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Ann Arbor



Companion Bird Club

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# AACBC Newsletter

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## Ann Arbor Companion Bird Club

**President:**  
Melanie Cunningham

**Vice President:**  
Mary Wieske

**Secretary**  
Nancy Walker

**Treasurer:**  
Pam VanHeyningen

**Board of Trustees:**  
Cindy Tonkin  
Gordon Brown  
Mary Whitcher

**Webmaster:**  
Tom Leadholm

**AACBC Mailing Address**  
2232 S Main St. #183  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

## ABOUT

The Ann Arbor Companion Bird Club (formerly known as the Ann Arbor Cage Bird Club) was organized in 1980 for the purpose of educating its members and the community about birds and to support avian research. The club is a member of the American Federation of Aviculture (AFA). We exchange newsletters with many avian clubs across the country.

## Meetings

AACBC meetings are held the second Sunday of each month at:

Animal Kingdom Veterinarians  
(above the above the vet clinics)  
4920 Ann Arbor Saline Rd.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
(734) 913-0003

Meetings begin at 1:00 pm. Interested persons may attend one meeting as a guest. Vet-checked healthy birds are welcome.

Club membership is \$20/year/family. Membership includes our monthly newsletter.

## We'd love to hear from you!

Do you have any questions or comments about anything you find in this newsletter? Would you like to contribute articles or photos to the publications?

Please feel free to send e-mails to:  
[sydneyano@gmail.com](mailto:sydneyano@gmail.com)

Or mail letters to:  
11977 Hall Rd.  
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## October's Meeting

Minutes for last month's meeting can be found on page 4.

## November's Meeting

The meeting topic for November is TBA. We will be voting for officers during the meeting. Snacks will be supplied by Nancy.

## December's Holiday Lunch and Auction

Decembers meeting will be the Auction and Lunch. Last Years holiday lunch and auction was held in Ypsilanti at Frenchie's. Was this location good? Please speak up if you would like to meet at another place. Since this is a public Restaurant, please leave your birds home! You can bring them back a fun item from the auction! The proceeds go into the funds we use to donate to bird related charities. Time and Date TBA.

## DUES ARE NOW DUE

Ann Arbor Companion Bird Club membership dues are now due. ALL members need to re-register with your current address, phone and e-mail and pay the \$20 yearly fee to the club Treasurer, Pam VanHeyningen.

## Cards for AACBC Members

Anyone who has experienced or knows of a club member who has lost a family member/pet or sustained an illness, please contact Ann via email so that a card may be sent out. [annriperberger@gmail.com](mailto:annriperberger@gmail.com)

## Meeting Etiquette

Please remember to provide papers for your birds during the meetings. Extra papers can be found in the cupboard in the storage room off the meeting area. Please pick up used papers before you leave! Also, please remember to be polite and show respect to our guest speakers as well as anyone who has the floor. This includes talking and cell phone usage. Thank you!

## Meeting Topics?

What topics, projects, speakers would you like to learn more about? Would you like to skip scheduling a presentation at a meeting and make it simply a social event? We are looking for your thoughts on how to have AACBC meet your needs and we need your input. Feel free to contact Melanie with your ideas. Email

[melaniecunningham2000@yahoo.com](mailto:melaniecunningham2000@yahoo.com)

## Donated Feathers

Save those molted, untrimmed bird feathers and bring them to the AACBC meeting. They are donated to various people for special uses. We offer some select feathers during the Pet Fest for a donation along with back issues of Birdtalk Magazine. Recycling! Unfortunately, clipped feathers are not suitable. Thank you!

## Do you have an adopted or unwanted bird story to share?

So many of our feathered friends have had difficult beginnings or were just not wanted in their former lives. Do you have a story you would like to share about a bird you have had in your life? Please tell us your story, how did you come about adopting this bird? Where there any issues you had to work through with the bird? Did you foster the bird first? We'd like to include some of these wonderful stories in the newsletter and, perhaps, include them with pictures on our club website. E-mail [sydneyano@gmail.com](mailto:sydneyano@gmail.com)

## AACBC Minutes for October 2010

By Nancy Walker  
*David Ano contributed to this story*

### Treasure Report

Current funds in the group account is \$3146.46. This means we will have less funding this year for annual donations. The deposit for the 2011 Ann Arbor Bird Expo show has already been paid to Webers.

Discussed at the meeting was the possibility of becoming a tax-exempt, nonprofit association. The 501(c)(3) will cost at least \$150. We would also have to produce an annual report. The advantages would be advertising and donations to club, for example for raffle, would be tax deductible. This issue will be brought up at future meetings.

