

# Squawk 'n Talk

Volume 8, Issue 3

March 2008

Greetings from the Presidential Perch!

March is here and that means spring is just around the corner. It doesn't look much like spring, though. As I write this article, I can see through the window that it is snowing heavily. Four or five inches in as many hours! The cardinals, chickadees, downy & red-bellied woodpeckers, juncos, starlings, sparrows, and morning doves are all fighting over the bird feeders, suet, and seed on the snow covered ground. I guess Punxsutawney Phil was right, after all – six more weeks of winter!

The 2008 All American Hookbill Fair is progressing very well. We already have several speakers lined up including; Rachel Crandell (Rainforest Rachel), President of the Monteverde Conservation League, US (MCLUS) of Costa Rica; Mattie Sue Athan, author of several books on parrot behavior and Quaker parrots; Avian veterinarians Dr. Kersting & Dr. Welle; and Walter Crawford, Executive Director of the World Bird Sanctuary.

Vendor applications are beginning to come in, and we are hoping to fill all the floor space. We are also seeking donated items for our Silent Auction and Raffle Table. If you haven't already volunteered your help, you may be called upon in the next few months to help in any way you can. We will need help in soliciting donations for the raffles, setting up & taking down the Fair, and, of course, help during the Fair itself.

Our educational speaker for this month's meeting is Nancy Schnell of GeesePeace. Please be sure to come and hear her talk.

See you at the Meeting. ---- Dave

## Tidbits

Trey Shaffer

**February Meeting** – At the February meeting, most of the Board's discussion focused on the Fair. There is, as always, a lot to be done, and we now have individuals assigned to manage the various aspects of planning and operation. They will be contacting you to enlist your help.

**March Meeting** – At this month's meeting our guest speaker will be Nancy Schnell, talking about the efforts of GeesePeace to help manage the wild goose population in metropolitan areas.

**Update from The Feather Distribution Project** – We received an email from Jonathan Reyman, with a lovely photo attached. The picture showed a Zuni celebration, which is interesting in itself, but made more special because all the feathers, in the various costumes and ornaments, were provided by *The Feather Distribution Project*. You can find the photo on the front page of our website. You can also find more information there about The Feather Distribution Project.

## All American Hookbill Fair AND Seminar (On A Mission)

Trey Shaffer

That is the full name, and in the title above, the emphasis is AND, pointing to the SEMINAR. We frequently reduce the whole thing to "the Fair," and in print, I always capitalize it to make it seem more significant. I'm going to wax philosophical a moment and then get back to the practical...

The Fair seminars are what drew me to the Club several years ago. I had recently lost an Amazon and acquired a Greenwing (many of you know "Q") and wanted to learn more about keeping parrots from a practical point of view. I actually had to look for the GPC. Some pet stores said they thought there was a parrot club in town, but didn't have details. Finally one pointed me to an individual they

thought might know something. It turned out to be John Tomasovic, our speaker for the April meeting, and I finally got connected. The conclusion to that rambling point is that education matters. There is a second point there too, about the Club needing to promote itself, but that is a later topic.

We always include the Club's Mission Statement in the back of the newsletter. Like anything that is *always there* we tend to tune it out after a while. But as we look forward to this year's Fair, and our speakers in particular, let's review the Mission and see how we are doing. The mission has four points.

**The Gateway Parrot Club, Inc. is a not for profit organization established in 1988 to:**

That is interesting, it means this is our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year!

**Bring people together in a friendly atmosphere in the interest of exchanging information on bird care and breeding.**

The Fair certainly brings people together, by the hundreds or thousands, in what we hope is a friendly atmosphere, and the seminars are our major tool to present/share information on a wide variety of topic.

**Create interest in bird care and responsible breeding through monthly educational programs and annual bird fairs.**

As I read this now, it seems a little redundant to the first point, but does highlight our activity structure, monthly meetings and the annual Fair.

**Reduce neglect, cruelty and abuse of captive birds through education and public outreach.**

This is the newest part of our mission, added in 2006, I think. We wanted to make explicit our desire to improve the lives of captive birds. This also reflects an evolution of member interests over the years. The early years of the Club had greater emphasis on breeding (I am told.) Since I have been around, about 2001, I have seen more emphasis on caretaking and rescue.

