

Squawk 'n Talk

Volume 7, Issue 2

February 2007

Greetings from the Presidential Perch!

Hopefully, everyone has their electric and is staying warm! While seeing to your indoor pets, feathered or otherwise, don't forget your feathered friends in your back yard. Food and water are not always available to them in the cold, snow, and ice. If you have any extra seed, and/or suet for them and a source of unfrozen water, it will help them survive the harsh winter.

Plans for the August Bird Fair are moving right along. Vendors are being contacted as well as speakers for the seminars. We can always use help and volunteers for soliciting donations for the raffle table and the Silent Auction. And, when the time comes, we will need volunteers for the setup and participation at the Fair. The Fair is really a fun and exciting time.

Ah, ah, ah! Don't touch that dial - I mean, remote! As you are aware, this February will be the last meeting at the Humane Society of Missouri. Beginning in March of 2007 the GPC will be meeting at the Kirkwood Community Center. Yes, this is a change from what was said in the last newsletter. So, stay tuned for more information by reading this newsletter and attending the meetings. See you there!

Dave

Tidbits

Trey Shaffer

Dues, Dues, Dues – Need we say more?

Conservation For Critters – Participate. There is a short article/news release in this issue about the March 11 event at the Kirkwood Community Center. In addition to participants mentioned in the release, The Gateway Parrot Club will participate. Please contact Dorene Olson to assist staffing the booth. Other bird-related participants include Perfectly Precious Parrot Rescue, Pekin Duck Fund and WyndSong.

January Meeting, or not – I guess the weather did us in. We didn't have enough attendees for an official meeting, so we sat around, ate, talked about birds and watched an interesting video on foraging, *Captive Foraging, The Next Best Thing to Being Free?* It is by M. Scott Echols. The basic message was that caged birds will enjoy the opportunity to "work" for their food, and the effort will replace unwanted behaviors caused by boredom.

New articles from the AAV - Association of Avian Veterinarians. We subscribed to a service of the AAV, a series of articles intended for bird club newsletters. This issue has the first, and we will probably have one each month. Please let us know what you think of the articles.

I chose this article, on chocolate, based on some conversations at recent meetings and interest in potentially "bad" foods. While the content of the article is good, I thought it was not really aimed at the non-technical pet owner. I asked Dr. Cira if she would clarify, and her comments follow the AAV article.

All the articles are bracketed by some required text. The opening is a straightforward copyright, and the closing is a brief commercial for the AAV and their magazine.

Chocolate To Die For?

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Suspected Chocolate Toxicosis in an African Grey

Gretchen Cole, DVM; Michael Murray, DVM

Chocolate toxicosis has been widely reported in dogs and numerous other domestic species. There are no documented reports of chocolate toxicosis in birds; however, many avian texts recognize the potential for this disease. It is suspected that birds could experience similar clinical signs and pathophysiology.

An adult African grey parrot was examined approximately 12 hours after eating a large chocolate doughnut. The bird was quiet, alert, responsive, dehydrated, and underweight. Dark green mucoid feces were passed during the examination. Supportive therapies were immediately initiated. Unfortunately, the bird was found dead 24 hours after presentation. Histopathology results were consistent with acute cardiovascular collapse. This may be secondary to ingestion of a toxic dose of theobromine, the substance found in chocolate. Necropsy findings on the bird were similar in many ways to findings on dogs with toxic doses of chocolate, including congestion of the liver, lung, kidneys, hyperplasia of the proventriculus (stomach in the dog). The similarities of pathology between canines and the bird in this case does not confirm toxicity, but it does suggest a common pathophysiology. Additional research is needed to test the pathophysiology of theobromine in birds. It is important to note that no additional cause of death could be found in this case, lending more weight to the suspected toxicosis.

Release #5, May 2006. The Association of Avian Veterinarians welcomes membership from veterinarians with an interest in avian medicine. Annual meetings and a quarterly journal provide a format for the latest in avian medical information. Is your veterinarian a member? Individuals wishing to subscribe to the Journal of Avian Medicine and Surgery may write to: AAV - P.O. Box 811720 Boca Raton, FL 33481.

