

- ♦ I know that owning a bird is a long term commitment. I will make the necessary plans so that in the event anything happens to me that makes me unable to care for you someone will be there to look after you.
- ♦ I will love you for whom you are not for whom I perceive you to be. Each bird has its own unique personality. Given - Love, Time, Patience and Good Care we will become the very best of friends enriching each others lives.

Thank you for reading Li'l Miss Kiwi's, Mr. Tuxedo's ^ Lady Katherine's Creed! They are very concerned that their fellow feathered friends are cared for properly. They also want to help new and potential families understand the commitment they are making before adopting a bird into their families.

If you agree with their Creed I have placed a text box at the end of the page for you to send them your pledge. They will then post once a week a list of all the people who have adopted their Creed. You can access this list by clicking on the link just below.

<http://lmkandtux.homestead.com/LMKandTCreed.html>

Mission Statement

Gateway Parrot Club
A not-for-profit organization
Established in 1988

Dedicated to the following goals:

- To bring people together in a friendly atmosphere in the interest of exchanging information on bird care and breeding.
- To create an interest in bird care and breeding through monthly educational programs and annual bird fairs.
- To educate ourselves, and the general public, on the ever-present danger of extinction in the wild.

Squawk 'n Talk

Volume 5, Issue 1 January/February 2005

Presidential Perch

Phyllis Cotton

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great holiday. Our holiday party turned out very well & a good time was had by all, even if it was the "coldest" day of the year!

You will see a lot of exciting changes taking place this year starting with our first meetings of 2005. I certainly hope you will make every effort to attend the meetings & get involved. We have many new members that I hope to see at the meetings as well. We welcome new & fresh ideas. It is also a great way to get to know other club members & share ideas or fun stories about your birds. Birds are always welcome to attend any of the meetings as well!

For any new member who may not be aware of it, the GPC has a complete library of books and tapes. Any member is welcome to borrow any of these at any time. Just ask Christine Kinkade, our librarian.

Plans for the annual fair have begun. If you have a particular speaker you would like to hear or a special topic you would like to see featured this year, now is the time to bring your suggestions to us. Michelle Karras, the Polite Parrot, is coming back again this year by popular demand. If you missed her last year you will get a second chance this year.

I will look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

Constitution, By-Laws Update

Trey Shaffer

We are approaching the end of the review process... For those that have missed discussion over the past few months, we have reviewed our Constitution and By-Laws, in several meeting sessions, with the primary purpose of making these, somewhat neglected, documents coincide with current practice.

Process

Here again is a review of what needs to happen to modify the Constitution and/or By-Laws, as described in Article 14 of the current By-Laws.

1. A proposed change is submitted to the Secretary in writing.
2. The proposed change is discussed at the next general meeting and voted on. If passed with a simple majority, the proposed change will be published in the next newsletter.
3. At the following general meeting the proposed change will be voted on a second time, by secret ballot. If passed with a two-thirds majority, the change will become effective.

We are at the point of number 1, above. Our discussions have led to a proposed change. The change consists of several items. This proposal has been submitted to the Secretary. The first vote, to accept the proposed change, will be taken at the February meeting. Assuming acceptance, the change will be published in the March newsletter. We will then vote for final acceptance during the March meeting.

Documents

The original document and the members' discussion have been available on our website throughout this process. The final proposal document is there as well. The URL to access these documents is:

- ♦ I will educate myself about the many household products/chemicals that could be dangerous even lethal to you.
- ♦ I will give you fresh water at least once a day.
- ♦ I will keep your cage, feed cups, play gym etc. scrupulously clean to protect you from harmful bacteria.
- ♦ I will not take you outside without your cage (securely closed) or in the case of big birds in a harness. Not even for a second.
- ♦ I will keep you free from drafts and if outside will be sure to protect you from the sun, being aware that you do not get to hot.
- ♦ I will not buy you for a family member/friend without their consent and knowing that they have researched responsible bird ownership.
- ♦ While traveling in an automobile I will have you in a travel cage and have it secured in the seat belt. I will not have you sitting on the steering wheel or otherwise free to be thrown against a window in case of sudden stop.
- ♦ If you are a pet - I will keep your wings clipped always. There are too many dangers in a house that you will not be aware of. (there can be exceptions here)
- ♦ I will take you out of your cage and spend quality time with you each and every day. Birds are very social loving creatures and need to be part of the flock. In their eyes the human family is their flock.
- ♦ I will keep you safe from all other pets. (Dogs, cats etc.) Though some might think, it is cute for them to be together Mother Nature never intended for many species to inter-mingle. A sudden flutter of your beautiful wings could frighten the cat and...! We will live together happily respecting each other's space.
- ♦ I will never shout at you and never ever hit you, drop you, throw you or otherwise abuse you.
- ♦ I will be firm but loving in my approach to training, teaching you to do step ups.
- ♦ I will be realistic in my expectations.
- ♦ I will learn about and observe your body language so I have a better understanding of what it is you want from me.
- ♦ I will see that you get 10-12 hours uninterrupted sleep each night. Warm, safe and covered up cozy. I know you have been busy playing, eating, climbing, and socializing. I know you need your beauty rest.

