

Red-and-yellow Barbet



Photo by James L. Monroe

Golden-breasted Starling



Photo © Daniel V. Klein



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"Bird Calls" is published for the members and benefactors of the National Aviary.

*The National Aviary inspires respect for nature through an appreciation of birds.*

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may 2007 • volume 21, number 1

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The National Aviary is supported jointly by individual gifts, grants, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the Allegheny Regional Asset District.

Cover photo of a Fire-tufted Barbet © Steve Shaluta.  
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CEO Linda Dickerson and outgoing Executive Director Dayton Baker admire a Golden-breasted Starling in the National Aviary's Tropical Forest.

On May 15, 2007, Dayton Baker passed the National Aviary CEO torch to me. Thankfully, by agreeing to serve as a consultant to the Aviary's new theater project, he remains connected to the institution that he adroitly led for 15 years.

Clearly, Dayton Baker left an indelible impression on the National Aviary. Under his inspired stewardship, the Aviary privatized in 1992.

The organization's budget grew from a meager \$500,000 when Baker arrived to almost \$3 million today.

Likewise, audience appeal grew steadily during Baker's tenure. Attendance blossomed from 60,000 during his first year to over 100,000 now. And, proudly, the National Aviary serves an eclectic array of individuals. Preschoolers, seniors, and all age groups in between find enjoyment here. People from all walks of life make the National Aviary a regular destination. And, increasingly, the facility is attracting individuals from around the country and around the globe.

This diversity is a direct reflection of Dayton Baker's leadership. Baker fervently believes that an appreciation for

transitions...

the National Aviary salutes  
Dayton Baker

## A Tough Act to Follow

by **Linda A. Dickerson**, Chief Executive Officer

nature has no demographic or socioeconomic boundaries. As a result, he worked zealously to ensure that all people could experience nature up close and personal at the National Aviary. I will enthusiastically uphold this core value.

By convincing Congress of the Aviary's importance to all people throughout the land, Baker was able to achieve the official designation of "National Aviary" in 1993. Four years later, he

championed a major renovation of the facility, including the atrium, classrooms, gift shop, endangered bird breeding center and parking lot.

While Baker is pleased with all of these accomplishments, the ultimate "feather in his cap" is the development of an internationally renowned Conservation and Field Research Department. Focused on documenting the deleterious consequences of habitat destruction on the ecosystem, this department works diligently to supply irrefutable evidence of the need for sound conservation practices.

In addition to spawning the Conservation and Field Research Department, Baker helped to build one of the nation's foremost avian veterinary programs. This program is breaking new ground in bird care and pioneering preventative avian medicine.

The National Aviary's planned expansion will be built on the strong foundation that Dayton Baker laid. Baker is, indeed, a tough act to follow, but the bird show waiting in the wings for the new theater is clearly up to this challenge.

