

# Squawk 'n Talk

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May 2006

## Greetings from the Presidential Perch!

I apologize if this is short & sweet. As many of you know, I have been extremely busy training to walk a half marathon in June to benefit the American Stroke Association. I have also been busy fundraising for the marathon, volunteering countless hours at several events, so please forgive me. I am extremely dedicated to the birds but this is an extremely important event as well. Anyone who has ever known or loved a stroke victim or potential stroke victim will agree.

Our annual fair is fast approaching and we need your help! We need volunteers to help with donations, setup, hospitality, advertising, etc. All of the speakers are booked & confirmed, vendors contacted and many already secured their desired spaces. Debby Martin, one of our most dedicated & active volunteers has had to give up many of her duties due to work related obligations. Can someone PLEASE, jump in and help? This club is everyone's club, not just the officers'. One position that needs to be filled is "Ways & Means", our monthly raffle. Please contact anyone on the board if you are interested in volunteering for that position.

The annual fair is really a lot of fun as well as a lot of work. If you have never participated in the fair, this is your chance. You will have a great time and meet a lot of new people in the process.

The education at the next monthly meeting will be Avian First Aid, something every bird owner should know. I hope everyone will make an effort to attend this meeting.

Phyllis

## Tidbits

Trey Shaffer

The April meeting featured the return of Jonathan Reyman, founder of The Feather Distribution Project. Dr. Reyman shared three folktales from the Cayapa Indians of Ecuador. We feature one of those, *Macaw Becomes A Rainbow*, in this issue. Again, we want to thank Dr. Reyman for visiting us. We gave him a donation to further his work, particularly with The Feather Distribution Project.

The meeting this month is back on our regular schedule, the third Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, at 2:00 PM. Join us to hear Dr. Kersting talk about first aid for our birds. To whet your appetite, we have an article this month from Dorene on building a first aid kit.



Public relations... Q and Trey visited Cub Scout Pack 116 to discuss birds and the rain forest. Q was a hit, and I read the *Macaw Becomes a Rainbow* story for the Cubs.

For the Earth Day celebration at Hardin Middle School, in St. Charles, Debby, Mozart and Ginger represented us. Also present were the St. Charles Parrot Club, the Herpetological Society, Greyhound Rescue, and Dr. Doug, Pernikoff.

We had a posting on the email list about a missing 10 year old Greenwing Macaw, named Phoenix. The bird has been missing, from South Carolina, for a year, and is believed to have been "adopted" out of the area. If you have any suspicions about a Greenwing that appeared in the past year, let me know. The owner has DNA available for comparison. FYI, the picture above is a Greenwing.

Eagle Cam – Check out this link to a webcam on a nesting pair of bald eagles... Dr. Georgia (Reger) Wilson sent us a letter announcing an expansion of avian/exotic facilities at Webster Groves Animal Hospital. We still have unpaid membership renewals for 2006. If you haven't renewed, do so immediately. This will be the last newsletter mailed to non-renewing members.

## The Cayapa of Ecuador

When Jonathan Reyman isn't saving birds by distributing feathers to native Americans, he works his day job as anthropologist at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield, IL. As with many "bird people" his interest for our feathered friends runs through many activities.

The following introductory material and folktale come from work Dr. Reyman plans to publish as a children's book, complete with illustrations by Wayne Smyth.

The South American rainforest is a lush, often fragile environment. Much of the soil layer is thin, and once trees and other plants are removed, it takes many years for the rainforest to renew itself.

In 1967, Dr. Reyman did anthropological fieldwork among the Cayapa Indians of Esmeraldas Province, northwestern Ecuador. "*Esmeraldas*" means "emeralds" in Spanish, and this is truly an emerald green environment. With an average yearly rainfall of about 400" (960cm), it's also among the wettest regions on earth. In 1967, there were about 3,000 Cayapa living along the banks of the Río Cayapas and smaller tributary rivers such as Río Camerones and Río Onxole. Today there are, perhaps, 5,000 Cayapa.

The rainforests are filled with wildlife. Macaws and parrots are among the most beautiful inhabitants. Their brilliant colors, intelligence, magnificent appearance in flight, and often comic behavior make these birds the subjects of wonder. This story is about the Scarlet Macaw.

## MACAW BECOMES A RAINBOW,

(Or How the Scarlet Macaw Received Its Colors)

Recorded and Adapted by Jonathan E. Reyman



Long ago, before the coming of the Spanish and all the others who have come since, there were only us, the Cayapa. And among us was an important shaman named Chápira. He was widely known for his many cures, and especially for his ability to heal burns. Chápira brewed medicines and knew and recited many magical chants to make us well when we were sick.

Now it is our Cayapa way to pay our shamans to heal us. Sometimes we give food, sometimes things received in trade such as cloth, and sometimes we pay them by working in their gardens. Chápira, however, was greedy. After he healed someone, he always demanded more payment than was offered. This made some Cayapa angry because a shaman should not be greedy. A shaman's power is a gift to be shared.

