

# Are Bird Clubs Straying From Their Purpose?

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The purpose of most, if not all, by-laws of bird clubs is stated to be "for the welfare of the avian community." The actual practice of most bird clubs today is centered around the giving of a bird show or fair for the purpose of making money. Though part of the raised money may go to an avian welfare organization, more of it goes to club members use.

The main focus of money making for clubs today is a bird fair. In order to have a successful bird fair, most clubs feel that they must raffle off a bird and have a lot of vendors selling unweaned baby birds. There is a movement to stop the sale of unweaned babies, especially at shows, as this practice often results in the death of the babies and a bad taste in the mouth of the new owner who has no idea of how to take care of their precious new purchase despite five minutes of instruction by the vendor. However, the effort to change the concept of shows is meeting resistance because of the fear of not making money.

And what is the purpose of earning money? Many clubs give a portion of the money raised to avian oriented foundations. This is good. The rest is kept for club use; refreshments, dinners, pizza parties, and sometimes for speakers at programs to educate or entertain the members who attend meetings.

Early shows and a few today (see *AFA WATCHBIRD* Third Quarter 2002) were held for the purpose of exhibiting birds to be judged for conformation. The idea is to encourage breeders to breed better and better specimens and

for the public to become educated about birds. This practice is not widespread partially because it is not the moneymaker of the shows that are focused on sales of birds and merchandise.

Exotic Bird Fanciers Guild of Naples (Florida) has diverged from the usual practices and we would like to share an idea with others for earning and spending, with the welfare of the avian community as the primary focus.

The Guild chose not to have a bird show but to have a day of fun and education for its annual fund raiser. It was decided to use a Rummage Sale as the main money earning part of the event. Everyone in a community loves a good sale. The members (and non members)

collected donated items for several months. A tent was donated by a local party company and each table held a specific type of item. Members manned the tables in two shifts so no one would get too tired. It was such an exciting day, though, that no member went home early. The bird cages and bird related items went first and the Guild members voted to concentrate on more and more bird items next year. One toy vendor was invited and he donated 25% of his sales to the Guild. The rummage sale netted \$2,500.

Additionally, the party company donated a bounce house; there was a free petting zoo; as well as free face painting, and a barbeque. The local community blood center brought its Blood Mobile. All of these activities generated good attendance and people stayed a long time with many of them putting money into donation jars. There was a booth with a video on birds, people walking around with birds, and peo-



Photos by Norma Banas



With a little creative thinking the Exotic Bird Fanciers Guild of Naples, FL., rummage sale was a big success. A good crowd gathered even though no birds were offered for sale.



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ple at the table to talk with and hand out literature on bird behaviors and bird first aid. The community really backed this event in so many ways. Thus, the day combined fun and education and was a huge success with people asking when was the next event.

The Guild diverged again in how to spend the funds it generated. The Guild decided to put all its money and effort into our local community. The stated purpose in the by-laws is "The objective of the guild is to provide education and help regarding exotic bird ownership to residents of and visitors to our community."

The Guild calendar for the year includes a Seminar on Behavior publicized and open to the public, a Micro chipping Clinic publicized and open to the public with the Guild paying the veterinary cost which is partially donated by the veterinarian, speaking engagements to community groups, schools, and libraries too numerous to list, and a major summer project with children. Fifteen members gave a morning to a camp with 150 low income children to read bird stories, visit with birds, color pictures of birds, build a bird house and have refreshments. The funding for this project came from the money earned at the fundraiser.

The Guild is very proud to be able to help the people of our community to understand their responsibilities as exotic bird owners and to therefore make the lives of the birds better. Our philosophy is to educate, educate, educate! If that means discouraging someone from getting a bird, that is better than running a rescue for all the birds that should not have been bought in the first place.

If anyone would like to know more about our activities and philosophy, please contact us at the following Email address:

**AVIARY 1@msn.com**

**Norma Banas, Chairman**

**Exotic Bird Fanciers Guild of Naples**



## Commercial Member Veterinarians

### Arizona

North Central Animal Hospital  
Hillary Frank, DVM  
Phoenix (602) 395-9773

Palo Verde Animal Hospital  
Ross E Babcock, DVM  
Phoenix (602) 944-9661

### California

Animal & Bird Hospital  
Dr Robert Stonebreaker  
Del Mar (858) 755-9351

Drury Reavill, DVM  
Citrus Heights  
(916) 725-5100

The Animal Hospital & Bird Clinic  
Daphne Hill DVM  
Fresno (559) 227-5575

### Delaware

Windcrest Animal Hospital  
Dr Morgan Dawkins  
Wilmington (302)998-2995

### Florida

Animal Clinic of Lady Lake  
Dr Tina B. Merritt, DVM  
Lady Lake (352)753-5333

Eastside Veterinary Hospital Inc  
William Geiler, VMD  
Clermont (352) 394-6624

Last Chance Farm, Inc  
Bern M Levine, DVM  
Miami Beach (305) 400-7201

### Maryland

Pulaski Veterinarian Clinic  
William Boyd, DVM DEPPL, ABVP  
Baltimore (410) 686-6310

### Massachusetts

Putnam Veterinary Clinic  
Wendy Emerson, DVM  
Topsfield (978) 887-3836

### Missouri

Bird Medicine and Surgery  
David Kersting, DVM  
Chesterfield (314) 469-6661

### New Jersey

Ridgewood Veterinary Hospital  
Dean J. Cerf, DVM  
Ridgewood (201) 447-6000

### New York

Northside Animal Hospital  
Mark Salemi DVM  
Staten Island (718) 981-4445

### Ohio

Avian Health Clinic  
Ram Mohan, DVM, Phd  
Reynoldsburg (614) 755-2273

### Pennsylvania

East York Vet Center  
Dr Valerie Miller, DVM  
York (717) 840-1025

### Rhode Island

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Julie Pelto, DVM  
Cranston (401) 942-7360

### Tennessee

Collierville Animal Clinic PC  
Shannon B Mcgee, DVM  
Collierville (901) 853-8519

### Virginia

Potomac Valley  
Veterinary Hospital  
Rose Ann M Fiskett, VMD  
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