

# Squawk 'n Talk

July 2018

## Gateway Parrot Club Toy Making Party

Sunday, July 15, 2018  
Varietees Bird Store, Valley  
Park, MO  
1:00 p.m.

The bird toys we will be making will be used for our raffle tables at the upcoming fair on August 25th. Lisa Rose and Dawn Breer are designing the toys we will be making. We appreciate you coming to help with this project. See you on the 15th!



Melanie Allen presented a very informative program at our June meeting.





**31st Annual Fair  
Birds, Reptiles, and Exotics**

**Saturday, August 25, 2018**

**10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.**

**Machinists' Hall**

**12365 St. Charles Rock Road**

**Bridgeton, MO 63044**

**Featuring 10,000 sq. ft. of vendor space offering:  
Birds, Reptiles, and other Exotics.  
Toys, cages, play stands, food, supplies & accessories, arts & crafts  
Snack Bar, Raffle, Silent Auction  
Special Exhibit: "Meet the Parrots"**

**Speakers:**

- **Dr. David Kersting, "Conservation of the Brown Throated Conure & Yellow Shouldered Amazon of Bonaire" & "Interesting Parrot Cases"**
- **Robin Shewokis, "All Animals Forage - Welcome to the Great Foraging Experiment"**

**Contact Information:**

**Dick Grommet, Fair Coordinator, 636-529-0026**

**Email: [rwgrommet@att.net](mailto:rwgrommet@att.net)**

**Website: [www.GatewayParrotClub.org](http://www.GatewayParrotClub.org)**



**\*\*\*Save the Date!\*\*\***

**Admission Fees: Adult: \$5.00; Children under 12: Free**

We welcome items from you for our raffle table or silent auction. Bring them to the July meeting or email us and we can pick them up. Christopher, Adeline, and Abbie will again have a special exhibit called "Meet the Parrots." Last year lots of people "flocked" to their area and enjoyed seeing many different species of parrots. We will also have great speakers (Robin Shewokis and Dr. Kersting), silent auction, raffle tables, etc. Also new vendors have signed up.



Many of you remember [Robin Shewokis](#) when she spoke at Varietees Bird Store in 2013 and have mentioned that you want her to come back. Good news! She will be speaking at the August Gateway Parrot Club Fair. We are very excited to have her.

The topic of her presentation will be "All Animals Forage - Welcome to the Great Foraging Experiment." We will explore the need to forage and ways to encourage your pets to participate in foraging activities. She will not limit her talk just to parrots, but all animals. Since we are adding reptiles and exotics to our fair, she will include them in her seminar.

Robin is the owner of The Leather Elves (a company that designs and manufactures enrichment devices for animals in captivity. Since 2000 Robin has consulted at zoos in the U.S., Canada and Holland and has distributed enrichment products worldwide.

Robin regularly speaks at parrot clubs, providing workshops teaching ways to create a stimulating environment. She also develops new products for parrots that will stimulate naturalistic behavior. Robin has published articles on enrichment in national and international publications. She has also produced a DVD titled "Enriching Your Parrot's Life."

