



# Arizona Falconers Association

## December 2018 Bulletin

---

### **Director's Reports**

#### ***Vice President's Report, Jamaica Smith***

Greetings AFA members! First off, I want to thank everyone who voted in the election. We had 80% participation with 33 out of 41 voters who took the time to go online and make their choices for the future of the AFA. Congratulations to our many new board members. It is truly delightful to see all the new faces volunteering for the AFA!

I recently attended my first NAFA meet in over 15 years. Greg and I attended quite a few meets over the first decade of our falconry, but since then we've been more likely to stay home and hawk hard. When we do go to meets we often don't take any birds so that we can go hawking with other people and see them fly their birds. This time around Greg stayed home to take care of all the animals, while I road tripped with Lauren McGough and my rehab tiercel eagle, Spinner. The meet was well attended with lots and lots of quarry taken, including one of only three quail taken by our own Brian Wood and his passage Harris's hawk! Brian was joined by his homies Carissa Jonason, Amber Smelker, and Nate Danforth, and they did an outstanding job representing Arizona at the NAFA meet, catching a boatload of jacks and bunnies. I was pleased that Spinner flew very well during the meet and took his first cottontail.

Speaking of meets, there is a whole village of volunteers working hard to put together the Desert Hawking Classic in Tucson this year. This will be our first southern AZ meet in many years, and our first Tucson meet in a coon's age. I'm pleased to announce our keynote speaker for the banquet will be the one and only Jeff Fincher, an accomplished squirrel hawker from

Tennessee. I've got feelers out for additional great guest speakers for Thursday and Friday night as well.

If you have any questions or concerns about anything meet related or club related, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

### ***Director's Report, Troy Moody***

Hi Everyone,

As this is my first report, I will attempt to keep it short and sweet. First and foremost, I am both humbled and excited to have been voted for and now represent all of you as an AFA Director. I want to say thank you to all past as well as returning directors and officers for their service. I would also like to thank everyone who participated in the AFA election. Whether you were running for a position or voting for your desired candidates, you all engaged yourselves in directing the club in a direction you want to see.

Election turnout and club engagement are extremely important. By keeping a high involvement rate in the elections, meets, and everyday communication, the members of the board and officers can better serve you by hearing your concerns as well as your aspirations for the club. On a less formal note, although we all share our love for raptors, I hope we can continue to build on and appreciate our relationships with our fellow falconers. For those fortunate enough to follow the **#TucsonMiniMeetSuperFriends** on their journey to the NAFA meet on Facebook know what I'm talking about. Thank all of you for documenting your journey and allowing us to live vicariously through you while you represent Arizona at the meet. It looked like a heck of a time with a lot of great people. Perhaps one of these times we can make it a caravan!

As a final note, I hope to see everyone who can make it to the meet be there. There are lots of new faces that need introduction and I'd love to hear everyone's stories and ideas for the club that they have. I hope you all have safe holidays and a happy new year!

### ***Director's Report, Brian Wood***

Happy holidays my fellow falconers! Hope everyone's season is going well so far! I'd like to start off with another short introduction for those who may not have read my bio in the election process. My name is Brian Wood and I was born and raised in the Tucson area. I first became interested in falconry at age 10, got my license at age 25 and this wonderful sport has since taken over my life! This fall I started my 4th season. I'm currently flying a 3 times intermewed passage Male Harris Hawk Indie and just started working with a freshly trapped female Red-tailed Hawk who has yet to be named. I've also got a

juvenile captive bred male Harris Hawk named Diablo in my possession for an abatement job in the Phoenix area. If I'm not flying Diablo at work I'm out in the fields chasing bunnies with Indie!

Early this month I had the pleasure to attend my first NAFA meet. My fiancé Carissa and I carpoled the 12-hour drive to Lubbock, Texas with the wonderful Amber Smelker and Nate Danforth. Our first day in Texas was spent driving around to some of the acquired lots of land looking for fields that looked promising for jackrabbits. The fact that none of us had flown any fields outside of Arizona we had no idea what to look for in the farmland that is Lubbock. We walked a few miles that first day to flush a handful of quail and a single jackrabbit. Though we struggled finding rabbits at first, it helped give my little male, Indie, the incentive to catch his first ever quail! That was an exciting day. As the week went on, we figured out what to look for and ended up finding quite a few fields that were very productive. It was a very neat experience learning what to look for and finding how the game we chase can change to fit its environment.

My favorite experience of the NAFA meet was seeing just how tight knit our falconry community truly is. When the 200+ falconers were in the hotel, whether they were browsing raffle tables, sitting together in the lobby, or just meandering around, it's easy to see that everyone there are more than just people with a common interest. They are family and treat each other as such. If you ever have the time and funds to make it to a NAFA meet, I would highly recommend it! After seeing how everything is done at a meet like this, it made me really appreciate the efforts the previous board members of the AFA put into running our own Desert Hawking Classic. I can't wait to see what this year's DHC will bring. A few of us in the Tucson area have been scouting to provide game maps for the upcoming meet. The fields we have found so far seem to have decent numbers of quail, cottontails and black tailed jackrabbits. For those interested, we should be able to provide areas with access to the monstrous antelope jackrabbits. Hope to see all of you in Tucson next month!