Comments From Jennifer Cira, DVM

Chocolate toxicity in birds has always been taught as a truism. However, I am only aware of 1 or 2 cases actually proven to be associated with chocolate. When I did a literature search, the article above and a conure showed up. Chocolate has two naturally occurring chemicals toxic to dogs, cats, and theoretically birds. They are theobromines and methylxanthines, and are absorbed into the bloodstream through blood vessels lining the stomach and intestines. Inside the body they cause numerous clinical signs

including hyperactivity, vomiting, diarrhea, cardiac arrhythmias, seizures, dark-colored feces (bleeding in the intestines) and death. Because there are so many different species of pet birds as opposed to different breeds of the same canine species, we do not have a documented toxic dose for birds. Treatment consists of fluids, medications to coat and protect the stomach and intestines, and medications to push the ingested material through faster so it does not get absorbed in the intestines, i.e. laxatives. If there is an irregular heartbeat, we give medications for this. The necropsy (autopsy) on the bird in this article showed failure of the heart and lungs. This is what caused the organs to look "congested". All this means is the blood stopped flowing to the liver, kidneys, and digestive system and pooled there. These findings are similar to what we see on necropsies of dogs that have died from chocolate ingestion. The bird in this article also may have been in poor health before chocolate ingestion.

Conservation For Critters

The fourth annual *Conservation For Critters* is scheduled for Sunday, March 11, 2007 from 10 am – 4 pm at Kirkwood Community Center. The goal of Conservation For Critters is to educate the general public about wildlife and conservation by creating a family-oriented event with numerous exhibits, some live animals, and hands-on activities for children. Admission is \$3.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children under 10. For more information call Karen Lucy at (636) 461-2818 or e-mail lucyreptilesrus@aol.com.

Participants include the St. Louis Herpetological Society, Wildlife Center Of Missouri, Audubon Society, Geesepeace, Wild Canid Survival Center, World Bird Sanctuary, Friends In The Wild and many more.

Dr. Van Horn - Tri-City

Dr. Van Horn spoke to our group a couple months ago. Sorry it took so long, but here is an update on his practice. The information was provided by Dr. Van Horn's office and presented unedited.

Note: As a reminder... The Gateway Parrot Club does not endorse any particular veterinarian, but does encourage regular visits to a qualified vet. We do try to provide information about veterinarians for use by our members in finding and evaluating avian veterinary services.

Dr. Mark Van Horn is the owner of **Tri-City Animal & Bird Clinic**, a four-doctor practice whose caseload includes a significant number of birds.

- Member of the Association of Avian Veterinarians.
- Provides veterinary care for the birds at the Purina Research Farm's Visitor Center in Gray Summit.
- Veterinary Advisor for Perfectly Precious Bird Rescue and other bird rescue organizations.
- Doctors are available 24 hours a day for consultation regarding bird critical care and emergency situations.
- For over 16 years the clinic has worked closely with pet behaviorist, Dorene Olson, who has extensive experience working with birds and a multitude of avian behavior problems.
- Has pursued significant continuing education in the care and treatment of birds.
- Has given several talks on bird care for the Gateway Parrot Club.

Where Is It?

Debby Martin

Note: At the January "non-meeting" we watched an interesting video about foraging, and how to gradually encourage your bird to adopt this beneficial behavior. We'll revisit the video at the February meeting...

The Detective Bird Mozart is adept at finding trouble. Beta Bird (Debby) thought maybe this talent could be put to good use while in his cage during the day. Foraging, that's name of the game Mozart enjoys. Here are some of his tips. Wrap a food treat in a plain coffee filter, tear a little hole to get him started and tie to the side of the cage. Gay Noeth sent Good Bird magazine some additional suggestions. Use raffia and tie peanuts or other treats to branches or perches. Fill little party cups with veggies and hang them from the branches/perches with raffia. Cut zucchini and hol-

low out a hole and fill with a grape and spear on a birdie kabob. Small realistic multiple branches and birdie kabobs are available at Bird Pet stores such as Varietees and Bird Cage Warehouse.