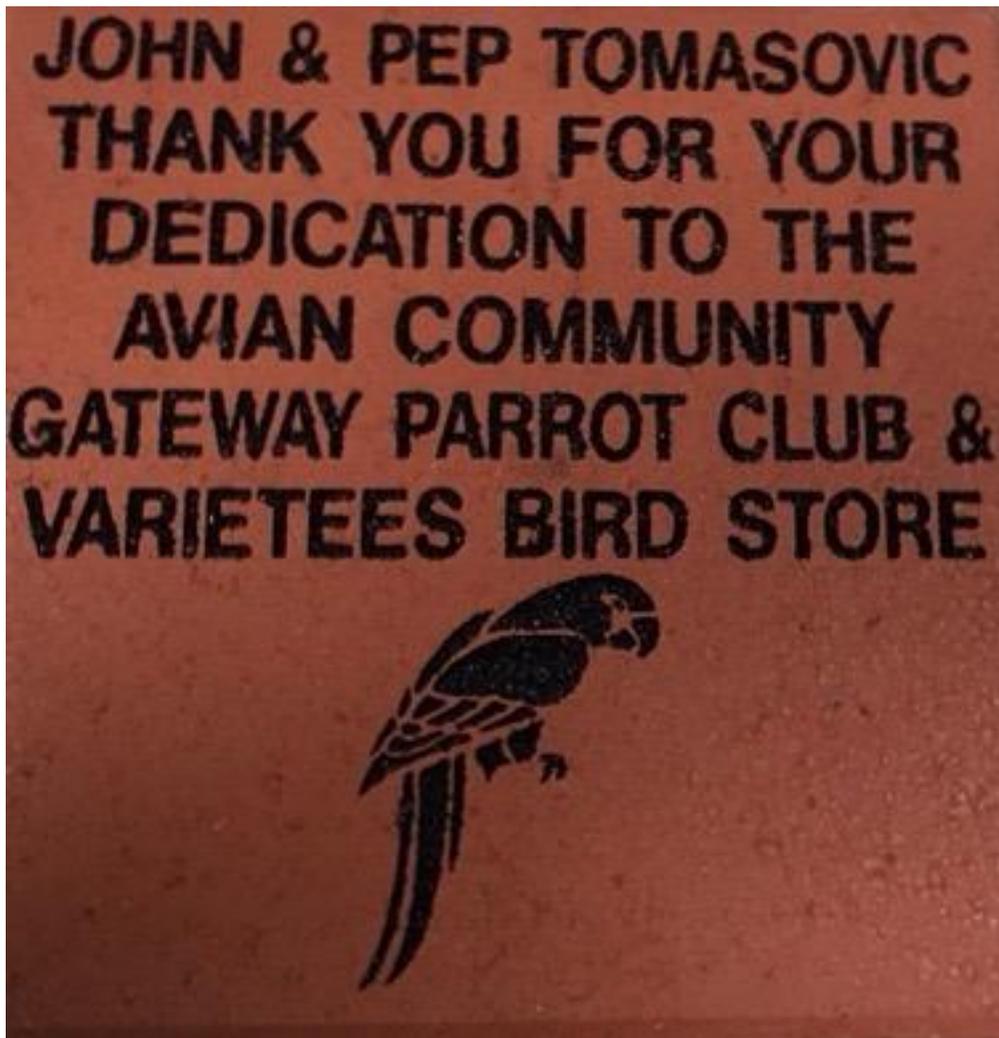
Robin is a member of The American Association of Zookeepers where she advises the behavioral husbandry committee. She currently serves on the board of The International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators and chairs their enrichment committee.

You don't want to miss Robin at the August 25th fair. Check out her Facebook page, "The Leather Elves."

## Memoriam Brick

In January, the board approved the purchase of a memoriam brick in John Tomasovic's honor (with Pep's name also on the brick) from the World Bird Sanctuary where he was a lifetime member. John and Pep have been members of Gateway Parrot Club for many years. We would like to thank our members and Varietees Bird Store who contributed to this fund.

Below is a picture of the brick now on display at the sanctuary.



# *Gateway Parrot Club*



## *Meeting Dates 2018:*

- July 15, Toy Making Party, Lisa Rose and Dawn Breer
- August 25, All American Hookbill Fair (no meeting)
- September 16, Michelle Vrbka, Consider Your Bird's Future by Equipping Tomorrow's Caregivers
  - October 21,
- November 18, Adrienne Mock, Protecting the Flock from Theft, Natural Disaster, Disease and Legislation
  - **December 9, Annual Holiday Party**

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

## 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 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, and helps us to provide special speakers. 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.

