

# Squawk 'n Talk

Volume 6, Issue 3

March 2006

## Tidbits or Droppings

Trey Shaffer

At the February meeting we accepted an addition of language to the bylaws to cover the replacement of a Board Member. This language has been incorporated in the bylaws. The current version is available at:

[www.gatewayparrotclub.org/Admin/Bylaws.htm](http://www.gatewayparrotclub.org/Admin/Bylaws.htm)

The annual All American Hookbill Fair & Seminar is taking shape. Our featured national speakers include Barbara Heidenreich and Michelle Karras. Michelle has been recalled based on appearances at recent Fairs. Barbara will be new to the GPC this year. The newsletter will feature articles by both between now and the Fair. Following is a brief introduction to Barbara...

Since one of Barbara's specialties is free flight training, I am reprinting an article I wrote several years ago about wing clipping. I'll spare you the suspense, the conclusion of the article was that if the animal can't fly it is not a bird. For those of you that know me, and my Greenwing, "Q", I have to point out that some time after writing that article, Q was spooked outdoors, spent the night in a tree, was rescued by the Fire Department, and has been clipped happily ever after. I'm sure the free flight moral to the story is that he should have been experienced in flight and trained to return. I look forward to Barbara's presentation...

### Smart Bird!

Member Sherry Miles sent this link, to a video segment from Animal Planet, with a very talkative African Grey named Einstein...

<http://tinyurl.com/52ydx>

There was a posting recently about changes at Texas A&M University... Dr. David Phalen, who has been part of the avian medicine and research program, is leaving for a position at the Univer-

sity of Sydney. He is being replaced by Dr. Sharman Hoppes, formerly of North Carolina State University.

### Dues and Don'ts

Do pay your 2006 membership dues, and Don't wait. Your membership expiration date appears on the cover. If it does not show as 2006, or later, please send your \$20 membership renewal to Nancy Marron at the address on the cover. You can also pay your dues through our website.

## Barbara Heidenreich

From Barbara's bio



Barbara has been a professional in the field of animal training since 1990. She owns and operates [Good Bird, Inc.](http://www.GoodBird.com), providing behavior and training products to the companion parrot community. These products include Good Bird Magazine, books, videos, consulting services and training/behavior workshops. She is the author of "Good Bird! A Guide to Solving Behavior Problems in Companion Parrots" by Avian Publications and also "The Parrot Problem Solver. Finding Solutions to Aggressive Behavior" by TFH Publications. She is the president of the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators ([www.IAATE.org](http://www.IAATE.org)).

Barbara's experience also includes consulting on animal training in zoos and other animal related facilities. Her specialty is free flight bird training. She has been a part of the development and production of more than 15 different free flight education programs. Barbara continues to provide consulting services to zoos, nature centers and other animal facilities through her other company Animal Training and Consulting Services ([ATandCS.com](http://ATandCS.com)). In her career she has trained animals, trained staff, and/or presented shows at facilities around the world, including the following:

- Disney's Animal Kingdom

- Dallas World Aquarium
- Brookfield Zoo
- Caldwell Zoo
- John Ball Zoo
- State Fair of Texas
- Disney's Discovery Island
- Marine World Africa USA
- Toledo Zoological Gardens
- Gulf Park Marine World
- Perth Zoo in Australia
- Ocean Park in Hong Kong
- Umgeni River Bird Park in South Africa
- African Safari in Puebla Mexico
- Earth Rangers in Canada

## To Clip or Not to Clip

Trey Shaffer

Now that is a question...

And like great and ageless questions there is no clear answer, but everyone has their opinion. Taking an abstract approach for the moment, perhaps there is guidance in the meaning of the word *bird*. According to Webster, a bird is...

*A warm-blooded egg-laying vertebrate characterized by feathers and forelimbs modified as wings*

That doesn't seem to answer our question, but what about the wing? Again according to Webster, a *wing* is...

*A movable organ for flying (one of a pair)*

Now we may be on to something! If a bird is "characterized by feathers and forelimbs modified as wings," and a wing is "an organ for flying," and we somehow render the organ useless for flight it would no longer be a wing, which would

leave us with a warm-blooded, egg-laying vertebrate characterized by feathers" and capable of climbing on cage and perch. At which point we no longer have a bird but a *feathered monkey*.