**Educate the public, as well as ourselves, on the ever present danger of extinction in the wild.**

Last, but not least, though we think of our feathered friends as members of our family, their roots are as wild animals in far-away places; and those places are changing to the degree there may soon be no wild birds of our treasured species.

Looking at those four points, every one involves education; about bird care and breeding, neglect and cruelty, and the danger of extinction. Over the years, we have brought the superstars of the exotic pet bird world to St. Louis for our annual events, and this year is no exception.

Things are shaping up for this year's Fair. Here is the current list of speakers we expect to present. Look for more information about them, their programs and their presentations in the next several issues of the newsletter.

**Mattie Sue Athan** – Behaviorist and author. Please see Christine's library article, in this issue, highlighting Mattie Sue's books, and remember, they are available in our library. You may have met Mattie Sue at last year's Fair. She was on hand participating in the Quaker Parakeet Society's activities.

**Rachel Crandell** – Conservationist/environmentalist. Rachel will discuss the Monteverde Conservation League's activities to protect rainforests in Costa Rica.

**Walter Crawford** – World Bird Sanctuary, rescue and rehabilitation. Walter is always an interesting speaker, and we, in St. Louis, are fortunate to have a world-class facility like the WBS in our back yard.

**Dr. Ken Welle and Dr. David Kersting** – Avian Veterinarians. Expect to hear about developments in medicine to help our birds live longer, healthier lives.

So there you have an outstanding set of presenters and topics, all supporting our various areas of education. Keep an eye on our website for more details; there are currently links to the speakers' own websites. As we firm up the details of their presentations we will let you know on the website and in the newsletter...

## Shameless Self-promotion

Wanted – Marketeer

GPC would like to improve our marketing/presentation. The topic comes up specifically in the context of the Fair, but applies in general. If you, or someone you know, works in the graphic arts, advertising, or marketing fields, please let us know. We will appreciate a

bit of your experience and/or time to help us promote the Fair and the Club.

Areas identified for work include our printed promotional materials, brochures, flyers, etc. and the more general area of getting the message out about the Fair, while working on our shoestring promotional budget. Particularly when it comes to the Fair, we have a terrific product, and have been fortunate to make money every year, but without changing the Fair at all, results will improve with every additional visitor we can generate. So help us with some ideas, suggestions, and contacts.

## YouTube for your Bird



This may be of interest... The weird wonderful web now has a site dedicated to videos of birds. At a glance, it seems like a combination of social networking and home videos for bird people and birds. So if you like to watch, crank up your browser and check it out. If you would like to contribute, get your bright lights and birdy actor going. There is a cage drawing for video contributors. There is advertising on the site, but it doesn't get in the way, and seems to be bird-related. [www.AvianVideos.com](http://www.AvianVideos.com)

## Bylaws Update

Trey Shaffer

Yes, it's spring, but thinking back a bit to our cancelled December meeting, and the impact it had on our election schedule, we propose this new language for our bylaws. This shouldn't be controversial; just to clarify the process in the event of similar future issues.

Per the process established in our current bylaws, here is the official notification of a proposed change to the bylaws. This will be followed by a vote at the general membership meeting. We propose the addition of the following language.

## Article 13 – Schedules and Timing

Should a meeting be cancelled or delayed, official business scheduled for the original date will be deferred to the next possible date, as determined by the President. Should a delay affect elections, the terms of existing office holders will be extended until the election takes place. If an election is delayed past the normal effective date of office transfer, newly elected individuals will assume positions effective immediately after the election.

## Book Picks of the Month

Christine Kinkade

Mattie Sue Athan will be one of our featured speakers at the August 23-24, 2008 Bird Fair at Queeny Park. Mattie Sue has written several parrot-related books. We have two of her publications in our GPC Library. I will feature both books this month. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with Mattie Sue's books, as she is quite an accomplished author and speaker.

Here are this month's picks:

***Guide To The Quaker Parrot*** by Mattie Sue Athan

Here is everything you need to know about caring for and training your Quaker parrot. This book guides you in the details of parrot behavior training that is best begun when the bird is still in its baby stage. You also get advice on grooming, diet, protecting against household accidents, choosing cages and toys – and dealing with that all too common problem: what to do if your bird flies away. Dozens of full-color photos and illustrations. (122 pages).