***We are going to have an indoor picnic at our July meeting, and because it will be too hot to cook, Chef Christine will be making hot dogs, baked beans, broccoli salad, and chips with a strawberry jello angel cake for dessert. There will be an assortment of soda and water. Feel free to bring something to add to the buffet (snack, salad, dessert, vegetable, fruit, etc.). Thanks to Christine and Dave for their dedication in taking care of all of us starving parrot club members.***



Association of  
Avian Veterinarians  
Advancing & Promoting Avian Medicine and Stewardship

### June 2018 AAV Bird Club News Release

*This article is for the use of member clubs only and is protected by U.S. Copyright laws. Use by any group or organization not currently enrolled in the AAV Bird Club News Release Program, is strictly prohibited. For longer articles, it is permissible for clubs to run as a 2-part article.*

### Breed Spotlight: Conure

*Adapted from AAV Avian Species Brochure Series*

The group of birds known as conures consists of several separate genera. They are small to medium-sized parrots with long tails and proportionately broad, heavy beaks. They have a body shape similar to macaws. Free-ranging conures are found from Mexico to Central and South America. Most conure species are very sociable and live together in small groups, spending time grooming each other. Some species are considered nomadic. Most have a loud, raucous call that can be heard for some distance in the forest. Conures are generally hardy and popular aviculture and pet birds, bringing to captivity their sociable nature and loud voice. The most commonly seen species are primarily of the *Aratinga* genus. Larger conure species, such as Patagonian and golden (Queen of Bavaria) conures, are relatively rare in captivity.

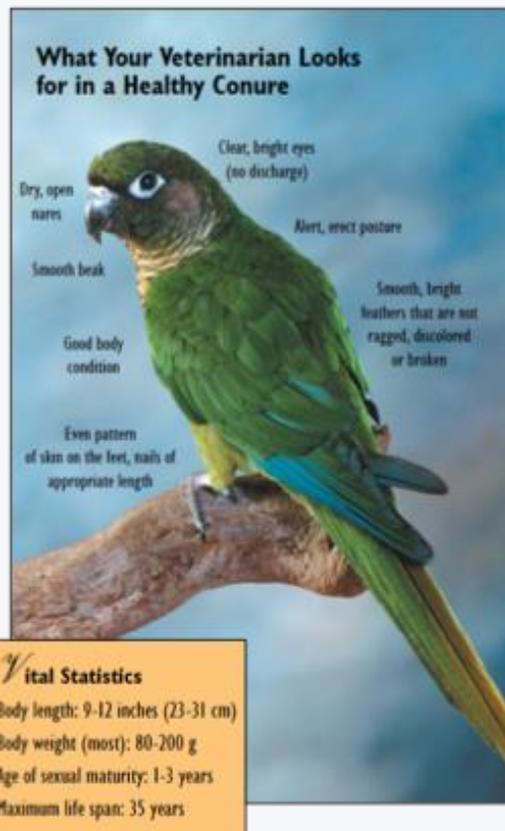
Conures are usually gregarious, playful, animated birds that enjoy and seek out attention. Conures are not usually timid. Like all birds, time outside of the cage should be carefully supervised. These birds can occasionally learn a few words, but are not known for their talking ability. Their noise level during vocalizations can be very loud and sometimes irritating. The less common dusky-headed and green-cheeked conures are somewhat quieter than the more familiar jenday, sun, mitred or half-moon conures.

#### Is Your Conure a Male or a Female?

It is difficult to reliably distinguish a male from a female conure based on physical characteristics; therefore, endoscopy or laboratory methods must be used for sex determination.

#### What Should You Feed Your Conure?

For a long, healthy life, conures should be fed a high quality, toxin-free formulated diet. Supplementation may include small amounts of chopped organic vegetables and fruit and whole grains.



### **What Do Conures Do All Day?**

Conures are adventurous and may play hide-and-seek with a towel or brown bag in their enclosure. Toys must be sturdy and free of toxic metals, hooks, sharp objects and easily consumed components. They should be rotated frequently to prevent boredom. Large diameter fresh-cut branches from nontoxic, pesticide-free trees should be available. Check with your veterinarian for recommendations on locally available safe trees.

### **Are Conures Tame?**

Young, hand-raised conures adapt readily to new surroundings and handling procedures. They should be exposed early in life to novel situations (car travel, hospital visits, playing "peek-a-boo" with a towel, multiple visitors in the household, other household pets) so that they are well-adjusted to these events. The best way to encourage desirable behaviors is with patience and by offering positive reinforcement, often in the form of food rewards. Even with training, all birds are capable of biting under the right circumstances.