So several Cayapa men asked and paid another shaman to punish Chápira. The shaman agreed to do so.

One day, Chápira was walking in the forest with his dog, collecting plants and other things to make his medicines. It was the dry season. A thick cover of old leaves and dead plants littered the forest floor. Chápira didn't

see the fer-de-lance hidden there, and he stepped on it. The

snake reared its head and bit Chápira on the leg, sinking its fangs deep. Chápira cried out in pain and fell down.

The snake told Chápira, "This is to teach you not to be greedy when you heal your people. Don't ask for more than they offer to pay you."

Chápira had no medicine with him to treat a snake bite. He again cried out in pain and yelled for help. Up in a tall chonta tree perched two large green macaws, a male and female.

They heard Chápira's cries, flew down to him, and asked, "Why are you crying?"

Chápira replied, "Because a fer-de-lance bit me, and I have no snake medicine with me. My leg is so swollen I can't walk, and I'm burning with fever and dying."

The macaws asked, "What do you need? We can get it."

Chápira told the macaws what he needed, and off they flew. Soon they returned with some plants. Back and forth they flew, bringing more plants and then clay so that Chápira could make medicine for his leg. But he had no medicine bowl, so the macaws chewed the plants. Then using their feet, they mixed the chewed plants with the clay. Chápira put the medicine on the snakebite, covered it with a palm leaf, recited his magic chant, and waited.

For several days he waited. He was weak and slept much. When he awoke, he was hungry and thirsty, so the macaws brought him fruits and nuts to eat. They drank water and spit it into his mouth to ease his thirst. Finally, on the fourth day, Chápira was well enough to begin the long walk home.

He said to the macaws, "You saved me from death. How can I repay you?"

The macaws replied, "Even though we're green, we can't hide well enough in the forest from men who would trap and kill us for our feathers. We are always afraid."

Chápira said, "I'm a shaman. Come to my house tonight just before sunset. I'll help you."

That night, just before sunset, the two green macaws perched on the wood railing of Chápira's house. Chápira picked them up and carried them to the west side of the house where he placed them on another railing. Then he took his most powerful charm, a large, clear crystal, and held it towards the setting sun. He told the macaws to turn in a circle. As they did, Chápira recited a magic chant and reflected the red light of the setting sun onto the macaws' bod-

ies. Their feathers immediately changed from green to red. Then he reflected the deepening blue of the night sky onto their wings and onto the tips of their tail feathers. This done, the macaws started to leave, but Chápira said to them, "Wait here until morning. I'm not finished."

Even though it was the dry season, it rained much of the night. The next morning Chápira awoke. He woke the macaws, picked them up, and carried them to the west side of his house. He placed them on the railing. As the sun rose, a magnificent rainbow appeared in the western sky. Once again, Chápira took his crystal charm and held it towards the rainbow. He reflected the rainbow onto the shoulders of each macaw, first their right, then their left. He chanted his magic, and the macaws' shoulder feathers changed into the colors of the rainbow.

Chápira said to the macaws, "Now you are different from all other birds in the forest. Because you are so different, you are easy to see and recognize. And because you saved my life, I shall tell all the Cayapa never to hunt or harm you."

"Thank you," replied the macaws. "And now you must not be greedy. Share your medicines with your people, and accept as payment only what you need to live. We might not always be near to help you." Then the macaws flew away.

So this is how Scarlet Macaw came to be, and why we Cayapa never hunt or trap it for its feathers. Chápira was no longer greedy. As payment for healing people, he accepted only what he needed to live, as the macaws had told him. Our Cayapa ancestors were no longer angry with him, and Chápira was happy and lived a long time.

Text © 2005 by Jonathan E. Reyman

## CLAIRE'S CORNER

Practical advice for parrot husbandry

### FIRST AID FOR YOUR PETS

By Dorene and Claire Olson- Frei

Late last year, Claire Olson, the Eclectus hen, participated in a lecture on emergency first aid for our parrot companions. Included in the discussion was discourse on how to recognize an emergency, how to triage your pet on the way to the vet, and how to create an avian first aid kit. The lecture was very enthusiastically received (except by Claire, who had to exhibit being restrained in a towel) and Dr. Kersting graciously offered to repeat a lecture of his own format for our May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006 meeting.

Since Dr. K will talk to some of the same issues, we thought a more useful column would be to provide our Gateway Parrot Club readers with recommendations for an avian first aid kit. Much of the information is from a chapter found in The Compete Idiot's Guide to Bird Care and Training, by Jacqueline O'Neil, published by Alpha Books, 1998. Further suggestions come from Drs. Mark T. Van Horn and Dr. Nicole Morhaus of Tri-City Animal and Bird Clinic, and back issues of Bird Talk Magazine, The Pet Bird Report, and the book by Bonnie Munro Doane, The Parrot In Health and Illness, an Owner's Guide, Howell 1991. While doing this research, it was surprising to Claire how few recent publications addressed this issue. Perhaps this is why the topic was so well received at the parrot club meeting and a repeat was begged.