***Guide To A Well-Behaved Parrot*** by Mattie Sue Athan

If you own a parrot or plan to get one, this book will give you practical solutions to the pet behavior problems that sometimes trouble owners of these birds. You will also get helpful information on bathing, grooming, communications, selection of accessories and toys for your parrot, and advice on maintaining safe interactions between you and your parrot. Dozens of full-color photos and detailed drawings. (144 pages).

***Cockatiels*** by the Popular Bird Series

This is a magazine publication that will delight anyone that is interested in cockatiels. Whether you are new to cockatiels or not, you

will find it a very enjoyable source of cockatiel information. It has many articles on talking, grooming, behavior, anatomy, body language, nutrition, and more. I particularly enjoyed the 5 'tiel treats recipes. Over 89 color pictures. (128 pages).

***The Bird Watcher's Handbook*** by Laura O'Biso Socha

Written in an appealing style, this handbook offers something for everyone from amateurs to seasoned birders. The book answers questions such as: "What kind of bird is that?", "What is it doing?", "What does it eat?", "Why is it singing like that?" & "Where does it go in the winter?" A few illustrations. (182 pages).

***Canaries As A New Pet*** by Maja Muller Bierl

A short beginner's book that is meant for someone who is just starting to keep canaries as pets. All the basics you need to know to get started on keeping canaries. Color pictures on every page. (64 pages).

***Lories & Lorikeets*** by John Vanderhoof

This hardbound book has plenty of beautiful lorikeet color illustrations. Although most of these birds are not available as pets, this book identifies the various species and subspecies of lories and lorikeets and their location in the world. There is a section in the back of the book that describes how to keep and care for lories and lorikeets in the home. (99 pages).

GPC members can check out any of these featured picks at this month's meeting. Please note that some books are quite old and some of the information may be a little outdated. Please keep this in mind when reading the books.

A complete listing of the GPC library is available on the GPC website [www.GatewayParrotClub.org](http://www.GatewayParrotClub.org). If you wish to check out any of these, or any of our books, please contact me prior to the next GPC meeting by phone (636) 343-8097, or email at [Librarian@GatewayParrotClub.org](mailto:Librarian@GatewayParrotClub.org), and I will bring them to the next meeting.

All books checked out should be returned at the following GPC meeting. If that is not possible, please return the books by mail to Christine Kinkade, 2412 Angela Dr., High Ridge, MO. 63049-2848.

Happy reading!

Christine

## Harley ~ A love story

Sue Owens

When I was a little one, my parents took us to Grant's Farm. I was mesmerized by the awesome parrots in the bird show – their tricks, how they obeyed the trainers, their beauty. I thought to myself: "One day I'll have one of those too".

Fast forward about 40 years. I did my research and decided on a Greenwing macaw. "Gentle giants", spaketh the Internet. "Intelligent, lovable clowns who are easily tamed" recited a parrot book. I found a lady through Gateway Parrot Club who was raising some, and went to visit. Her chicks were still naked and extremely hideous, but I decided on one anyways since apparently they don't stay that way. She urged me to visit often to watch him grow, and tried to teach me to hand-feed him. I have to admit right now that the wee thing repulsed me and I didn't feel good touching him. He seemed so breakable, and I was terrified of aspirating him with the formula.

On each visit, I would wander around her house and look at the other birds there. In her living room (converted to bird room) was a huge black wrought iron cage with an adult Greenwing resident. He would spy me and cling piteously to the side of his prison and yell: "HI BIRDIE!". Once he let me give him a peanut. I even dared to touch his head through the cage bars. The Bird Lady told me that he was for sale cheap – he was there on consignment. She said his left wing didn't work, either as the result of a birth defect or abuse, no one knew. I felt drawn to him, but all the bird books said to get a baby so that it would love you and you could raise it properly – adults were not very good and came with a load of baggage.

So I continued to visit my baby and tried to feed him. My heart didn't want to stay with him though. It kept making my feet wander into the other room where the Big Red Guy cling to the bars and said "HI BIRDIE!" On the last visit, I couldn't stand it anymore. I asked the Bird Lady to call the owners and see what they would take. We negotiated and he came home with me the next day.

You thought this was the end of the story, didn't you? Heavens no, I can't tell a story THAT quickly!

We renamed the big red bird Harley. We already had an African Grey. This guy was a whole new experience... that huge beak was scary as hell. When I approached, he would hold up a foot and say "Up, step up!" so stupidly I would offer my hand. He stepped up very

well, and promptly chomped my arm. I took to wrapping it in an ace wrap and wearing long sleeves. This worked a couple of times. Then he realized the ace didn't go all the way up so he chomped my shoulder. I had some spectacular bruises, and still have scars on my deltoid to this day. There were many nights when I would cry when I went to bed, and vow to get rid of him the next day and get a baby instead.

