

Squawk 'n Talk

October 2019



Gateway Parrot Club

Join us on

Sunday, October 20, 2019, 1:00 p.m.

Varietees Bird Store

Valley Park, MO

Guest Speaker, Dr. Patricia Anderson

"The Empowered Parrot: Creating a Better Human -Avian Bond"

We are excited to have Pat as our guest speaker. Her talk will explore common misunderstandings about parrots and how to make life more fun and less challenging. She will discuss strategies for empowering and enriching parrots, including the teaching of husbandry and trick behaviors, which are illustrated with videos of her parrots performing tricks.

Come for a fun afternoon:

Meeting (1:00), Food (1:30), Program (2:00), Raffle (3:00)

You are welcome to bring your bird(s).

The only requirement is that wings be clipped (for their safety).

If fully flighted, please keep them in a carrier.

You don't have to be a member to attend.

Chirps From the President's Perch

I'm so looking forward to having Dr. Patricia Anderson as our speaker this month. Pat has so much to offer and such wonderful training ideas for us. We will all enjoy having her.

Update on Fair Meeting at our September Meeting: Our Fair Discussion went well last month. The members present indicated they really enjoyed our Fair and would like to see some kind of parrot event continue. It's obvious that we can no longer continue to pay the high price to rent the Machinist Hall. Overall Vendor participation seems to be declining thus making the high price per square foot too difficult to cover profitably. I know for a fact that most of our vendors were pleased with their overall sales this year.

We were able to locate a couple of very suitable locations at much lower prices. HOWEVER, no one was willing to step up and volunteer to head up next year's fair. This left the board with very little in the way of options to be able to continue with planning for an event next year. We decided to try something new! Rick Ruderer is a professional event planner and an active club member. We asked Rick about helping us and he is excited about the possibility. We will be meeting and discussing options and possibilities with Rick in November.

Annual Election News: The following is a list of the current club positions that will be up for nominations during the November, 2019 meeting. All positions are for a two (2) year term beginning on January 1, 2020. Voting on these positions will be at the December, 2019 meeting.

The positions are as follows with the person who currently holds them in parenthesis:

Offices

President	(Georgia Fletcher)
Secretary	(Heidi Hellmuth)
Treasurer	(Cathy Timma)

Board positions (3) (Even Yr)

(Christine Kinkade)
(Dave Kinkade)
(Beth Poll)

Christine and Dave Kinkade have made the decision not to seek reelection for the board. Their input and knowledge will be greatly missed. They have been members for many years and have served on the board of parrot club for most of years they were members. Dave has probably held all offices on the board. They will continue to be active in the club and the good news is that Christine will continue cooking the food for our monthly meetings! We are very thankful for that. They commented that there is a need for younger members to run for board positions. So this is a call out to all young members who qualify to run this year to consider running for a board position. We don't want to exclude anyone from running - we welcome all people who want to get involved.

In order to run for office or board position, you must have attended four or more meetings during the past 12 months. If interested, come to the meeting and tell us if you would like to run. If you attend the October and November meetings, that would count toward the requirement of attending four meetings a year.

Feathers: Start saving your parrots' molted Feathers. There is a new Feather Distribution Program "Feathers for Native Americans". We will share more information about this program at the meeting. For those of you who wish more information before then, go to: www.feathersfornativeamericans.com

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at our meeting on Sunday October 20th. Meeting time 1:00

Georgia Fletcher
President

Pictures from our September Meeting

Star (Cockatoo), Akai (Blue & Gold), Cosmo (Hyacinth Macaw), Disney (Blue Eclectus)



General Meeting Notes

Come and enjoy the fun and bring a bird (as long as it is clipped). It's so enjoyable seeing all the different species of parrots and talking to other parrot owners.

You don't have to be a member to attend, but we would love to have you join. Meeting starts at 1:00 and it will be a full afternoon of meeting, socializing, eating, program, and raffle. For members who have not renewed their membership or who would like to join, please see Renee Davis, our membership chair person. She will be at the meeting to sign you up. An annual membership fee of \$20.00 includes your family (two voting members) and brings you our monthly newsletter by email, helps us to provide special speakers, and allows us the opportunity to support not-for-profit organizations. Thank you for joining and helping support the parrot community in St. Louis.

We meet at Varietees Bird Store, 60 Meramec Valley Plaza, Valley Park, MO. Varietees will be open in the afternoon so you can purchase bird food, supplies, toys, cages, play stands, etc.

We do have a raffle most months so if you would like to donate item(s), they are always welcome. They do not have to be bird related. We sell raffle tickets for \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00.

Did you know that the Gateway Parrot Club has a Facebook group page? If you would like to join this group, search for "Gateway Parrot Club" in Facebook and request membership. We have over 600 members! Also check out our website at gatewayparrotclub.org. If you ever want to contact the club via email, go to our website, select "Contact," select the board member you would like to contact, and send your message.

Chef Christine will be making meat lasagna and eggplant lasagna for our meeting. She will not be at the meeting, but will be preparing lasagna before she leaves town. That is true dedication! We know everything she makes is delicious! As usual there will be water and an assortment of soda. Please feel free to bring something to add to our food table. We appreciate anything you would like to share.

Gateway Parrot Club



Meeting Dates - 2019:

- October 20, Dr. Patricia Anderson, The Empowered Parrot:
Creating a Better Human-Avian Bond
- November 17 Randy Morgan, Honey of a Bee Presentation
 - * December 8, Holiday Party
 - 2020 Election of Officers/Board-

*** Meeting will be on 2nd Sunday**



Association of Avian Veterinarians

September 2019 AAV Bird Club News Release

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Top 10 Things Your Avian Veterinarian Doesn't Want You to Do (Part 1 of 2)

By: Jodi Berls, CVA, LVT

Ever wonder what your avian veterinarian is thinking when you tell them about the care of your pet bird? Usually we're thinking, "good job!" or "way to go!" But there are times when we're thinking, "uh- oh" or "oh, no." Here's a list of some of the most common things your avian veterinarian is hoping you're not doing.