Mozart also says Gay is absolutely right about moving toys around frequently, hang the foraging items in different places and hide them in out of the way spots. Change things around on the Play Stands frequently.

It's Mozart's chance to shine because Ginger, beautiful though she is, doesn't seem to understand the "Where Is it" game. Or maybe with "Princess" status she expects it delivered on a silver platter.

Addition to Bylaws

Trey Shaffer

Following are proposed additions to the Club's bylaws, intended to clarify election procedures in the event the election of an individual, vacates a currently-held office. These changes will be presented to the membership for approval at the February meeting.

Section 4.2 of our current bylaws discusses election of officers. Section 4.2.4 addresses Vacancy In Office.

4.2.4 - Vacancy In Office

Should a vacancy occur in any office, a special election shall be called to fill the vacancy, except the office of the President which shall automatically be filled by the Vice President. Nominations for the filling of such vacancy shall be made by the members.

The intent of these changes is to establish a procedure whereby all offices are filled at the regular annual election meeting. To that end, the following language will replace Section 4.2.4

4.2.4 - Vacancy In Office

4.2.4.1 – General Vacancy

Should a vacancy occur in any office, a special election shall be called to fill the vacancy, except the office of the President which shall automatically be filled by the Vice President. Nominations for filling such vacancy shall be made by the members.

4.3.4.2 – Vacancy Caused by Election

An individual may hold only one office or Board position at a time. Should a vacancy occur, in any office, as the result of an Officer being elected to another position, the vacated office should be filled, with a special election, at the same meeting. As many elections as needed should be conducted to fill all offices.

Section 5.2 of the bylaws discusses election of members of the Board of Directors, with Section 5.2.4 discussing the term of the office. Openings on the Board are filled by the Board. The language for this is:

Vacancies in any office may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

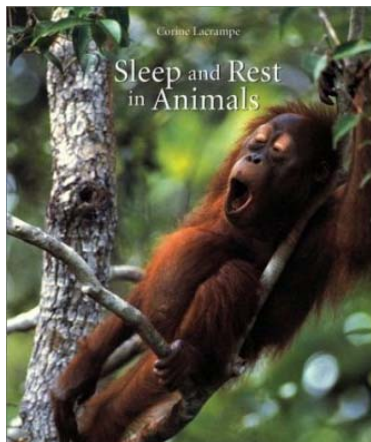
This sentence could be clarified:

Vacancies in any position on the Board of Directors may be filled, by the Board of Directors, at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

Sleep With One Eye Open

Kashmir Csaky, (Macaw Mama)

Note: This information came through email postings via Dorene Olson. Kashmir summarizes information from reading, *Sleep And Rest In Animals*, by Corine Lacrampe



I have been reading a book called *Sleep and Rest in Animals* by Corine Lacrampe. It is a beautiful book with very nice photographs including a stunning picture of a Scarlet Macaw and an adorable picture of two budgies. There are chapters on Insects, reptiles, birds and mammals. The book also discusses fish and amphibians.

Here are some facts about birds from the book. Light dictates when birds sleep and wake up. Increased light stimulates the pineal gland and this determines the amount of sleep a bird gets. Diurnal birds sleep around seven hours during a 24 hour period. Most of the sleep is taken in short naps sometimes only one minute long. Paradoxical sleep (REM) is rarely longer than 30 seconds and is normally only 5 to 6 seconds. Chicks experience five times more REM sleep than their parents. Only three to six percent of total sleep is REM sleep. Birds are able to sleep with one eye open. Half the brain sleeps (unihemisphere sleep) the other half is alert and awake. This is a protection from predators. When birds are not in danger they sleep with both eyes closed. If I find any more interesting tidbits I'll post them...

You can find out more about Kashmir on her web site:

www.MacawMama.com



You can find more information about the book at your favorite bookseller. It is available in paperback. If you're into the Internet thing, you can find used copies for less than a dollar...