The next morning I would get up with resolve to get him a new home. The gnarly beastie read my mind, he did. He would lean over to me and say "HI BIRDIE!" and hand me something regurgitated. I'd fall in love all over again. It took over a year before we learned to trust each other. He grooms my eyelashes now with that immense beak, and lets me gently scratch his face-paint feathers.

Harley got very ill five years ago. I feared he would die. He spent 2-3 days at Dr. Kersting's bird hospital, and those fine folks pulled him through. We found out that he is really a she also. People at work would say "What's the big deal? It's just a stupid bird. You can always get another one". No one could understand our bond. No one could understand spending nearly a grand to save the life of a "stupid bird". I expect though that you all understand, don't you?

This is my favorite love story, about my favorite Valentine bird – my dear red Harley 'caw. He doesn't do tricks like the Grants Farm birds. He can't fly. He doesn't say a lot. He's not a lot smarter than a houseplant really. But he is a wonderful loving creature who has taught me that although the way to the heart may be a rocky and painful path, when you get there, you are home forever.

## Recipe of the Month

Posted by: Lorien Carrillo - [carrillo@community.net](mailto:carrillo@community.net)

June 16, 1999

### Cheesy Pasta Surprise

- 1 lb bag of small elbow macaroni
- 1/2-1 lb, shredded or small cubes
- 1/4-1/2 cup milk
- 1 can (or small bag frozen) whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 can (or small bag frozen) peas, drained
- 2 cans tuna, drained

Boil macaroni. Drain and place back in pot. Turn burner to medium-low heat and add cheese, stirring and folding gently until almost melted. Add milk as needed during melting process for creamier texture and easier melting. Add veggies and tuna and continue mixing until all ingredients are heated and cheese is fully melted.

Take a small birdie-sized portion for each of your birds and place it in their bowls and let it cool before serving. They'll love it! And you don't have to make something else for you and the kids. Now, if you want, you can mix in sprouts, pellets, or whatever you like. I don't...they love it just like this.

### Bogie's Birdie Biscotti

Posted by: Catherine Dobbins - [mcat@brella-grey.com](mailto:mcat@brella-grey.com)

April 19, 1997

Mix 1 cup ground bird pellets, 1/2 cup corn meal, 1/2 cup whole wheat flour, 1 cup ground almonds. Add 1-2 tbs powdered wheat grass and 2 tbs powdered eggshells. Mix in 4 whole eggs, 1 jar of baby food carrots, and enough unsweetened fruit juice to mix into a firm dough.

Scoop by the spoonful and roll into balls of about 1/2 - 3/4 " diameter; place on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake in oven at 325 degrees for 20-30 min. Cool on a rack and keep in the refrigerator. Also freezes well. Depending on size, makes about 90-100 pieces.

I keep a Ziploc of these in the freezer at all times and take out 15-20 at a time and keep in the refrigerator. My U2 and CAG both LOVE these and will do just about anything to get one! I think they are a much healthier substitute for many of the bird treats in the pet stores.

Recipes from the Birds n Ways website, [www.birdsnways.com](http://www.birdsnways.com)

## 2008 Schedule

March 16 - GeesePeace
April 20 – Tomasovic Travelouge
May 18
June 8 ( second Sunday )
July 20
August – Fair
September 21
October 19
November 16
December 14

### Our Mission

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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

We welcome your comments and suggestions...

### Officers

President	Dave Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Vice President	Phyllis Cotton	(314) 427-3679
Secretary	Cathy Wendler	(636) 586-0604
Treasurer	Nancy Marron	(314) 984-9524
Membership	Niki Shaffer	(314) 853-5323

### Board Members

Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Dawn Breer	(636) 464-8085
Suzanne Dohack	(636) 734-4527
Trey Shaffer	(314) 432-4317
Janet Draper	(314) 432-3019
Jim Berk	(636) 586-1445

### Committees

Education	???	
Hospitality	Pat Seiler	(636) 462-4732
Librarian	Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Ways & Means	Suzanne Dohack	(636) 734-4527
Website Newsletter Public Relations	Trey Shaffer	(314) 432-4317