1. Delaying treatment when your bird is showing signs of illness

No matter how tame your pet bird seems, he is a wild animal, who still retains all the instincts of his wild counterparts. One of the most important of those instincts is to hide any signs of weakness, illness or injury. This means that, by the time he starts to look sick, he is likely to be very sick, possibly ill enough to require hospitalization. If your bird is showing signs that all is not right, he needs to see his avian veterinarian right away.

Some signs you should be looking for:

- Fluffed feathers
- Sitting on the bottom of the cage
- Open beak breathing, also known as “tail bobbing”
- Vomiting or regurgitation
- Weight loss or prominent keel bone on the breast area
- Not eating or drinking

If you see any of those signs, please get veterinary care for your bird immediately.

The other side of that coin is, please don't feel silly for bringing your bird into the clinic about something that seems very subtle. You're the one who lives with your bird and sees him every day, so you are likely to be the first one to notice something unusual. If you tell your vet that your bird “just seems a little off,” he or she will take you seriously and not think you're silly at all. Your veterinarian knows that your observation may have saved your bird's life.

2. Deciding that your bird will only eat seeds, not pellets

Because, really, he *will* eat pellets. Eventually. If you're patient and persistent, it should only take a week or two to convert by gradually feeding a little more pellet and a little less seed every day. Make a game of it, offering the pellets as treats. Eat some yourself, so your bird can see they're safe to eat. (They taste kind of like breakfast cereal. We know, because we have eaten them to try to get birds to eat them, too.) We know some birds can be stubborn, but hang in there, because it's worth it. If you need some extra motivation, keep in mind that seeds are mostly fat and lack many nutrients your bird needs to survive, much less thrive.

Vitamin and mineral deficiencies can cause a number of serious illnesses that are easily avoided with a healthy, appropriate diet.

Note that using popular mixes of seeds and pellets probably won't help. The odds are your bird is eating only the seeds and leaving the pellets in the bowl. It is as if you gave a 2-year-old a plate with chocolate on one side and green beans on the other – the part he will eat is the chocolate, right? If the seeds and pellets are together in the bowl, your bird still isn't getting good nutrition, and you're spending money on a lot of food he is just not eating.

3. Buying a bird from a flea market or “some guy” on a website

We know that there must be responsible sellers at flea markets and even on websites like Craigslist and Nextdoor. But we see far too many birds sold this way who come in to our clinics looking like death warmed over.

The story is almost invariably the same, and it is always very sad: *The vendor said the bird is definitely male, that he's two years old or younger, and of course, he's completely healthy.* The vendor may have given you a phone number and said that if there were any problems, you could call him. He may even have encouraged you to take the bird to your avian vet within a few days and let him know the results. But now he's not answering his phone.

It is really important to do your homework before buying any bird and to try to obtain your pet from a responsible, knowledgeable source. If you're buying from an individual, make sure you can see the bird before you make the purchase – if it does not look healthy or the seller won't let you see it, beware. No matter who you buy from, getting a veterinary exam within a few days is a good idea – in the event the bird has a health problem, getting treatment early will save grief and money.

All that said, if you just cannot resist that impulse purchase, or if you decide you want to buy anyway because you want to help a bird that does not look well, that's your call. Just be aware that veterinary bills later may be more than double your original purchase price.

4. Using medications formulated for humans

If your bird appears ill or injured, the temptation can be strong to use the medications you already have at hand, especially if the condition has occurred suddenly at a time when it is not convenient to see your veterinarian. The thing is, birds are not humans. They are not even mammals. So medications formulated for humans may not resolve a health problem in your bird – they may even create new health problems or be outright toxic.

The ASPCA reported in 2004 that almost 30% of poisonings in pet birds involved human medications, including painkillers, cold medicines, antidepressants and vitamins. Birds may be attracted to small, round objects like pills; they may swallow them whole or chew on them, thinking they are seeds or other foods or toys. However, even if the drug is safe for the bird, most pills prescribed for humans are far and away too high of a dose for even a large parrot. And some of those drugs may be toxic to birds even in very small amounts. Worse yet, a bird's very rapid metabolism means there may be little or no time for treatment once the medication has been ingested.

Topical ointments, such as antibacterial products, can contain oils that coat a bird's feathers so thoroughly they reduce the bird's ability to regulate its own body temperature, and they may not be easy to remove later. Some topical ointments also contain ingredients that are toxic, such as diclofenac, an anti-inflammatory drug that's safe for humans but so toxic it caused near-extinctions in some species of birds.

Never give your bird any medication without first consulting your avian veterinarian.

5. Taking your bird outside without any form of restraint

Even if your bird's wings are trimmed, he is still small, lightweight and aerodynamic by design. It may only take a small gust of wind, or one loud noise, to send him airborne, and he can go a long way before he stops, possibly several blocks away in a very tall tree. If he is unlucky, there may be a hungry hawk nearby when he lands.

Never forget that your bird can still fly even with clipped wings. Accidents can happen.

In a similar vein, your avian veterinarian would really appreciate it if you bring your bird in to the clinic in a carrier, rather than simply perched on your shoulder or held in a towel. There are likely to be other animals in the clinic who may startle your bird into flight, and toweling your bird for a long period of time can overheat him. Carriers that are small, lightweight and secure for your bird are not expensive; in a pinch, a carrier designed for a dog or cat often will be sufficient.

To be continued as October 2019 AAV Bird Club News Release.

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