#### First Aid Kit for Birds

It is recommended that a first aid kit for birds be on hand in an immediately accessible spot in the home, and a duplicate kit in the car if you travel a lot with your feathered friend, as the Olson birds do. Here are some basics that you might want to include in a standard tool case, easily procured from a local hardware store:

- On the lid of the tool kit should be complete information for your avian veterinarian, including but not limited to: Name, number, pager, address, and emergency clinic information. You may be busy dealing with your bird and need a second person to find this information and call for you.
- Pen and pad for taking instruction over the phone.

- Light source for seeing in less than optimal lighting.
- Heat lamp or heating pad for the bird for warmth. Also thermometer to monitor heating issues.
- Gatorade or Pedialyte for electrolytes, honey or Karo syrup for carbohydrates, both provide energy in emergency situations.
- Pepto Bismol or Kaopectate for poisoning.
- Syringes for giving medications and liquids, plastic is better than glass, especially for the larger, stronger bird species.
- Quick Stop or styptic pencils for stopping bleeding.
- Towels for restraint.
- Hemostats, tweezers, or needle nose pliers for pulling blood feathers.
- Cotton swabs, cotton balls, gauze pads, and vet wrap for cleaning wounds and putting on pressure wraps for bleeding wounds. A roll of gauze is also helpful for bandaging.
- Nail trimmers and scissors.
- Hydrogen peroxide for wound cleansing.
- Surgical tape.
- Pet carrier with blanket for warmth and towels on floor.
- Bach flower remedies such as Rescue Remedy for shock.

This list can definitely be augmented, such as including antibiotic powder or other emergency medications, but I have left these off for you to engage in further discussion with your own avian veterinarian or do your own research.

We all will look forward to Dr. Kersting's lecture on avian first aid and have lots of questions!

Don't Forget the Club Needs You!!!

Debby Martin

Now that the weather is turning warmer, Mozart certainly is full of energy, scurrying around and announcing his charms to the world! Since the days seem longer and energy levels higher, Mozart and I are hoping you will find some time to volunteer for the Gateway Parrot Club.

How can you help, you ask? We need help for tasks at the meetings and, of course, for the Fair in August. There will be a volunteer sign-up table at the Parrot Club meetings to make it easy to volunteer for a small or large task. If you would like to volunteer please sign up at the meeting or give Debby Martin a call at (314) 968-0949 or Email to [BoardMember5@GatewayParrotClub.org](mailto:BoardMember5@GatewayParrotClub.org)

### Meetings

- Bring a food donation for the refreshment table
- Take down tables and sweep after the meeting
- Membership: Greet visitors and new members making sure they get a name tag and feel welcome
- Library: Help set out selected books and put library things away. .
- Donate bird items for the Ways and Means raffle table

### Bird Fair

- Set up and Take Down
- Obtain donations for the Silent Auction – This is a CRITICAL need at this time!!!!!!!
- Purchase Bird toys, food etc. for the raffle table
- Work at the Gateway Parrot Club Membership Table
- Help with the dinner Saturday night.

We already have some WONDERFUL people who have volunteered already and Mozart sends them his best chirps!

Come Hither to the Happy Hut!

Mozart has a spring in his step and a glint in his eye – a “come hither” glint! He is assiduously shredding the paper in “Mozart’s Drawer” in the computer room. Beta Bird (aka Debby) didn’t really pay too much attention because he had been doing that all winter. There is a “Happy Hut” hanging from the Manzanita Tree which Ginger ignores altogether and Mozart only enters to search for foraging toys. Then came the subtle changes, Mozart got nippy and clingy by turns, he spent more and more time in his Happy

Hut even when no foraging toys were there and finally Ginger herself began to edge toward the entrance, peering curiously. Potential disaster! Finally Mozart refused to come out and Beta Bird had to reach in and pull him out – NIP NIP!! Everybody was stressed! Later that day Mozart and Beta Bird were helping the Parrot Club at the Conservation for Critters, and Mozart made a little love offering – he threw up all over Beta Bird’s hair, sigh!! Now actually it’s a sign of deep affection and love for him to share his lunch like that and it’s a completely normal behavior. But taken with the other behaviors it’s apparent he’s over stimulated. Soooo, good-bye Happy Hut! It has been quietly retired until the Fall – and so has Mozart’s Drawer. As spring comes closer watch out for those places that may encourage nesting behaviors you don’t want.

## 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>
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

## Hookbill Fair Dinner

More to come... But for now, plan on joining the vendors, volunteers and board members Saturday evening, August 26. Even if you don’t come for dinner, please provide a dessert for the event...

## April Attendance

Mancy Baumgartner	Lance Triplett
Carole Grommet	Kiarn Triplett
Niki Shaffer	Dick Horwitz
Trey Shaffer	Sherry Miles
Dave Kinkade	Nancy Powell
Christine Kinkade	Judy Kandlbinder
Phyllis Cotton	Barbara Payne
Janet Draper	Susie West
Debora K Anderson	Ron Spittler

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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.

## 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
Niki Shaffer	(314) 432-4890

### 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