

**SOUTH SOUND EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER**

Volume XXIV, Issue 6

December 2009

P.O. Box 15014, Tumwater, WA 98511-5014
<http://ssebs.org>

(The newsletter is now published every other month)

**Sunday, December 13 (Sunday)
Holiday Party**

1:00 to 3:00 PM

Dirty Dave's

3939 Martin Way East, Lacey

In addition to pizza, there are all sorts of yummy things on the menu and a salad bar.
We have the room only until 3:00, so let's not stroll in too late.

Directions to Dirty Dave's:

Heading South on I-5: Take exit 109 (Martin Way/College St/ Sleater Kinney N.). Turn right off the exit ramp onto Martin Way. Travel 0.8 miles. Dirty Dave's is on the left.

Heading North on I-5: Take exit 108 (Sleater Kinney/College). Follow the ramp to Sleater Kinney North and go 0.8 mile. Turn left onto Martin Way. Travel 0.2 miles. Dirty Dave's is on the left.

*We will be having a "Pirate" Gift exchange
To participate, please bring an inexpensive, but "interesting" (open to interpretation)
wrapped gift.
(suggested maximum cost is \$10).*

Also bring your appetite !!

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Friday, February 12, 2010

Program:

"What the Heck is My Parrot Doing?????!!!"

Behavior is a component of an endless reciprocal interaction among an individual's genetics, behavioral history and environment. Behavior is nothing if not complex. When it comes to the complex behavior of our companion parrots, we definitely have our hands full. With the potential for screaming, screeching, calling and shrieking . . . feather plucking, picking, shredding and clipping . . . and who can forget to mention biting, nipping and clawing, reducing problem behavior seems especially complicated.

If we hope to improve our ability to understand and positively influence our parrot's behavior, we need an approach that provides an organized, trust building as opposed to trust destroying, process that simplifies the seeming complexity that threatens to obscure our view.

Enter a Ph.D in psychology named Susan Friedman at Utah State University. Her interest in parrots and other

species of non-humans led her to look into her field of study for answers to how to understand specific behaviors in them. When we can clarify the related components of different types of behavior, the path to creative, positive solutions and teaching plans becomes more clear. The approach she has brought to the parrot world is known as ABC Analysis. Our speaker this month, a student of Dr. Friedman, will show us how the ABC Analysis tool can be used to positively impact our relationships with our birds

MEMO

TO: My Boss

FROM: Pegg

DATE: Almost Every Day (sigh....)

SUBJECT: My Continual Tardiness

Today when I tried to slide in 30 minutes late (again), I ran into you in the hallway. You were very pointed in your observation that my tardiness is a continuing issue, and that my giving up breaks and working late to make up the time – at least on a daily basis -- does not really work for you. You'd like to know why I don't seem to manage getting to work by 9 AM, as scheduled, especially when I supposedly get up at 5:30 AM.

Well, as you know, I have parrots. And dogs. And a cat. Getting up at 5:30 allows me time to jump in the shower and then take the dogs out for a walk. Then apply the 3 medicines on the bulldog. Because parrots need their beauty sleep, I try to be as quiet as possible. My Umbrella Cockatoo, 'TooBird, thinks he's a rooster, and at the first rustling he hears will let out ear-shattering shrieks to "Get My Cage Cover Off" and "Everybody Get Up Now !" The dogs will start howling and barking, and my Blue and Gold Macaw Pukana will join them in barking. BamBam, who has been sleeping soundly next to his heater, will pry his eyes open and want to know where his 2 wake up pine nuts are.

Cage cleaning and water bowl (dogs and birds) scrubbing and refilling follows, and then I prepare the birds' pine nut foraging blocks (all birds get a token pine nut – BamBam gets 2) and then their "crunchy" bowls (pellets, seeds, nuts) for later. Everyone gets a little spray of water (which Pukana hates). By then I have to pull some more dirty papers from their cages.

I prepare the dog food – a different diet for each of them, with appropriate supplements and meds – for later feeding. Then it is mash time for the birds – some is pre-cooked and mixed – a different mash for each bird – with different supplements and meds. They each eat their mash on bowls that are mounted on bird trees and stands. This is where this morning became difficult. The two macaws were finishing up their mash on their trees, and I had just thawed some frozen peas in a strainer. They are BamBam's favorite – he would kill for them. So I gave some to BamBam, and went to give a couple to Pukana. Pukana is not so into peas as he is into making a mess. As I went to take some peas out of the strainer, he grabbed the strainer and threw it across the room. The peas went flying everywhere.