Source: Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, © 1996, 1998 MICRA, Inc.

## Member Profile Mike Brown



### What do you do for a living?

I am the Chief Administrative Officer (city manager) for the city of Kirkwood, Missouri.

### Where are you from? Are you a St. Louis native?

I was reared in a north St. Louis County suburb of St. John, Missouri.

### Tell us about your own personal birds

Well, we have his bird and her birds. His bird (me) is an African Grey Congo born January 29, 1999. I purchased him from a local breeder by the name of Carol Field. He was probably too young to put in the hands of a novice, but I feed him that tasty, yellow formula with an eyedropper every six hours and it seemed to last forever. Now he is still considered young, but has a vocabulary of about 50+ words. I chose the name Henry, well, just because I wanted to. My wife Ann raised Gouldian finches for a while and still has four or five. She also has four cockatiels, six society finches, and about eight parakeets. This all started because one day before we even owned any bird I wanted one male Canary that would sing. Well the Canary never did sing and when it went to the great choir in the sky, some neighbors gave us a cage because they were moving and asked if we wanted a free parakeet,

so we said, "what the heck". She quickly laid an egg and my wife was off raising parakeets except they turned into her pets and she couldn't move them on. So she sorted the males from the females and she sweeps up seed every day.

### **What other pets do you have?**

My wife and I have an eight year old Russian Blue cat named Maleesch (lacking Cyrillic fonts the name is pronounced as written in English and translates to "pretty little boy.") He is small and about the color of my African Grey. He is affectionate and manages with Henry so long as he stays out of Henry's space. Henry has been known to bite a cat tail floating under his cage.

### **How did you first become involved with GPC?**

We heard of the club through Varieties, in Valley Park, and saw a brochure at Dr. Kersting's. We thought the idea of a club was a good way to gain more bird knowledge and the members all seemed very friendly.

### **What are your main concerns in aviculture today?**

All birds are special, even the sparrow on the back porch, but "exotic birds" are extra special because they are vulnerable to unscrupulous and illegal importers, unethical breeders, and retailers who will sell them without any consideration as to the environment that the bird will be exposed. Exotic birds of all types are, in my opinion, genetically programmed to survive in a very different environment than the United States and consequently must be more alert and intelligent than most average backyard birds out of necessity. In terms of a time frame, even birds recently hatched by a breeder here in the U.S. are not far removed in time from its ancestors original environment.

All of this should be understood and studied before anyone invites an exotic bird into their home as a family member or they will be better off investigating a dog or cat.

### **What would be your advice to person looking for a bird?**

Read every thing they can about the various exotic birds and understand that very few breeds are alike. Talk to bird owners and reputable breeders and don't rely on the sales clerk at the local pet store. If a person believes they have narrowed in on a species they think is ideal for them and their life style talk to members of this club or others and attempt to talk and preferably visit the home of someone who owns a breed of the species in question. Certainly understand that exotic birds are high maintenance family members that can change one's life style. Its is easy to have your

neighbor feed your cat for the weekend, but the situation changes when you own a Green Wing Macaw. Unless one likes to live in a messy house be prepared to do a lot of vacuuming and cage cleaning - birds are birds and the bigger they are the more difficult they can be to maintain in a clean environment. Certainly, be prepared to expend much more at an avian veterinarian than with your cat under normal circumstances. Such a vet is a specialist and consequently the price for care may be higher, but the traditional vet is seldom the best option. Bottom line, don't rush and do your homework and measure it all against your life style.

### **What other clubs or organizations do you belong to?**

Being an Amateur Radio Operator or HAM, I belong to a national organization. I've found few HAM operators understand my interest in birds. Because of my interest in old clocks, I belong to a local and national watch and clock association. I believe my wife wants to start a Grandmothers of American Club but hasn't gotten around to it.

### **Besides birds, what hobbies or interests do you have?**

My wife gardens obsessively and I collect and repair antique clocks, mainly for myself and friends and to a lesser extent play with radio equipment.

