spree's by Bird Channel

1. Tana Sutphin
2. Carole Grommet
3. Teri MacDougall
4. Nora Schmidt
5. Rockie Mooney

50/50 Raffle

1. Lanette Raymond
2. Lanette Raymond
3. Lanette Raymond

Baby Picture Match

1. Nancy Speed
2. Jamie Whittaker
3. Melanie Allen/Robin
Shewakis/Sharon Garsee (tied)

First Timer

By: David Skidmore

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Sometimes good things can come from adversity. I always seem to have a house full of unweaned babies when the AFA convention rolls around. Last year was a terrible season, but the upshot is that I was able to be in Portland with my Sister and fellow AFA member Nancy Wilson.

We had a stellar time. In my everyday life I don't talk much about aviculture. My friends' eyes glaze over if I babble on too much about my birds. My local bird club is pretty much pet centric, so to be in such a crowd of really top notch aviculturists was really pretty fantastic. People were extremely welcoming, and I was having a blast in short order despite being sort of nervous at first. I know a lot of you already via the internet, and it was fantastic getting to connect in real life. Nancy lives in Houston and is pretty

active in NFSS, so she had a lot of friends there as well. We attended lectures separately and together and spent time together and with our respective bird pals. All the speakers were great. I won a print and a Mousebird book!

My biggest regret is not staying longer. Flights home Sunday were really bad—crack of dawn, or midnight—so I opted to come home Saturday and get things in shape before the work week. My pet sitters are great, things are never how you do them yourself are they? Still, I missed the bird show and banquet. Next year we are in Chicago, my backyard. I won't make the same mistake twice. Thanks to all of you who made the convention such a great time for us, we learned a lot, and had an amazing trip. See you next year!



Legislative Workshop 2014

This year there were three separate legislative talks that each tied into each other. Brent Gattis (AFA 2nd VP) and Alycia Anthéunisse (AFA RD) held a talk called Preparing for Legislation. Genny Wall (Legislative VP and AFA RD) and Brent Gattis held a 2 hour legislative workshop that featured some hot topics and allowed for plenty of Q & A. Patti Strand, who is an internationally recognized animal issues expert, featured a separate presentation and then joined the legislative workshop to add input. Buddy Waskey presented his case about the legislative issues that were in Virginia and how AFA helped him and the entire state of Virginia turn around a law that made it illegal to keep certain parrots (felony). Through the hard work of Buddy and members of AFA, Virginia changed its law. This is a perfect example of how important it is to pay attention to rules, regulations and pending laws and why joining together really works.



up and mingle with the rest of the attendees all at the same time with no other presentations taking place to divert one's attention.

2014 AFA Convention Essay Contest Winner, Kaylee Johnson Corwin.

As a special treat, Susan Hilliard brought performing Sun Conures to the banquet. These amazing conures took flight and collected dollar bills and placed them in a donation container. The donations went to AFA. Everybody enjoyed this special treat. During the conclusion of the banquet the live auctions took place, and the final raffles were drawn. The convention came to a close after the banquet dinner.



BOD: We all swore an oath

The last day of the convention closes with a banquet dinner. Before the dinner starts, the new board of directors are sworn into office and take an oath to serve the members of the American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. After the swearing in, recognition and awards are given. The annual banquet dinner is an opportunity to dress



Sunday morning is always bitter sweet. We all meet new friends and have to say goodbye until the next convention takes place. It is great to go home with the new knowledge that is gained from the convention, but saying goodbye is sometimes hard to do. There is always a board meeting, and all attendees are welcome to participate. Then there is an off-site trip planned for a final farewell.

The 2015 convention will be in Chicago, and the 2016 convention will be in Connecticut. Plan ahead, and don't miss out on these most amazing 3 to 4 day long everything-avian sessions.



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