The dogs were delighted – particularly the bulldog, who is allergic to everything, including, undoubtedly, peas. I went scrambling for the strainer and peas. I stood up briefly after picking up the strainer, and BamBam, who was next to me, grabbed my eyeglasses and heaved them across the room. It is his favorite trick, and he was chortling gaily. I go to retrieve my glass – which I cannot see because they are not on my face – and slip on the peas and over the bulldog who is in hog heaven inhaling what he can find and tracking the rest all over the floor. By the time I pick myself up off the floor (now covered with peas) and find my glasses, I am across the room and Pukana has let himself down off his stand and is now chasing the bulldog (nothing shy about this bird). 'TooBird, who I thankfully had just put back in his cage before the peas were thrown, just now manages to unfasten the main perch in his cage and goes crashing to the bottom. Putting it back together will take an additional ten minutes after I mop up the smeared peas from the floor. BamBam is squawking about not having received his peas or the little piece of toast he gets with his thyroid medication. Pukana has abandoned the bulldog – at least

hardware establishments extraordinarily giddy with joy. Went a step further, and took all the toys apart and replaced every bit of metal with SS, having made an even larger investment in SS chains.

Fast forward to about 8 weeks ago. My other rescue bird was an Umbrella Cockatoo. Not much known about him except that his original owner died and he was passed between family members until he, apparently, wore out his welcome and ended up in rescue. (His being a self-appointed rooster every morning at 0-dark-thirty might have had something to do with that, but that is another story). 'TooBird is also a rather curious bird – which may be a bit of an understatement. 'TooBird would chomp the entire house down given the opportunity. He would also attack the birds. He's, therefore, very closely supervised when out of his cage – usually either on my hand or on a stand.

How 'TooBird survives on what he eats (or, more to the point, doesn't eat) is a mystery. He will eat apples, a piece of orange on occasion, carrot, organic grapes in season, perhaps some banana (although he does like sweetened banana chips), and an occasional nut. Harrison's treats (sweetened), sunflower seeds, and well about it. If it's green, "get it out of here." Pellets (except for the sweetened ones) – forget it. He ate peanuts when he arrived, but we don't do peanuts in the house, so..... Despite this, he's maintained a good weight and good labs, and at least so far hasn't succumbed to diabetes or liver failure.

But he's always had polyurea. No clear reason why..... After some experimentation, and reasoning there might be a subclinical infection lurking, I found I could keep the polyurea relatively in check by adding 4 drops of apple cider vinegar to his water. This has worked well for a number of years.

Until about 8 weeks ago when I awoke at about 3AM to the sound of 'TooBird vomiting. This was not regurgitation. He was obviously sick, and it took just a few minutes to establish that, once again, our area emergency clinics were being staffed by non-bird vets. I put him under heat. Poor guy went on vomiting until about 6AM when he quieted down. By then he had pretty much lost his voice from the constant retching. Thank God it was Saturday -- not Sunday -- and I hit the road with him en route to Dr Onorati in Des Moines as soon as I got everyone else squared away. I took the cage papers with me, and when Dr. Onorati saw all the vomitus, 'Too Bird was immediately hospitalized and started on anti-biotics and fluids.

His CBC on Monday verified a wicked infection, but we couldn't get a culture on the organism. Nonetheless, he responded well to the antibiotics, and spent the week there. But there was not need to feel too sorry for him. He felt better by Monday and was set up in a cage in the clinic's laboratory where he was able to supervise everyone in their comings and goings. He had constant attention, and when I picked him up at the end of the week he was not only feeling quite fine, thank you very much, but was rather disappointed to come home.

We returned about 10 days later for a new blood draw, and he was looking good. The bloodwork, in a word, however, sucked – infection was still present. We returned again, and this

time radiographed him. Bingo. Five pieces of metal in his gizzard. He was again hospitalized again. More bloodwork sent in and he was positive for zinc toxicity. Thankfully, not critically so. This time he underwent another course of antibiotics, chelation, fluids, and – to his great joy – mounds of peanut butter. And he was once again ensconced in the lab. The point of the peanut butter, by the way, was to try to "capture" the metal and ease it out of his system. So, only smooth – not crunchy – would do. I believe "TooBird, who used to love peanuts, thought he had died and gone to cockatoo heaven. He dutifully gorged himself on the peanut butter and tried to whip the lab into shape.

I picked him up at that end of the week with instructions to keep filling him up with peanut butter. By this time, however, he had completely peanut-battered himself out. Couldn't get him to eat it for anything. Another alternative was a high gluten toast. Nope – no deal. Back to being picky, although for the first time his polyurea seemed to be gone.

Back to the vet the next week for a follow-up radiograph. The metal had not moved, and he was hospitalized again and gavage-fed peanut butter for one last try. By now he thinks Onorati's lab is his true home (and I have, by now, shelled out almost enough to purchase the place) and all of the staff his wait-persons.

He's home now, and we'll go back for more tests/radiographs in a couple of weeks. Surgery to retrieve the metal has been deemed to be too dangerous. If the metal is still there (which I assume it is, because the polyurea has come back), then we will simply have to "manage" the situation. I don't yet know what that looks like. We believe that the metal has been in there for years, and may have now become imbedded in the gizzard wall. It possibly had a protective coating on it when swallowed, but the coating, after years of exposure to digestive juices, has now eroded off and the underlying zinc is now exposed and leaching out. The pieces are about all about the same size with no particular shape – I'm thinking maybe zipper teeth? I can't absolutely without a doubt for sure guarantee that that this didn't happen on "my watch," but I rather doubt it. And I haven't lost any zippers to birds.