Pitcher vs Saver

Debby Martin

"You threw it away!!!!" "We might have wanted that some day!" Alpha Bird barked at Beta Bird. "There's no room to store it" spat back Beta Bird. "How many times have I heard this same argument" Mozart grumbled to Ginger. "It's really difficult being part of a flock where Alpha bird is a saver and Beta Bird is a pitcher". Ginger sniffed "They've been bonded for 100 years – so you know it will never change – but it sure makes me twitchy and my feathers feel all funny." Mozart, being older, felt obligated to provide some balance – Ginger did seem to be particularly upset – she was shaking slightly.

Timing it carefully, he launched from the play-gym onto Beta Bird's shoulder as she stomped very annoyed into the kitchen. He had to distract her – a quick nip always brings her around – nothing hard – just enough to divert her from that behavior that was so upsetting. Ah, works like a charm. Now, quick, lower the head and she's charmed into quick neck scratches and begins to calm down. Sigh...flock leader wannabe's job is never done! Alpha Bird and Beta Bird should know by now – NO ARGUMENTS IN FRONT OF THE FLOCK! Loud, upset and hostile words and actions really upset the flock – "Boy, they're lucky there's no African Grey's in this flock because they really would be upset – so super sensitive" mumbled Ginger.

"Beta Bird's right – there is no room. But Alpha Bird has a good point too – a use can be found for a lot of these things. Why, rescue organizations would give their right wing feathers for some of this stuff. I can't tell her – I'm no African Grey – but I can write an article for Squawk N Talk," thought Mozart. MAARS, Perfectly Precious, The Gabriel Foundation, Humane Society, ASPCA need this kind of stuff all the time! So, Club Members, remind Alpha Bird and Beta Bird of this list for me – and, say, could you maybe fly some of these items to one of the Rescues from your basement?"

- Assorted sizes of bird toys for canaries to macaws
- Toy Parts as rescues frequently make their own toys
- Bath towels – assorted sizes
- Fresh nuts in the shell
- Bird food cooking mixes
- Stainless steel bowls
- Clean old phonebooks

- Newspapers
- Paper Towels
- Latex or vinyl gloves
- Sponges with scouring pad on one side
- Trash Bags
- Dawn liquid detergent
- Brooms
- Buckets
- Shop Vac's
- Office supplies
- Rakes
- Flight cages
- Play gyms
- Bird food
- Birdie baskets with kitchen stuff that birds can play with: wooden spoons, plastic measuring cups, plastic spoons

2007 Meeting Schedule

The year is just starting, and we are looking for topics of interest for our meetings. Dorene Olson is our Education and Program chair. She is looking for our input on suggestions for topics and speakers. Please let Dorene, or any Board member what interests you and what you think will make the meetings more interesting.

| Date | Topic |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| February 18 | Active Foraging |
| March 18 | Living with special needs birds |
| April 15 | Wing/Nail clinic |
| May 18 | TBA |
| June 15 | Toy Making |
| July 15 | TBA |
| August | All American Hookbill Fair |
| September 16 | Profile of Rescue in Aviculture |
| October 21 | TBA |
| November 18 | TBA – Nominations |
| December 16 | Holiday Party - Elections |

Contact Information

Officers

We welcome your comments and suggestions...

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| President | Dave Kinkade | (636) 343-8097 |
| Vice President | Phyllis Cotton | (314) 427-3679 |
| Secretary | Dorene Olson | (314) 956-1310 |
| Treasurer | Nancy Marron | (314) 984-9524 |
| Membership | Jennifer Cira | (636) 527-5889 |

Board Members

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Christine Kinkade | (636) 343-8097 |
| Carole Grommet | (636) 529-0026 |
| Mandy Baumgartner | (314) 842-4191 |
| Trey Shaffer | (314) 432-4317 |
| Janet Draper | (314) 432-3019 |
| Niki Shaffer | (314) 432-4890 |

Committees

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



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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