



By Barbara Friedman

The Quaker Parakeet Society (QPS), a 501(c)(3) society, is unique in that it is primarily internet based. It has thrived since its beginnings in 1999. Members are Quaker Parakeet breeders, owners and conservationists. QPS is composed of an elected Board of Directors and several committees with Chairs as follows:

Newsletter Committee: The Newsletter Committee publishes a quarterly journal, *THE SENTINEL*, which is included in yearly membership dues. Back issues are available to the public. *THE SENTINEL* averages 60 pages per issue and is the only publication devoted exclusively to Quaker Parakeets. Contributors to the *SENTINEL* are professional and hobbyist writers, avian behaviorists, Quaker breeders, enthusiasts and owners. Each year *THE SENTINEL* sponsors the Fledgling Author Contest for QPS member amateur writers.

QPSRAPP (Quaker Parakeet Society Rescue and Placement): This subcommittee of QPS is an entirely free placement service for Quakers in need of new and permanent homes. RAPP consists of over 200 volunteers across the U.S. and Canada and averages 4 placements per month. As QPS is internet based, RAPP can communicate rapidly between committee, relinquishing owners, adopting, fostering, and transporting volunteers without the burden of staffing and funding a central facility. RAPP works cooperatively with programs such as The Gabriel Foundation, Polly Wanna Rescue, Fauna and Flora, and others.

RAPP Support is a mentoring program. Experienced RAPP adopting volunteers mentor and support first time adopting volunteers who may be having difficulty adjusting adopted Quakers to their new surroundings, and/or help fellow adopting volunteers modify unwanted behavior that an adopted Quaker may have brought into the new surroundings. There are owners who contact RAPP with the intention of placing their Quaker with a RAPP volunteer because they are experiencing difficulties in their relationship with their companion and do not know how to go about modifying unwanted behaviors that the bird may have developed. In many cases, with RAPP mentor support, education, and resources, owner-Quaker relationship and understanding between bird and owner improves substantially, allowing the Quaker to remain in its original home.

QPSERC (Education and Research): A primary goal of our society is to make educational information easily available to Quaker owners, future Quaker owners, and the public. QPS literature is distributed at avian events and at facilities, such as veterinary offices, humane facilities, and to rescue and placement programs. Basic but extensive Quaker information and resources are also available on the QPS website at: <http://qp-society.com/QPSmain/QPSindex.html>

Quaker Parakeet Discussion List: This is one of the oldest and largest online mailing lists on the internet. While maintained financially by QPS, the QPList is open to the public.



Quaker Parakeet Society members Debbie Muldoon and Nancy Jane Baily showing off some of the raffle prizes from the QPS booth at the 2005 AFA Convention in Miami.

Fundraising Committee and QPS Store: Raising money to fund QPS above and beyond yearly membership dues, the Fundraising Committee's efforts support the free services QPS offers to the public, such as QPSRAPP, the QPList and QPSERC. Projects revolve around creating new, exclusively "Quaker" products for sale, including a yearly QPS calendar (this year, the calendar sported not only beautiful photos of Quakers, but each month also provided a Quaker educational tip), QPS pins, books, note cards, and various items located at the Café Press Quaker store. The Fundraising Committee holds raffles at the AFA conference and other venues. Raffles held at the annual AFA conference fund QPS-sponsored, renowned speakers. Past Fund Raising Committee projects have even included E-bay auctions.

Membership: As stated above, membership dues include and fund publication of THE SENTINEL and support the free services QPS offers to members and the public. Yearly dues are tax deductible. All members receive a membership kit which includes membership card, the QPS bylaws, a nationwide vet listing, an additional past issue of THE SENTINEL, and Quaker appropriate toys or items. As is the case with any avian society or club,

membership dues and fundraising cannot meet all costs. QPS does rely upon donations. Donations can be named to QPS in a general manner, or ear-marked for specific funds:

- The Otis "ONE" Fund: (Otis Nutrition Education) named for Dr. Patricia Anderson's Quaker, Otis, who succumbed to Iron Storage Disease, the fund's goal is to establish research, fund speakers at forums like the AFA and run articles in THE SENTINEL, and provide information on the QPS website to educate Quaker owners and potential Quaker owners on how to provide a healthy, balanced, nutritious diet that will promote a long, healthy life for Quakers, a species which is prone to diseases of the liver.