### Potential Trips

A field trip to Ann Arbor's Leslie Science & Nature Center was discussed. The LSNC has a number of injured owls, hawks, kestrels, turkey vultures, and falcons that are not able to survive in the wild. These birds have been trained to educate people about the issues facing wild birds today. "Raptor Volunteers" are showcased at the LSNC every Saturday and Sunday from 3-5 pm.

Other possible trips include the Detroit Zoo, Kellogg Bird Sanctuary near Kalamazoo, or the Binder Park Zoo in Battle Creek. These trips are tentatively scheduled for next spring.

### Guest Speaker/ Meeting Topic

Mary and Tonya were going to talk about 'Adventures in Rescue' but since Tonya was not feeling well, we will postpone until maybe January

### Nominations

October's meeting included nominations for officers.

President – Gordon Brown

Vice President – Sydney Ano

Secretary – Nancy Walker

Treasurer – Pam VanHeyningen

Show chairs - Mary Weiske & Melanie Cunningham

Hospitality - Raehel Naegele

Raffle Co-chairs - Carol Aldrich & Chris

Trustees (3) - Cindy Tonkin, Mary Witcher & Jim Aldrich

Webmaster – Joe

Voting for office will occur at the November meeting.

### Internet Presence

Tom has reported that he is been busy updating our website. Sydney has also set up a Facebook page but it is unsure what your plans are with it. Melanie reported that she will get electronic vendor forms for the bird expo to put on the website.

### Newsletter

Dr. Karen Knight's article in last month's newsletter was well received. Mary will ask

both Dr. Knight and Dr. Moran about contributing articles and having a ask the vet Q&A..

### 2011 AABE planning

We discussed the possibility of moving the guest speaker in the atrium along with some vendors to save on cost of an additional room. Vendors may object but it may draw more people into atrium to their benefit. Discussed is whether there is a cheaper venue. The benefits to having the Expo at Weber's is that people are used to having it there and it has easy access to highways. Work will need to be done next year to promote the event in community event calendars as well as getting coverage from local news and media outlets.

Fund raising ideas we could do at next expo

- 2012 calendar using pictures of our birds
- notecards – can get 5 packs, blank inside, photo on outside printed at Costco
- Donations

### Other

Carol asked why we don't do scholarships for avian vet students anymore. Mary explained haven't done it in a few years because of past experiences of one student decided not to even become a vet, ask for recipient to speak and hasn't been done. Prefer to use to help resources for birds.

## Life as a Veterinarian



*By Dr. K. Moran*

Each day can be absolutely different from the next at the Canton Center Animal Hospital. Some days we see many, many birds (especially in the warmer months) and other days we may not see a single bird (most likely in the dead of winter.) Our clients have varying levels of experience and knowledge about their feathered friends. One point some of our bird owners have in common is some type of misinformation they possess that has been passed down to them from a friend, family member or internet website. There are so many recommendations presented to us that it can be difficult to differentiate fact from fiction.

Almost once a week someone will come in to the clinic for a well bird exam with one or more bird mite protectors hanging on the cage. He or she tells us that they have always used mite protectors. All of their bird cages have them, and the pet store employees recommended the white, circular objects to keep their birds healthy

The clients are shocked to learn that we recommend removing the mite protectors and that they may actually be causing a toxic environment. (Sometimes that is not all we urge them to change about their cages!)

Food fallacies are extremely common as well. I have learned that something a client was told 35 years ago can be quite a challenge to disprove. I'm not quite sure why lettuce would be toxic to birds unless it's heavily treated with pesticides, but we had a lady last week who was told never to feed her cockatoo lettuce. Of course we see birds that eat pretty much whatever their human companions ingest, but it is unbelievable how many times I have witnessed birds eating out of their owners' mouths. I casually try to discuss bacteria present in our saliva but more than one Green-Checked Conure's owner has made it clear that her bird prefers to share food from her mouth like a mother and baby bird. One individual is not willing to alter her behavior to ensure her bird's health. It is a bonding activity and has never made her bird sick before. The little conure has been eating out of her mouth, drinking from her glass and standing on her plate at every meal for years.

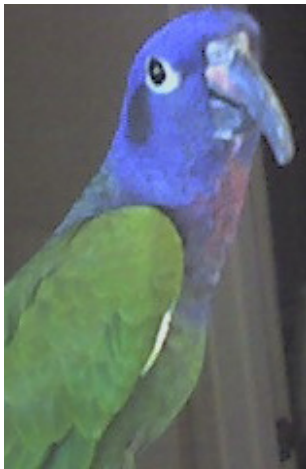
It seems as if there are so many myths surrounding keeping birds as pets. These myths have been around for decades and many bird owners just accept them as facts. For example,

it is not unusual in the winter months to find that clients are inadequately bathing their birds. They are too concerned that they will become ill from a bath when there is snow on the ground even though our homes are comfortably heated. Also, people will refuse to bring their birds to the clinic at all once the temperature drops to the freezing point; however, most birds will tolerate a quick transfer from warm vehicle to warm building with ease. Drafts as the primary cause of a bird's illness resulting in a bird "catching a cold" are rarely the case.