Score into serving size pieces while still warm. When cool cut into pieces and wrap individually to store in freezer. Don't forget to serve a piece right now to your Parrot friend to taste test right away.

The recipe above is how LMK and Tux love this cake best. However you could add 1 cup thawed frozen veggies, dehydrated veggies, other fruits, a dab of peanut butter, almost anything you feel your bird will like. I always make it with their favorite things so this has become a real treat. I do not recommend adding pellets as the one time I did the bread was VERY hard. Last Christmas I made with Fresh cranberries and green peas. They loved it and it looked so festive.

Caretaker's Creed

Thanks to Debby Martin who suggested publishing the recipes above. While looking at the Parrotlet Express website,

<http://parrotletexpress.homestead.com>

for contact information to request permission to reprint, I ran across the following...

By: Li'l Miss Kiwi, Mr. Tuxedo and Lady Katherine

Please read Li'l Miss Kiwi's, Mr. Tuxedo's & Lady Katherine's Creed below. If you agree please, send us your pledge and commitment to your birds from the link at the bottom of this article!

As a Pet Owner, Breeder or Wannabe - I promise ("say your birds name") to the best of my ability I will:

- ♦ Research various species before I get a bird or if I already have you I will research to learn the very best possible care I can give.
- ♦ I will find a qualified Avian Veterinarian and take you for well bird
- ♦ check ups. I will keep phone numbers handy in case of emergency.
- ♦ I will feed the best possible diet for the individual species.
- ♦ I will never be too lazy to prepare fresh fruits and vegetables and a host of other dietary requirements that birds thrive on.
- ♦ I will never give you Chocolate or Avocados as these are poisonous to birds.
- ♦ I will not, or allow anyone else to give you Alcohol.

<http://www.gatewayparrotclub.org/Admin/OrgDocs/Constitution.htm>

If you do not have access to the documents via the Internet, and would like to review proposed changes before the February meeting, please contact Dave or Christine Kinkade, (314) 343-8097, and request a copy be mailed to you.

Membership Renewal

Carole Grommet

Take time this month to renew your membership if you haven't yet. Enclosed in this newsletter is a membership form. After filling out, you can either mail it to the address shown on the form, or bring it to the next meeting with your \$20 dues. If you are not sure if you have renewed, look at the mailing label on this newsletter. After your name there is a year in parenthesis. If 2003 or 2004 appears, your membership has expired. If it reads 2005 you don't have to do anything—your membership is up to date. The Gateway Parrot Club appreciates your support.

How To Charm Your Step-Bird

Liz Wilson

Finally, after all those years of loneliness, singles' bars and woefully inadequate relationships, it has *finally* happened. You are in love! The future has taken on a rosy hue of bliss, and you cannot believe how wonderful your life has become. The object of your affection is wonderful, warm and loving ... but there is one problem. This person has a BIRD. A canary, you say? No, no such luck. A canary would be easy, just lives in a cage and makes lovely music. No, this person has a PARROT. Beautiful, yes. But not just beautiful – also messy, destructive and loud. Worse yet, it's obviously very intelligent and it has deduced that you are competition for the love of its human ... and I mean serious competition with a capital 'C.' And in addition to the messy, loud and destructive parts, there is that BEAK, which looks like a cross between a nutcracker and a razorblade.

What to do?

One Step At A Time

The first thing to understand is that the bond that can form between a psittacine and its caretaker is an extraordinary one, and you will do yourself damage in your association with this person if you do not respect that. Imagine this feathered can opener to be valued like a child, and you will get a grasp of its significance in the eyes of its human.

Following the child analogy a step further, you have to understand that, like a single parent with a child, your beloved cannot manufacture a relationship for you with this parrot. You have to do that yourself, and that relationship needs to be separate from that which it has with its owner. This person may love you, but this does not automatically put you in good stead with the parrot. On the contrary! Rather, imagine how you would feel if your beloved spouse just brought home a new mate, and expected you to cheerfully and peacefully cohabit with this person. Seen in that light, it is obviously not an easy situation for the parrot.

