

AFA4Kids welcomes young aviculturists

By Julie Corwin

The AFA4Kids program was well attended at the AFA convention this year. The program is designed to help the younger generation learn more about birds. Attending the program is free for kids ages 6-16, and adults are welcome.

Kids attending this year were of varying ages, and included two from Germany. Kids are able to win prizes by answering questions correctly while learning more about birds.

Special guests Barbara Heidenreich (renowned bird behaviorist) and Robin Shewokis (enrichment and behavior specialist) helped get the program started by implementing the training game with the kids as the bird show people finished removing birds.

The Bird Show followed the AFA4Kids program, so it was fun for the kids to see and learn more about the birds that were still in the room after the show. There were some rare treats! Mary Ellen LePage brought her Goliath Black Palm Cockatoo. Other rare species included a Cloncurry (Australian parakeet), Brown-necked Parrot (UnCape), Derbyan (Asian Parakeet), Eclectus Parrot and a Rosebreasted Cockatoo. It was really exciting for the attendees to be able to touch and hold these rare parrot species. There are many adults who've never had the opportunity to see quite a few of these parrots either, and they were just as excited as the kids!

Topics in the program covered housing, training, responsibility of care, toys, and general aspects of living with a bird. The variety and differences in parrot species was demonstrated with posters, pictures, and live birds during the program.

A very special guest this year added to the fun by arriving dressed as a Flamingo, and brought a male Eclectus with her. Flamingo~Carol Stanley~ talked about some of the non-parrot species in aviculture. The live Eclectus and a Derbyan species presented the perfect opportunity for the kids to learn what "dimorphic" means in birds.

Look for this program at future AFA conventions, and bring the kids to enjoy the fun and learn more about birds. AFA4Kids is a free program, and there is also a special rate for kids who want to attend other parts of the convention.



GINNY HEPTIG/Barbara Heidenreich addresses participants during the AFA4Kidz program.



ADRIANE MOCK/Children get some hands-on experience with a male Eclectus Parrot.