Every now and then while obtaining a detailed history on an avian patient we will learn that the patient is completely free in the house. No cage is available to the bird, or cages are in the house but are never or seldom used. It amazes me that these birds have been able to live their lives tragedy-free. Some birds even sleep with the owners in their beds! Of course there have been a few accidents. A few years ago a Double Yellow-Headed Amazon fractured his leg during a particularly severe thunderstorm. No one was home to witness the incident. He was found on the floor in the middle of the bedroom. There have been several cases where birds have gotten under reclining chairs and experienced major traumas often resulting in death. It's

**See Life as a Vet, page 7**

## My Life with Adam



*By Nancy Walker*

Adam is a male blue headed Pionus of unknown age. He came into rescue on May 22, 2010 with 2 other Pionus', 3 Caiques and several cockatoos so Mary asked for volunteers to foster them with the goal of adoption. I have 5 budgies and a green cheek conure but no larger birds. I had done some research before I agreed to take one of the Pionus' and knew they are Amazon sized parrots and also have a reputation for being rather quiet. Since I live in an apartment noise is a consideration. I agreed to take a Pionus; while I have heard wonderful things about Caiques' personality I also heard they can get rather loud so thought a Pionus would be good for me.

We met Mary to pick up the birds and there were these 3 birds all looking a little

confused and being really quiet. Adam was wheezing, which Pionus' are known to do when they feel threatened. He was a little puffed up and the paper with him said just his name and "very aggressive". His age is unknown. At that time Mary clipped the wings of all the Pionus' and clipped their nails. Adam was the only one that didn't let out a peep during this. He had a band but it was so encrusted with poop that it couldn't be read.

I have to admit to being a little nervous about an aggressive bird especially since I have only had smaller birds until now. Mary said why don't you try to work with him and I agreed. I realized he may never be a lap bird but he did need a good loving home. We were told they had been on all seed diets and agreed to get them on pellets as soon as possible. I had a bag of natural Zupeem conure size and Adam started eating them immediately. He also started to use his water bottle immediately. He is now eating Roudybush pellets as well. I have given him lots of veggies and he seems to like green beans but only eats the beans inside. He will eat a little sweet potato and will also eat a little fruit; I have tried peaches, mangos, blueberries (ignored) and he prefers green grapes to red ones but since they are so high in sugar he only gets a few each week as a treat when he is good.

His favorite treat is unsalted pistachios in the shell. Pionus' do not have as strong a bite as other large parrots but pistachios are easy for him to crack open since they are already slightly open.

While he came with an old cage that was more like a dog crate I know I had a spare cage (18x22x40) at home and it would work as a temporary cage until I got him a larger one. I had seen a cage I wanted to get at a bird show in Chicago the day before but figured I should wait until I had the bird. I ordered, and got within a few weeks a 34x23x40 cage. He seems to really like his new cage. He has taken a liking to a large cholla wood perch and also his comfy perch. At first he was ignoring his toys but after a few months has started to chew on a wooden chew toy and loves the preening rope/thread toys he has. He also has been chewing a woven piñata toy.

For a few days Adam was quiet with an occasional cry but as time has gone on he has proved to be quite a vocal boy, he is not loud but he chatters a lot in a gravelly voice so I cannot understand many words. He is not at all loud. He does say 'good boy' and will also make crow like sounds and coughing sounds. Sometimes when I turn out the lights I will hear 'good night' and when I come in the room he will answer my hello with a 'hello'.

Adam does love to have his head and back scratched. At times he will lunge if you put your hand in the cage but I have learned if I talk to him then put my hand up and scratch my head he will lean down and let me put my hand in and scratch him with no problems. He also loves to get misted down and at times has even hung upside down from the top of his cage to expose his stomach to the water. We have been working on step up however Adam seems to have his own ideas about it. He will occasionally get onto a perch then my hand or he will step onto my hand if he is on the side of the cage but if he is on one of his two favorite perches he doesn't want to cooperate.

We did have a breakthrough the other night. I have started to leave his cage door open when I am home and in the room and hung a comfy boing from the top. I was doing something on the computer and after a while looked up and there was Adam sitting on top of his cage looking so proud oh himself. He stepped up onto my arm and then sat in my lap for a while eating a couple of pistachios I gave him for being such a good boy.