To be successful at this endeavor, you need to understand that your object is not to insinuate yourself between these two intelligent entities. The last thing you need to do is compete for the favor of your darling. It is a foolish mistake to try and come between a person and that person's family ... and this bird is a member of this person's family.

Instead, you are here to add a new and wonderful dimension to their lives. Psittacines are social creatures, and most species live in varying sizes of flocks when out of nesting season. By varying sizes of flocks, I mean flocks can range in numbers from 5 ... to 500 individuals. Forming a relationship of your own with this parrot need not take anything away from the relationship the bird has with its owner. An apt analogy would be that I have a strong monogamous bond with my husband, but that certainly does not stop me from forming precious and enduring friendships outside of my marriage.

No Parrot Experience?

If you have no experience with parrots, then get some. The first thing you need to do is read, read, read. Parrots are complex and intelligent animals that are very different from the predatory mammals (dogs and cats) with which most people are most familiar. The more you learn about psittacines, the better the odds that you will start to understand their behaviors.

- 4 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 C. Petamine
- 1/4 C. Vegetable oil
- 1 C. milk
- 2 eggs with shell
- 1/2 C. mixed frozen vegetables, thawed
- 1/2 C. frozen broccoli, thawed

Mix together all dry ingredients. Stir in milk, eggs, oil and vegetables. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool and cut into one inch cubes and store in plastic bags.

Li'l Miss Kiwi Parrot Cake Our Home Page Toronto, Canada

- 1/2 cup yellow corn meal
- 1/2 cup rolled oats (not instant)
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 tb. baking powder
- 1 small handful of hulled millet seed.(health food stores)
- 1 egg
- 1 cup apple or orange juice (my Mom uses apple)
- slightly less than 1/4 cup corn oil

Mix all dry ingredients together in a bowl. Mix and beat together all moist ingredients in another bowl. Blend the two together until well mixed. You will have a mixture that holds its shape but is moist. You may have to add a dash more juice.

Top and tail about 12 figs and chop into little pieces. Chop 12 strawberries into little pieces. Mix fruit into cake mix and then pour into a 8" pan that has been sprayed with a vegetable spray or most often I line the pan with aluminum foil. and spray

Bake at 400 degrees for approximately 30 minutes. The top will be a light golden brown. Remember ovens vary so start watching at about 25 minutes..



Bonnie Boime, Director of Volunteers, accepted our check, presented by Dave Kinkade our Treasurer. She expressed the gratitude of her organization and indicated the funds will help greatly with WBR's activities, particularly their relocation after losing the lease at their former location.

They will own their new facility, at 9624 Midland, in Overland (63114) and hope to open the doors there by March first

There is no specific assignment of the GPC funds at this moment, but one interesting feature of the new facility, which is not fully funded, is their large pre-release flight cages. They are excited about having this new capability to let the birds prepare for their final release. Some other needs include washer and dryer, shelving and an unattended drop off area for leaving birds after hours.

By the way, their hours are essentially daylight hours, conservatively, 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM. You may stop by and see the facility and/or volunteer your services during these hours. They do ask that we do not drop in during their peak season, which is April 15 to July 15. As Bonnie mentioned in an earlier visit to our club, if you would like to volunteer, it would be best to contact them early so you can be trained and productive by that time.

There is a link to their website on our home page, and you may contact them by phone at (314) 984-9116.

Recipes

(from <http://parrotletexpress.homestead.com/Recipes.html>)

Easy Bake Muffins - Gal Fids Only Texas

- 1 C. flour
- 1 C. yellow corn meal
- 3/4 tsp. salt

It wouldn't hurt to get some handling experience, either. After all, parrots are most comfortable with those who are comfortable with them, and that comfort level cannot be faked. Humans tend to be xenophobic, meaning they are often afraid of the strange or unknown, and you can be quite sure this parrot KNOWS if you are afraid of it. Consequently, you might find it useful to go with your special person to various bird stores in your area to get handling experience with babies. However, you **MUST** make a solemn promise prior to entry that you **WILL NOT** purchase a parrot, no matter how cute. That is not, after all, why you are there. (You'll probably have to make your beloved promise not to purchase another parrot, too.)

Have your darling show you how to step baby parrots on and off your hand, how to block them from running up to your shoulder, etc. If there are experienced personnel working in the store, ask for their help, also. Explain you do not wish to purchase a parrot, only get comfortable with handling them. Employees in a good store will be delighted to assist you in your learning. Get comfortable with these strange and fascinating creatures.