### **How to Identify Your Bird**

Conures occasionally escape outdoors, and permanent identification may help to return birds to their owners. One method used to permanently identify your bird is implantation of a microchip, as is performed in other pets. Some birds already have leg bands for identification. Although closed leg bands seldom cause injury, some owners prefer to have them removed.

### **Should the Wings be Clipped?**

The decision to clip wings or allow free flight should be made carefully. Birds allowed free flight benefit from exercise and mental stimulation; however, free flying birds may be injured by hitting windows or ceiling fans or hurt by encountering toxic materials. With careful planning and training, some birds may be allowed free flight in a safe area. The goal of clipping the wings is not to make the bird incapable of flight but to prevent it from developing rapid and sustained flight and to prevent escape. Clipping must be done carefully and tailored to each individual to prevent flight and injuries from falling.

### **How to Keep Your Conure Healthy, Happy and Safe!**

- Take your Conure to your veterinarian immediately after purchase, then once annually for examinations.
- Provide stimulating environmental enrichment by offering toys, social interaction and foraging opportunities.
- Feed a fresh, high quality, toxin-free formulated diet with fresh chopped fruits, vegetables and whole grains according to the manufacturer's recommendation.
- Provide clean, fresh uncontaminated drinking water and change frequently. Conures can be trained to use a water bottle.
- Many birds enjoy bathing. Try providing a warm water bath, or gently spraying with clean warm water daily if possible.
- Avoid spraying house with insecticides.

### **Housing for your Conure should:**

- be as large as possible
- be clean, secure and safe
- be constructed of nontoxic materials (some cages may contain toxic metals, such as zinc)
- contain variable-sized perches made of clean, nontoxic, pesticide-free wood or branches
- have easy-to-clean food and water containers
- have perches not placed directly over food or water bowls
- offer opportunities for protected outdoor exposure to fresh air, direct sunlight and exercise

Conures are very curious and will investigate anything new in their environment. That is why it is important to prevent their access to:

- ceiling fans

- stove tops with hot burners, pans or skillets
- fumes from overheated non-stick cookware
- sandpaper-covered perches
- tobacco and cigarette smoke
- chocolate, avocado, salt, alcohol
- toxic houseplants
- pesticides or chemical cleaners
- easily dismantled toys
- dogs, cats and unsupervised children
- sources of heavy metals, such as lead or zinc (stained glass windows, pewter, some mini-blinds or linoleum)
- plug-in air fresheners
- scented candles

#### **Common Disorders of Conures**

- Behavioral problems (screaming, biting)
- Bacterial and fungal infection
- Injuries and toxin exposure
- Reproductive-related disease
- Viral infections, such as polyomavirus, Proventricular Dilatation Disease, and herpesvirus

Many diseases can be prevented with regular veterinary care, proper diet and housing. For these reasons, it is important to develop a relationship with a veterinarian who is experienced in avian preventive care, medicine and surgery. For help in finding an avian veterinarian in your area, contact the Association of Avian Veterinarians (AAV) by visiting <https://www.aav.org/> and click on "Find a Vet" or contact the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners by visiting <https://abvp.com/>.

###

## Membership Report (Renee Davis):

Welcome New Member:  
Jess Ellis

GPC June Meeting Attendees:

Georgia Fletcher	Aubrey Kiener
Dick Grommet	Nancy Marron
Cathy Timma	Edwin Massie
Renee Davis	Julie Morgan
Heidi Hellmuth	Barbara Peach
Dixie Danzeisen	Rick Ruderer
Carole Grommet	Tracy Schwarztrauber
Beth Poll	Andrea Stoppelmann
Pamela Alsop	Laura Vinyard
Jim Berk	Sharon Wilkins
Jess Ellis	Rosemary Wilson
Dave Guiot	Melanie Allen
Elizabeth Guiot	Christine Scott
Jim Hermann	Mary Starb
Esther Hermann	Brenda Wilson