Adam really is a pleasure and is so happy and inquisitive most of the time. And he still may never be a lap bird but that is OK, he has become a part of the flock and I love him.

## ► Life as a Vet

Continued from p. 5

always a concern when other pets are present in the house, too. We've seen some birds in critical condition resulting from a dog or cat altercation. Toxins become a huge problem for birds allowed to roam, as well. Heavy metal toxicity from the lovebird picking at the stained glass window or the African Gray chewing the foil on the champagne bottle we have seen. Also, we all know birds do love to chew anything and everything. Recently we talked with a lady whose cockatiels had been chewing electrical cords behind her couch unbeknownst to her. The birds, luckily, were all just fine.

Daily we are fortunate enough to witness the warm, loving and often complex relationships between pet bird companions and their owners. I enjoy watching Skipper, the Lesser Sulfur crested Cockatoo interact with such complete trust with his owner and best friend. She can check any part of his body (he is a cockatoo) without a complaint. I am not nearly as privileged, but at least he only hisses and

refrains from biting me! I love how some clients are willing to do everything they possibly can to ensure the health, comfort and well being of their birds. It is so rewarding to treat birds that are truly valued as companions. Birds are living longer and healthier lives-it is so exciting to be able to see birds grow old with their human flock. Today I saw a 19-year-old cockatiel for bloodwork to monitor kidney and liver values since he is on Metacam, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory used for arthritis pain. He is playing with his toys again and more active than he's been in months. I hope we can keep him comfortable for many more years.

Most clients do a tremendous job caring for their birds but every now and then we'll encounter some habits or beliefs that need to be altered. We always encourage our clients to call us with any questions or concerns. It's our job to help educate pet owners to the best of our ability.

*Dr. Moran, DVM is a trusted vet that works closely with our Club during our annual Bird Expo. Canton Center Animal Hospital is a full service exotics vet located at 5900 Canton Center Road North, Canton, MI 48187 (734) 459-1400*

## RECIPES

### For The Birds: Best Birdie Pizza

- 1 ready made pizza crust or use own recipe eliminating salt
- 1 jar baby food mixed garden vegetables
- 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/4 cup shredded carrot
- 1/4 cup chopped broccoli
- 2 tablespoon wheat germ
- 2 tablespoon wheatgrass powder
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella

Spread baby food on crust. Sprinkle carrot, broccoli and bell peppers. Sprinkle cheese, wheat germ and wheatgrass powder over and bake according to directions for crust.

### For The Humans: Cranberry Pumpkin Bread

- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 cup egg substitute
- 1 (16 ounce) can whole cranberry sauce
- 1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin puree
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Spray two 8x4 inch loaf pans with non-stick cooking spray. Combine the flour, brown sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, ground cinnamon and ground cloves in a large bowl and mix well. Set aside. Mix the egg substitute, cranberry sauce, pureed pumpkin, vegetable oil and grated orange zest together. Add this mixture to the flour mixture and stir until just moistened. Pour batter into the prepared pans. Sprinkle the top of each loaf with the chopped nuts. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 55 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let loaves cool for 10 minutes then remove from pans. Can be made even lower in fat by substituting 1/3 cup applesauce for the 1/3 cup vegetable oil.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### For Sale

Have something to sell? Bird related or otherwise. Let us know ... e-mail [sydneyano@gmail.com](mailto:sydneyano@gmail.com)

### Personals

Please let me know if you are interested in an AACBC knitting group! e-mail [sydneyano@gmail.com](mailto:sydneyano@gmail.com)

### Wanted

What do want? Bird related or otherwise. Let us know ... e-mail [sydneyano@gmail.com](mailto:sydneyano@gmail.com)

### Services

#### World Wide Stitches

Rahel Naegele  
World Wide Stitches supplies professional high quality embroidery around the globe.  
6540 Peckins Ln., Manchester, MI 48158  
734-272-1849 or  
[worldwidestitches@hotmail.com](mailto:worldwidestitches@hotmail.com)  
[www.worldwidestitches.com](http://www.worldwidestitches.com)

### Rescues

#### PJ's Parrot Palace

Tanya at 810.687.1362  
[TanyaL282@aol.com](mailto:TanyaL282@aol.com)

### Home Again Avian Rescue

Mary at 734.326.0720  
[mdw0123@aol.com](mailto:mdw0123@aol.com)

### Other Categories?

Let us know ... e-mail [sydneyano@gmail.com](mailto:sydneyano@gmail.com)