I vividly remember introducing my non-parrot-loving father to a baby Moluccan cockatoo many years ago. The bird was a 4-month-old cutie who (like most babies) adored humans. My father had no clue as to what to do, and no instincts to help him. Bracing his arm so it was steady, I gently stepped her onto his hand, and she puffed up and swayed and whistled her desires for his attention. However, my father was a dog person and had no idea as to what her body language was saying. I explained that she wanted badly to be petted, then took Dad's other hand and showed him how to accomplish that feat. It was delightful watching his look of wonder, as she leaned her soft body into his caresses, obviously loving every second of the attention. The encounter was great fun for all of us, and fifteen years later, my father still talks about it.

So, spend time handling different species of parrots of widely different sizes. Get used to the weight of them, the feel of their feet on your arm, the touch of their beaks, the differences in their voices. Learn to not jerk away if they use their beaks for stability as they clamor onto your hand. Start getting comfortable around parrots. [Note: You should shower and change your shoes and clothing when you return home, to minimize the potential for any disease transmission to your friend's bird. After all, introducing a health problem to your sweetheart's parrot would not be good for your long-term relationship.]

It might also be useful for you to analyze just how big your beloved's feathered friend really is. People tend to view objects of fear as being substantially larger than they actually are. This phenomenon explains why frightening creatures are viewed as being huge, as in, "The spider was the size of a *dinner plate!*" This phenomenon is quite understandable but it will get in your way as you try to make friends with this psittacine.

Analogies can again be helpful. For example, no matter how scary it is, a one-pound amazon parrot is smaller than a dressed-down Cornish hen, and sometimes it helps one's perspective about how dangerous a psittacine actually is. Even Hyacinth macaws, the largest species of parrot found in captivity, aren't that large when you compare them to other more familiar similarly-sized animals. After all, at 3-4 pounds, they are much smaller than a roasting chicken.

Winning The Parrot Over

It is important that your Adored One assist you in your efforts to win over the parrot. He/she needs to make it very clear to the parrot that you are a valued new member of the flock, and that you are to be treated with civility and respect. The bird also needs to understand that no aggression is to be tolerated. My Blue and gold macaw Sam is not fond of my husband, but she knows quite clearly that she is NEVER to take one step in his direction if her body language is aggressive.

You also need to find things that you and the bird can enjoy together. Perhaps the parrot would enjoy hearing you read aloud as you sit by the cage, or hearing all about your day. Maybe it would enjoy a shower, or a ride in the car, just you two. You can also become the purveyor of Seriously Special Treats. If you are the only person that is allowed to offer special delicacies, the parrot is sure to be impressed with your value. After all, YOU are the Giver Of Walnuts (or whatever).

It is also important for you to realize that no matter how difficult it might be to win over this parrot, the most imprudent thing you could possibly do is to try to get your new love to *get rid* of this feathered friend. For a true animal lover, such an ultimatum would end your relationship immediately. After all, how much could you truly love someone if you immediately try to eliminate something from their lives that they consider valuable? My husband and I have a standing joke for many years. Sam and I have been together for 30 years, and husband David has only been around for

20. When I tell David how much I love him, he is likely to grin and say, "But not enough to get rid of the bird." My response is always the same. With a matching grin, I say, "Nope, not enough to get rid of the bird."

Most importantly, you need to be infinitely patient in your efforts to win over this parrot. Parrots can be long-lived creatures, surviving anywhere from 15 to 80 years, depending on species. If you want to spend the rest of your life with this special person, that means you are likely to spend a lot of that life with the parrot, as well. You have plenty of time in which to slowly build a relationship of trust and mutual respect with both of them. There is no hurry, so take your time and do it right. With persistence and understanding, you can add a wonderful dimension to your relationship with your new love.

This article was first published in Bird Talk Magazine, Vol 22, No 6, June 2004

Liz can be reached most days, 9 AM to 8 PM EST at [215] 946-5964, or at LWilson@att.net

HELLO WHITE ELEPHANTS

Debby Martin

We just wanted to thank everybody who brought something to donate to the raffle table at the last meeting - and of course to encourage additional donations. It certainly doesn't have to be bird oriented - just small items you think someone might be able to use and enjoy. Sooo, instead of setting it aside for the garage sale, why not set it aside for the Parrot Club. Hope to see everybody at the next meeting!

GPC Supports Wild Birds (too)

The Gateway Parrot Club is pleased to support the Wild Bird Rehabilitation organization. Representing distribution of proceeds from our annual All-American Hookbill Fair, we donated \$2,000 to World Bird Rehabilitation, Inc.