### **Is there anything else that you would like to share with us?**

How about a funny story? It was time for Henry, my African Grey Congo to have his annual check up. I transport him to the vet in a cat size transport cage made of plastic with a grill style door on the end and a handle on top. Henry at the time would become nervous when he saw the cage so I sat the cage in another room with the door open with the intent of taking Henry in and placing him in the carrier in a cool and calm fashion. He was somewhat reluctant but went in and I closed the door. Henry imitates the meow of our Russian Blue cat who is similarly grey in color and who had already climbed into the carrier. Henry sounds more like the cat than the cat. I went to pick up the carrier and mentioned to my wife that our bird had certainly gained some weight and carried the case to the back seat of the car. Even though I heard meows I assumed it was Henry, my Grey, doing his imitation of Maleesch the cat.

I started the car and almost headed to Dr. Kersting's when something told me the meow was much louder than that of Henry's normal imitation and so I stopped and inspected the carrier and all

I could see was a lot of the color grey. Realizing that both the cat and the bird were both locked in the same carrier, I quickly took it inside, set it on the floor and opened the door. A bird and a cat exited at the speed of light and headed in separate directions, with no harm done to either (perhaps psychologically, not physically). I almost wish I would have gotten them unknowingly to Dr. Kersting just to see his face when the carrier door was opened in his exam room!

*Member Profiles are compiled by Mandy Baumgartner. To be featured please email Mandy at [clicktrink@mindspring.com](mailto:clicktrink@mindspring.com) or ask for an interview form at a membership meeting.*

## Raffle Donations For The Fair

Carole Grommet

Our August fair will be here before you know it. Time does fly! We still need donated items for our raffle table. We would like as many bird-related items as possible (toys, perches, swings, ladders, play stands, pellets, food, treats, carriers, cleaning supplies, parrot jewelry, statues, sweatshirts—anything parrot related) Any donation will be greatly appreciated!

Mandy Baumgartner donated over 30 small to medium size toys at last month's meeting, Sherry Miles and Dick Horwitz donated two beautiful parrot pins, and Kelly Hope has a toy for a large bird that she will be donating. My hands have been busy making toys—I think I'm up to at least a dozen.

Let's make this year's raffle table a huge success!

Our June meeting (second Tuesday in June (11<sup>th</sup>) will be a toy-making seminar conducted by Dawn Breer, a very talented toy maker. Dawn will talk about toy making for a few minutes and then everyone present will have the opportunity to make a toy or two. Her toys are all unique and I know all our parrots love it when we come home with her toys. She will also have her entire line with her so you can buy toys for your own birds and maybe donate a toy or two to the club for the fair.

After the June meeting, we will have a toy making party sometime later in June or July to complete the raffle table items (date TBD). We'll keep you posted.

The raffle table committee consists of Debby Martin, Cathy Dervalis, and me. Any one of us will be glad to accept your dona-

tion(s) so bring to a club meeting or give me a call, (636) 529-0026, or email, [rcgrommet@charter.net](mailto:rcgrommet@charter.net) I'll be glad to pick up.

I might add, we will again have the silent auction table at this year's fair and donations are also needed for this table. More info on these items will follow in a future issue.

## Scratches And Bliss

Debby Martin

There is nothing like a good scratch is Mozart's theory. It's a great way to start the day and Beta Bird agrees as it reduces her stress level too. To hold him and watch him lower his head for a scratch and then close his eyes in pure bliss brings Beta Bird almost to tears at the thought of the total trust being given. But of course being a greedy human, Beta Bird wants to enjoy the same connection with Ginger, our most recent flock addition – a little rescue from Perfectly Precious Rescue. (Especially since Beta Bird is doing all the cage cleaning and food preparation.) However, Ginger's theory is she's a one man birdy and she has given her total devotion to Alpha Bird (aka Larry) so leave my head alone please!!! Mozart read an article in Bird Talk from April 2004 that may have some tips.