- Pennies for Placement: Not everyone can donate time to QPSRAPP by volunteering to adopt, transport, or foster. Monetary donations, no matter how small, can make all the difference to Quakers who need placement in new homes, in particular, and to defray costs of removing a Quaker from an illegal state or when a relinquished Quaker needs extensive veterinary assistance. Many times relinquishing owner or adopting volunteer may not be prepared to meet these costs in totality.

Protection and protection of, and education about the naturalized Quaker are of extreme importance to QPS. Affiliation to the AFA allows the Quaker Parakeet Society to be part of the larger avian community and helps to keep QPS abreast of avian legislation and efforts to change or modify legislation in a manner that is effective and beneficial to all avian owners, breeders, and future owners, and foremost, in a way that would most benefit and protect Quaker Parakeets. QPS has special consideration for those who would potentially own Quakers. Quakers are illegal in several states, carry ownership restrictions in several states, and have colonized in urban areas in the U.S., causing concerns for many who might consider them a problematic, invasive species because of their nesting

preferences in this type of setting.

Earlier this year, QPS supervised the publication of Parrots in the City, (PITC), written by Mattie Sue Athan, with Jon-Mark and Jo Davey. PITC explores the plight of wild Quakers in urban settings.

In February of this year, QPS was contacted by Alison Evans-Fragale, who is spearheading a grassroots campaign to assist an established colony of Quakers in Edgewater, NJ which is nesting in utility poles. Alison asked QPS to supply her with any writings and informational resources that would help her to educate her community, which we did. When groups assisting wild Quakers contact QPS, it often is to ask us to supply them with validated information which would help dispel many of the myths associated with wild Quaker colonies.

A city council meeting with Alison's core group, as well as with the Mayor of Edgewater, resulted in a very favorable attitude regarding the wild Quakers of Edgewater and a meeting with the local power company, PSE&G, ensued. PSE&G agreed that they would notify the Edgewater Quakers group when nest take-downs were to occur, but they claimed that they could only hand over birds recovered from take-downs to the Teterboro Animal Shelter, who consider Quakers pests (Quakers are considered illegal in NJ. The law states that there is a permit process required for Quaker ownership, but they are reluctant to issue permits, as Quakers are listed as a dangerous animal), and will destroy them. An agreement was reached that would allow the colony to be relocated and juveniles and



Ellen Kruger (standing), Joann Davey (left) and Zoe Howland (right) are hard at work manning the QPS booth.

eggs removed and moved to a state which permits Quaker ownership. QPSRAPP has offered assistance to transport and place.

QPS was also once contacted by a group in Seattle who is faced with a similar situation as the Edgewater Quakers, except the Seattle Quakers are nesting in a Cingular Wireless Tower, which needed replacing. The group asked that the tower not be replaced, but that a new tower be erected nearby. QPS is waiting for further news following a meeting scheduled with Cingular.

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Recently, an unusual request for information came to us from an unlikely location. A gentleman from Belarus, a former Soviet Republic, contacted QPSERC requesting information on Quaker plucking and mutilation syndrome, which he was supplied with. THE SENTINEL has enlisted this gentleman to write of his experiences with his Quakers in a country where there are few companion birds kept and no avian veterinarians. QPS has spent the past year revamping the QPS website, which is updated on a daily basis. It is user friendly, with easy to navigate menus which include information on all QPS Committees, Quaker behavioral information, an extensive listing of resources, diet information specific to Quakers, anatomy, grooming tips, emergency information, hazards and safety information, information and facts about wild Quakers, a listing of laws and states where Quaker ownership is illegal or restricted, current legislation, Quakers in the news, including archived news, videos, and photographs, a nation-wide vet listing, tips on choosing a vet, the first vet visit and common illnesses, articles on plucking and well crafted and illustrated articles on the use of foam collaring for Quakers as opposed to the traditional Elizabethan collaring, Quaker adoption tips, and a safe and toxic plant listing. Future topics for the website will include a safe and toxic food listing, avian CPR, and a section for owners of handicapped Quakers, among others.

QPS holds its annual meeting each and every year in conjunction with the AFA Convention and welcomes all Quaker owners to attend.

If you would like more information about the Quaker Parakeet Society or would like to join, you can go to <http://qp-society.com/qpserc/qpsspromo.html>. ■

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Generously Handpacked? Handful of Banana Chips - Scoop of Pistachios, etc.	YES	NO	
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