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Monthly Newsletter From Gateway Parrot Club!

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# Squawk 'n Talk

**December 2017****Hello Bryan,**

**Gateway Parrot Club  
Holiday Party**

**Sunday, December 10, 2017, 2:00 p.m.  
Varieties Bird Store, Valley Park, MO**

- Come join us for a fun afternoon (you don't have to be a member)
- Parrots are invited

**Short meeting to vote for election of officers**

- Turkey dinner prepared by Chef Christine
- Bring something to add to the buffet table
- No raffle in December

**If you want to participate in a "Rob Your Neighbor" game, please bring a \$10.00 wrapped present.**

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)A green rectangular graphic with a white border. In the top left corner is a gingerbread man icon. In the top right corner is a candy cane icon. In the bottom left corner is a Santa Claus icon. In the bottom right corner is a reindeer icon. The text is centered and reads: "Menu for our Holiday Party: Chef Christine will be preparing a traditional turkey dinner. She will be making turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, green beans, and gravy. There will also be bottled water and a variety of soda. A side dish or dessert to complement the menu would be welcome. We always have a good time and a lot of food."/>

**Menu for our Holiday Party:**

Chef Christine will be preparing a traditional turkey dinner. She will be making turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, green beans, and gravy. There will also be bottled water and a variety of soda.

A side dish or dessert to complement the menu would be welcome. We always have a good time and a lot of food.

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## **Election of Club Officers and Board Members** **(Dave Kincade):**

During the December meeting, we will elect club officers and board members to fill the club positions that will expire on December 31. Below is a list of the current club positions and the people who have been nominated to fill them.

### **Club Positions and Nominees:**

#### **Secretary:**

Heidi Hellmuth

Steve Johnson

#### **Treasurer:**

Cathy Timma

#### **Membership Secretary:**

Renee Davis

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**(Three positions to be filled)**

Beth Poll

Dixie Danzeisen

Jim Berk

Pat Seiler

Christine Kinkade

David Kinkade

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**General Meeting Information:**

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 2:00 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. 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.

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# Gateway Parrot Club



## Meeting Dates 2017:

**\*December 10, 2017, Christmas Party\***

## Meeting Dates 2018:

January 21

February 18

March 18, Dr. Susan Friedman, Speaker

April 15

May 20

**\*June 10\***

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

**Save The Date!    March 18th 2018**



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We are very excited to announce a very special speaker for our [March 18, 2018](#) meeting. We feel very honored to have her as our speaker for this meeting.

Dr. Susan Friedman (pictured above) is a psychology professor at Utah State University who has pioneered the application of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to captive and companion animals. ABA, with its roots in human learning, offers a scientifically sound teaching technology and ethical standard that can improve the lives of all learners. Students from 22 different countries have participated in Susan's online courses, *Living and Learning with Animals for Professionals* and *Living and Learning with Parrots for Caregivers*. She has written chapters on learning and behavior for three veterinary texts (*Behavior of Exotic Pets*, *Clinical Avian Medicine*, and *Manual of Parrot Behavior*), and is a frequent contributor to popular magazines. Her articles appear around the world in eleven languages. Susan has presented seminars for a wide variety of professional organizations around the world such as the Association of Avian Veterinarians, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, Moorpark College Exotic Animal Training and Management program, and NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. She has been nominated for the Media Award given by the International Association of Behavior Analysis for her efforts to disseminate to pet owners, veterinarians, animal trainers and zookeepers the essential tools they need to empower and enrich the lives of the animals in their care.

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## **Membership Report** **(Renee Davis):**

*It's that time of year again to renew your membership for 2018. You can do it online, at the meeting, or via snail mail. If you renewed at the August bird fair, then your membership will run through 2018. Members who have not paid their dues by January 31 will no longer be in good standing and will not be able to vote on club matters.*

### **Welcome new members:**

Katherine & Richard Mueller

Debra Hogland

### **GPC November Meeting Attendees:**

Georgia Fletcher

Julie Morgan

Dick Grommet

Katherine Mueller

David Kinkade

Richard Mueller

Cathy Timma

Beth Poll

Renee Davis

Pat Seiler

Carole Grommet

Penny O'Grady

Ruth Anderson

Donna Ruben

Jim Berk

Scott Ruben

Christine Kinkade

Casey Uhlmeier

Heidi Hellmuth

Terri Uhlmeier

Barbara Agathen

Gerry Van Der Heide

Paul Agathen

Deborah Van Der Heide

Michael Cross

Kasia Waniolka

Wanetta Ann Dodd

Sharon Wilkins

Dixie Danzeisen

Rosemary Wilson

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	Dan Fogarty	Judy Baughman
	Debra Hogland	Daniel D.
	Steve Johnson	Miriam Hannibal
	Aubrey Kiener	Mary Starb
	Nancy Marron	



**Association of  
Avian Veterinarians**  
Advancing & Promoting Avian Medicine and Stewardship

### September 2017 AAV Bird Club News Release

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### Socialization (Part 3 of a Series on Enrichment)

*By: Kenneth R. Welle, DVM, Dipl ABVP (Avian), University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine Adapted from: "Extreme Enrichment for the Modern Macaw," Session #137, ExoticsCon 2016*

Parrots are obligately social animals.<sup>11,12</sup> While it is common to remark about birds being "spoiled" because they demand constant attention, it is unnatural for most parrots to be alone. The only time most parrots are ever alone in the wild is when they are incubating eggs. At other times, they would be with their parents, offspring, clutch mates, juvenile flock, adult flock, or their mate. Being alone is completely unnatural. It is not just "loneliness" that results from this isolation. Flocking is primarily a protective mechanism to reduce the pressures of predation. Being within a group allows for multiple sentinels looking for signs of danger. A group of birds can "mob" a predator and chase it away. Even thinking less altruistically, a bird in a group of 10 birds has a 10% chance of being the target of a predator while an individual bird has 100% chance. Just as most people feel more vulnerable when alone, parrots will also feel stressed and vulnerable when kept alone.

