

Squawk 'n Talk



August 2020



**August Gateway Parrot
Club Meeting is Cancelled
due to COVID-19
Pandemic.**

**Sign up for our Virtual Toy
Party in September!**

Greetings from the Presidential Perch!

At this time we have cancelled the Gateway Parrot Club meetings and will resume our monthly meetings based on guidance by St. Louis County and the CDC. Please stay safe and continue to follow the guidelines, such as, wearing face masks, social distancing, hand washing, and the use of hand sanitizers, etc. to stay healthy.

Fair Reminder - the Gateway Parrot Club will not have a Fair. We had two events planned but they were canceled due to Covid-19.

Announcing a Zoom Party!

On September 20th we will have a virtual bird toy making party led by Robin Shewokis Sullivan with 'The Leather Elves'. Order your Boredom Buster Box (link below) and join us via Zoom on September 20th. We hope to see you then. Robin will lead the Zoom party and we will make toys for our feathered kids. <https://theleatherelves.ecwid.com/>

Please let us know your suggestions for topics of interest for our Monthly Newsletters. The primary mission of the Gateway Parrot Club is education.

As we near the date of our future meetings we will announce if the meeting will be held or canceled based on the COVID-19 numbers and the government recommendations at the time.

Stay well and take care.

Renee Davis

Be sure to sign up for our September 20th Virtual Toy Making Event!

Missing your bird club friends? Need a dose of positive parrot vibes?

With limits on the numbers of people at gatherings getting together with like minded bird people is challenging at best. The Leather Elves have the solution... Attend a **Virtual Boredom Buster Box Party!**

In an effort to keep bird owners engaged and thinking about ways to enrich their feathered companions during the pandemic, the Leather Elves developed The Boredom Buster Box. Each box contains parts and assorted items to create at least 4 enrichment opportunities. People who have purchased boxes have reported that they have built between 7 and 10 toys. It all depends on your level of creativity! We also realize that clubs and other avian organizations have been unable to meet and in many cases are suffering financial setbacks due to the inability to meet and raise funds in the usual ways. After brainstorming a way to help with these issues The Leather Elves have created The Virtual Boredom Buster Box Party.

Order your box online from www.theleatherelves.ecwid.com by **Sept 6th**. Go to the "parts" section, select your box size (box sizes are based on bird size not quantity...for example a cockatiel would need a small box while a macaw would need a large. It doesn't change the number of opportunities in each box just the size of the parts) and head to checkout. Enter code **GPC** to receive 5% off your order. Entering the code also helps identify which group you belong to. A flat shipping fee of 10.00 per box gets the box to you in plenty of time to be set for the virtual party.

A Zoom meeting invitation will be sent to you the week before the meeting. On **September 20th at 1PM** sign in and as a group along with Robin Shewokis Sullivan, enrichment specialist, open boxes and discuss contents. No two boxes are exactly alike. Items will be discussed as to why they were included and then the group will share ideas for how to use the pieces. We will also have Q&A time for you to ask enrichment/behavior questions. This is a great opportunity to sharing ideas and experiences. The virtual party will last 1-1.5 hours as people tend to get antsy online any longer than that.

As an added bonus for each box sold The Leather Elves will donate 5.00 to the club. The more people who order boxes the higher the donation. In addition at the end of the Zoom meeting you will be given a code good for 15% off any item in The Leather Elves store valid until October 20th.

If you have any questions feel free to contact Robin at birdelves@aol.com. Announcing

New Gateway Parrot Club Facebook Group:



This group is designed to connect members of the Gateway Parrot Club and other parrot owners in the greater metro St. Louis region. It's a way to reach a targeted group of buyers to sell parrot accessories, equipment and parrot related items.

There are MANY buy, sell, trade pages on Facebook. This page is strictly designed to sell parrot related items only. **ABSOLUTELY NO SELLING OF LIVE ANIMALS.**

You do not have to live in St. Louis to join the group. Members can choose to offer shipping for their items, or not. It is up to each individual seller. Buyer will be responsible for shipping fees.