So, where does that leave us? Our investment is now a healthy 4 figures (all left of the decimal point). He can't be chelated constantly. We'll be developing a plan, I assume, to keep the toxicity under control. The lesson here is that allowing your bird to be around anything other than SS is dangerous. The nontoxic plating is NOT enough. And that if there is a suspected ingestion, the bird should be radiographed immediately so the chances of retrieving the metal from his/her system are better. "TooBird and I didn't have that opportunity, and our future is now uncertain.

LIVE AND LEARN

I finally acquired a dehydrator and am learning. My first success concerns kale and cilantro. Two of my three birds will NOT eat anything green, and I took the dried kale and cilantro and put them in a coffee grinder (no coffee....) with nuts, ground it up, and added the mixture to their mash. Woo Hooo !! They are eating it !!

Free Cage –

Large enough for 2-3 small birds,
or as a temporary cage for a conure.

Might be useful for someone engaged in rescues
or for emergencies

Contact Barbara-Ann Smith.

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Contact Linda James:

360-491-3216

jamesgang@thurston.com

CLUB INFORMATION

- As a general rule, the first half hour of each General Meeting, from 7:00 to 7:30 pm, will be dedicated to socializing. The evening's program will begin at 7:30 pm, and the regular meeting will follow the program.
- For information, call 360/455-0697.
- The SSEBS mailing address is:
South Sound Exotic Bird Society (SSEBS)
P.O. Box 15014
Tumwater, WA 98511-5014
- Please use this address for all club correspondence except for items to be sent to the newsletter editor. Send newsletter correspondence to: Pegg Bauer, 8008 Ellison Loop NW, Olympia, WA 98502

SSEBS Officers Needed

Officers are needed for calendar year 2010.

If you are interested in serving,

please contact Pegg Bauer at

peggb@comcast.net or 360/584-6495.

Join !! SSEBS YahooGroup.

This is not a "chat group" as such (a "chat group" generally means that everybody is on line at the same time, "talking" back and forth by typing messages in real-time.) With a YahooGroup, e-mail messages are posted to the group which then distributes copies of the messages to the subscribers, depending on how they want to receive the message copies.

Go to <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/SSEBS/>. You can join by clicking on the "join this group" button on the home page or by sending an e-mail message to SSEBS-subscribe@yahoo.com. Learn how the group works: <http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/> is the place to go.

SUPPORT YOUR CLUB:

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

Each commercial membership includes one business-card sized advertisement in the newsletter. Commercial members may also purchase additional ad space at the following rates:

One half page	\$50
Full page	\$87.50

Non-members may purchase ad space at the following rates:

Business card size	\$40
One-half page	\$100
Full page	\$175

All ads run for a 12-month period. Send camera-ready artwork or neatly printed ad copy to SSEBS, P.O. Box 15014, Tumwater, WA 98511-5014 (please do not use a little piece of scrap paper). Copy and payment received by the third Thursday of the month will appear in the following month's newsletter. Copy changes during the current period will be considered on a case-by-case basis and additional charges – if any – determined at the time of the request. All ads must be paid in full prior to being published. The SSEBS Board of Directors reserves the right to refuse any advertising it deems inappropriate. Questions? Contact Pegg Bauer, Editor.

2010 Meetings

February 12

August 13

April 9

October 8

June 11

December -- tba

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SSEBS is proud to be associated with:

- NORTHWEST EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY
P.O. Box 47377, Seattle, WA 98146
<http://NWExoticBirdSociety.org>; Email: Info@NWExoticBirdSociety.org
Meetings on the third Thursday of each month
- THE WASHINGTON BUDGERIGAR SOCIETY
2126 Bedal Lane, Everett, WA 98208-2439
<http://mysite.verizon.net/resom1a2WBS1.htm>; Email: swanson28s@verizon.net
Meetings on the first Sunday of every month.
- THE BIRD LOVERS SOCIAL CLUB
(Renton area)
For information, contact: President Julie Corwin, 206-772-1730
Email: blconnection@hotmail.com
http://www.geocities.com/bird_lovers_club/
Events and Educational Programs only – no meetings

SSEBS Meeting Time/Place

SSEBS meetings are **NORMALLY** (but not always!>) held in Room 103 at the Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St NW, Olympia, WA 98501-8208 on the 2d Friday of each month. This can, however, vary – check your newsletter and the website. From I-5, take the Capitol exit, which comes out onto 14th Street. Follow 14th through the tunnel and turn right at the stoplight after you come out of the tunnel onto Capitol Way. Follow Capital Way to State Street. The Olympia Center is just past this intersection on the left (light-colored 2-story building).

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Pegg Bauer, Editor
Newsletter address only:
8008 Ellison Loop NW
Olympia, WA 98502