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Like mammals, the parents will stimulate defecation and carry the waste out of the nest initially. Parental care is fairly constant and involves feeding, preening, vocalization, and other interactions. This is not readily replicated in incubator hatched and hand raised chicks. Most species will also have clutch mates in the nest with them. This also helps them learn social skills. Once they fledge, there still is a great deal of parental care and teaching. Many parrots also have a crèche system, a flock of juvenile birds that move about together and learn about the environment, feeding, predators, and other important life skills. One of these skills is how to interact with other birds without conflict.

Hand raised birds have somewhat displaced imprinting. While filial imprinting on humans may have some advantages, sexual imprinting on humans has severe behavioral effects. Birds that are sexually imprinted on humans often pair bond with humans and will be aggressive to others, sometimes be aggressive to their perceived mate, or will defend a nest territory. Other birds may become frustrated and engage in self-damaging behaviors such as feather chewing or plucking. In addition, birds that are completely imprinted on humans may exhibit poor socialization with other birds. Many bird owners have multiple birds and one with poor social skills may either attack or be attacked by other birds.

Some studies have shown that parent raised birds that are handled by people while developing have pet qualities exceeding those of hand reared birds.<sup>13,14</sup> This can be slightly challenging to accomplish, but should be considered. Minimally, having birds raised with clutch mates or other babies will at least allow them to imprint on both humans and birds.

-more-

Assuming that a bird has well-developed social skills, the next concern is providing them with social opportunities. While bird owners like to believe they are providing this for their pets, in most cases, the social contact they provide is inadequate. Socializing a parrot is more than a full time job. The ideal solution is that birds be kept in a more normal social grouping. Companion birds can provide 24-hour socialization for each other. As discussed, they must be compatible and they must have some social skills with other birds. They also should be size and temperament matched. Although it can occasionally work, large birds with small birds can be a dangerous situation. Larger birds can easily tear the beak or a toe off of a smaller one. Likewise, a loud bird may be stressful for a nervous or quiet bird. Introductions are easiest with very young birds, and most birds that grow up together remain compatible provided that they don't conflict over a mate or resources. If breeding is not desired, the birds should be the same sex.<sup>15</sup>

The obvious benefit of having birds in pairs or groups is that it corrects for some of the limitations of human companionship. Companion birds can be together all of the



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as nuisance vocalization, stereotypies, or feather damaging behavior may occur when birds rely too much on the owners' presence and attention.

Although there are exceptions, usually, breeding will have some negative effects on the pet characteristics of a parrot during the breeding season. Most breeding pairs will defend the nest territory from all others. This may result in aggressive behavior. If breeding is desired, the pair should be allowed to defend their territory. They should be conditioned to allow nest cavity inspection on a daily basis and should be trained to allow normal care procedures, but should otherwise be left alone.

In most cases, breeding and sexual behaviors are not desired. However many owners inadvertently encourage them constantly. For most wild birds, breeding occurs during a defined, short season. This may be signaled by changing photoperiod, rainy season, availability of certain food items, or simply food surplus. The presence of a mate is also a key stimulus. Pet birds typically are overfed on high calorie diets. This is one stimulus. Many are offered nest boxes, "snuggle" tube perches, or are allowed access to cabinets or other hollow structures that the bird may perceive as a potential nest site. Many owners interact with their bird in ways that are exclusively reserved for the pair bond in parrots. Reproductive instinct is strong in most species, and adding in these potent stimuli is enough to get the process started.

In order to discourage reproductive behaviors several strategies can be employed. Caloric intake should be carefully controlled. This is especially effective for suppressing egg laying, since most hens will increase food consumption in preparation for egg laying. Foraging can give the bird the impression that food is limited, even if higher amounts of food are present. Physical contact should be somewhat restricted. Alternative activities between bird and the owner should be encouraged. Training, playing, and other active games should replace much of the "cuddle" time. The petting that is done should be brief, used to reinforce good behaviors, and limited to non-sexual locations of the body. For those species that respond to photoperiod, this should also be regulated. A relatively short and consistent day length is desired.

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of young Amazon parrots. *Appl Anim Behav Sci.* 2003;81:73-88.

## **Not a member yet?**

[Download a membership application](#) and bring it to our next meeting, or email it to Renee Davis, our membership secretary, at [membership@gatewayparrotclub.org](mailto:membership@gatewayparrotclub.org).

Our PayPal email address is [payments@gatewayparrotclub.org](mailto:payments@gatewayparrotclub.org)

You can also now join and pay dues securely from our site: <http://gatewayparrotclub.org/join-now/>

**Our Officers and Board members:** <http://gatewayparrotclub.org/about-us/>

**Join our FaceBook group:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GateWayParrotClub/>

Email Bryan at [4birdsmax@gmail.com](mailto:4birdsmax@gmail.com) if you want to submit an article, send cute pics to post on the website or future newsletters, have a suggestion, etc!

**The Gateway Parrot Club, Inc.** is a 501c3 not for profit organization based in St. Louis Missouri and established in 1988 to:

- 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.

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extinction in the wild.

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