For a comprehensive list of items prohibited by Facebook, please visit the link here: <https://www.facebook.com/policies/commerce>.

Sell your birdie swag here!

QUARANTINE & NECROPSY...WHY?

We all love our parrots. Getting a new pet bird is exciting and scary all at the same time. You wonder if they will love you, if they will thrive in your home. You ask yourself if you and your newbie will be compatible. For those of us bringing the bird into the home is a first-time experience. For others, it will be an addition to our flock. What are the first steps to take? Get a cage? Check. Get proper food and toys? Check. You may be scouting out an area in your home for the cage which is great, but what about the new bird's health? Here the first step when obtaining a new parrot is Quarantine.

What is it, and why is it so important?

Quarantine is the practice of separating the incoming parrot from other birds. If you have no other birds, your home is effectively the quarantine area. If you do have other parrots at home, your new bird (regardless of where it came from) should be separated from the rest of your flock in a *different airspace*. If that is not possible, at least place your new bird as far away from the others as possible. When feeding, feed your birds first, the new one last. Take care to not expose your shoes, clothing, hands etc. to your current pet(s) during and after handling the new bird. It is not that difficult if you find a system. Quarantine for a minimum of 30 days, 60 days if you can.

The reason to quarantine is disease. Even if your new bird looks healthy, the bird may be carrying bacteria or viruses that could easily spread to the rest of your flock. Left unchecked in an "only" bird may display itself later on. While the bird is in quarantine you can visually check for his health. Observe his poop, blood in droppings, diarrhea, nasal discharge or eye discharge, heavy breathing and possibly seizures. Make sure your bird is eating. Some birds will not eat the first day or two while adjusting to their new environment. Do not panic prematurely.

Veterinary care and testing are important.

Starting with a health record, having a baseline is a best practice. Taking your new buddy to an avian veterinarian can detect some illnesses or verify that the parrot is healthy. You wouldn't want your current birds exposed to diseases such as PDD, Aspergillosis, Chlamydia and other diseases. Birds hide their illnesses, so follow through to protect your flock. Your avian vet can detect health issues with a blood test, which most veterinarians will do at first. A visual exam and your input on his behavior can tell more. Ask your veterinarian whether your species of bird is prone to certain illnesses. Go to the vet prepared. If you take care of your new bird for this short period during quarantine, you will ensure a happy future for both you and your flock. It is your responsibility as a pet owner.

Necropsy goes hand in hand with Quarantine.

What is necropsy? It is an autopsy on a non-human. Used commonly for animal autopsies. Why? Because just as we take care to quarantine in the beginning, many of us seek closure when a loved one passes. America can be a throw-away society but if you love your bird, and it passes away, why wouldn't you want to know? Most people do not necropsy their bird. It is very important to know what your bird died from for many reasons.

When can you bypass a necropsy?

If your bird is quite old, you may wish to opt out of necropsy. If you previously had your bird to the veterinarian and you are fully aware of a particular illness, such as heart disease, liver disease, cancerous tumors, well, then, you already know and are prepared for his demise. Some birds may have been a carrier of a particular disease, not showing it from the beginning. If you do have other birds, having the necropsy done may prevent the spread among your flock if caught early.

Far too many birds die young.

A lovebird should not die at 2-5 years old. A macaw should not die at 8-10 years old. If there was no accident causing the death, we should question why the bird died and without a necropsy you will never be able to determine what happened. Even if a bird falls from its perch and breaks its neck, do you really know why he fell? Did it have a seizure? Heart attack? A necropsy could determine that. As we all know, we are responsible for what we keep. Should you choose to cohabit with a long living bird requires that we care for their medical, mental and physical well-being. Taking these steps beginning to end ensures safety for your other birds and closure for you.

Elise Negrin lives in Western NC with her Congo African Grey Gringo. She has been educating within parrot clubs for nearly 25 years. She is the founder of PSPB.club and MVPSNC.club.

**When I grow up,
I'm going to join the
Gateway Parrot Club.**

Are you a member yet?

WWW.GATEWAYPARROTCLUB.ORG



