

March 2010 Newsletter

Meeting Notice:

Our next meeting will be held
Saturday, April 3rd, at 2:00 pm prompt.

Location:

Rosie's Family Dining
31301 Harper Ave.
St. Clair Shores, MI 48082
(586) 296-9390

Upcoming Events:

April 3rd, 2010 – club meeting
May 2nd, 2010 (Sunday) – club meeting
May 8th, 2010 – Spring Expo!

No meetings in June, July, or August

September 11th, 2010
October 2nd, 2010 – Fall Expo!
October 9th, 2010 – Post-Expo Meeting
November 6th, 2010
December 4th, 2010 – location to be determined

All meetings will be held at Rosie's Family Diner unless specified otherwise.

Bird Bands:

Bands will be available for sale at all meetings. The bands for 2010 have finally arrived at my new address. It took them awhile to catch up with me since I moved. If you need any, please see Sheryl Fisk.

Election Results:

Congratulations to all newly-elected 2010 Club Officers!

President: Lori Kanas
Vice President: Jeffery Olivier
2nd Vice President: Sara Schweitzer
Treasurer Pro Tempore: Pat Piekarz
Show Manager: Pat Piekarz
Public Relations: Lori Kanas (this is a volunteer position, not an elected one)

Dues:

Dues for 2010 were due at the November meeting. Couples' dues include only husband/wife teams, not family members. If anyone wishes to change this in our bylaws, it can be discussed at any upcoming meeting.

Tips & Tidbits:

The coming April issue of Bird Talk magazine has some great articles in it and I would like to recap some of the topics for our members to pass on to novice owners.

First is the topic of loving our pets to death no matter what species they are. When we allow them to eat whatever they want, whenever they want, this could cause unhealthy weight gain and in our feathered companions could also lead to fatty liver disease. We need to keep in mind that they need a well-balanced diet to maintain their health, just like we do. We could cause them to be very ill and they may not tell us with their bodies. When we don't feed them enough greens or fruit with essential oils or they aren't feeling well,

unless we know some of the sickness signs, it often ends up with us finding them lying on the bottoms of their cages only hours from death and we are in a panic trying to preserve their fragile lives.

One of the most frustrating ways we love them to death is in keeping them when it's not working out in our home. We hate to rehome them, yet they hate some of the other human flock members or some of the human flock members dislike them and may even be mistreating them behind your back. This is so harmful to the emotional health of our feathered companions. If we plan to try to keep them, all the members of the flock need to be on board with their training, feeding and socialization. Then there are owners that never cage their birds in their home environments to try to keep them safe or never go on vacations because their birds get too upset and depressed while they are gone. With proper socialization, these depressive states of mind wouldn't be so severe. Another example is those repeated visits to the ER because a person continues to let a biting companion roost on their shoulder. According to the article, the most common were owners who set no boundaries on their parrots' behavior no matter how bad it gets, because they claim to "love the birds and want them to be as "free" as possible.

There is always more work involved in being a good parent than a bad one. It is imperative that we teach them good manners. Quoting from the article, this statement says a lot. "Loving a parrot means doing what is best for the bird in the human habitat. This includes such things as insisting that the bird learn to respect boundaries, avoid aggression by finding less belligerent means of communication and to eat a nutritious diet. LOVE is never a justification for laziness or ignorance on the part of owners." (Liz Wilson, April 2010, Bird Talk)

Another article that I wanted to mention discussed the importance of knowing the sex of your feathered companion. This will help you be aware of what types of hormonal displays you will be in for at that time of year and at what age to anticipate the beginning of them. Reading from several great authorities on bird behavior will also give you ideas of how to handle these. Sally Blanchard has written an invaluable book about parrot husbandry called "The Companion Parrot Handbook." Subscribing to Bird Talk Magazine is another great way to learn. Also, being knowledgeable of whether your companion is a female and become aware of the signs of being egg bound. This is a death sentence if you don't know what to look for.

As we welcome the spring months and the warmer weather, let's continue to be aware of the wind chill factors. It could be a beautiful spring temperature, yet if the gentle, or sometimes yet brisk breezes of the season are cool our birds could get chilled if we leave them outside for too long, whether in the sun or chillier in the shade if the sun has moved too fast for us to be aware of. Continue to keep in mind the importance of a natural sunlight bulb over their cages to help them with their vitamin D and help to keep them warm. These can be purchased through health food stores in the area, or see our president, Lori. She orders through a company that can get these for you also.

We are looking forward to our next expo on May 8th, 2010. We can look forward to growing larger every expo in our new and wonderful location.

Sheryl~