- Try using the "Favored Person," who they care for the most, to do the training and rewarding.
- Evening is often a preferred time, so try consistently setting an evening time to get together with "Favored Person" and bird. Choose favorite treats that will be offered only by you. "Favored person" should *enthusiastically* praise the bird when they take the treat.
- Favored person should encourage the bird to step up on your arm and praise as dramatically as possible and then immediately take the bird back. Remember, accepting a treat from you or stepping up on your arm should be a big happy party time and the more animated and happy Favored Person is the quicker the bird will begin to modify its response to you.
- If the bird decides not to step up or accept a treat, Favored Person should just ignore the bird for a few moments and turn attention to another bird or object. Pretty soon the bird will understand Favored Person is happy

when they interact with you and you may become “Favored Person 2”.

- Keep the sessions short to prevent the bird from leaving you on his own – either you should hand the bird back or Favored Person” should take him back and you thus remain in control.

## Fair Thoughts...

Here are a few comments from vendors/attendees of the Fair last August. They came in quite a while ago. I was just waiting for the right opportunity to publish them, like this blank page...

"Dear (my favorite) Club,

You are the best of the best! Each year I am impressed how your fair is organized. I feel the warm hospitality and the caring you show. You have a priceless jewel in Phyllis Cotton.

Please renew my membership. It is a privilege to be a member, even if it is long distance membership.

Thank you ALL. You are wonderful!

Love and Hugs,

Dotty Hat

P.S. See you next year!"

Dear Phyllis:

John and I just want to thank you and the other members of the Gateway Parrot Club for a wonderful show two weekends ago. We know how much work goes into planning and executing an event like this, and it couldn't have been better. We had a wonderful time, made some new friends, and even sold a few things in the process. We were so pleased to be part of this year's show—and hope to have the opportunity to participate in next year's event.

I know that a lot of people contributed to the success of this year's show, so please extend our congratulations for a job well done to everyone involved.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Aleta Redford

Wingdow, LLC

## 2006 Meeting Schedule

Here is the year ahead, as it is shaping up. Mark the dates. More information will come later on topics for each meeting.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
February 19	Creative cage setup and location
March 19	The Feather Distribution Project - Jonathan Reyman
April 9	South American Bird Myths – Jonathan Reyman <i>Note: This is the SECOND Sunday of April</i>
May 21	Dr. Kersting - First Aid and more...
June 11	Toy making party. <i>Note: This is the SECOND Sunday of June</i>
July 16	TBA
August 26-27	All American Hookbill Fair
September 17	TBA
October 15	Dr. Van Horn – AAV conference update, Bird flu
November 19	Eco-Tour of Peru, Dorene Olson Nominations for offices
December 17	Elections – Holiday party

## February Attendance

Carole Grommet	Geneva Picott
Debby Martin	Betty Garvels
Janet Draper	Crystal Rolfe and Chloe
Christine Kinkade	Suzanne Dohack
David Kinkade	Dick Horwitz
Mandy Baumgartner	Sherry Miles
Trey Shaffer	Penny Siefried
Dorene Olson	Ron Spitzler
Phyllis Cotton	

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## Mission Statement

Gateway Parrot Club

A not-for-profit organization

Established in 1988

### *Dedicated to the following goals:*

- Bring people together in a friendly atmosphere in the interest of exchanging information on bird care and breeding.
  - Create interest in bird care and responsible breeding through monthly educational programs and annual bird fairs.
  - Reduce neglect, cruelty and abuse of captive birds through education and public outreach.
  - Educate the public, as well as ourselves, on the ever present danger of extinction in the wild.
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## Contact Information

### Officers

We welcome your comments and suggestions...

President	Phyllis Cotton	(314) 427-3679
Vice President	Janet Draper	(314) 432-3019
Secretary	Dorene Olson	(314) 956-1310
Treasurer	Dave Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Membership	Nancy Marron	(314) 984-9524

### Board Members

Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Carole Grommet	(636) 529-0026
Mandy Baumgartner	(314) 842-4191
Trey Shaffer	(314) 432-4317
Debby Martin	(314) 968-0949
Larry Martin	(314) 968-0949

### Committees

Education/Outreach	Dorene Olson	(314) 569-1310
Hospitality	Pat Seiler	(314) 462-4732
Librarian	Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Ways & Means	Larry Martin	(314) 968-0949
Website /Newsletter	Trey Shaffer	(314) 432-4317