

## **Ann Arbor Companion Bird Club January Newsletter**

Greetings Companion Bird Enthusiasts!

Our next meeting will be Sunday, January 9 at 1:00 PM at the Animal Kingdom Veterinarians located at 4920 Ann Arbor Saline Rd., Ann Arbor. We hope you will attend.

There was no December newsletter so we have a lot to talk about in this issue:

Nancy Walker has a report from our annual Holiday Luncheon:

### **Holiday Luncheon**

Due to a last minute change in the date our December meeting and auction to Saturday Dec 11 was not as well attended as previous years. But if we had held it as originally planned on Sunday Dec 12 we would have been snowed out! There were 11 members present and we still raised \$218. We did not auction some of the bird related items and will have an auction at our regularly scheduled January meeting (Sun Jan 9, 2011) so if you have any items to donate please bring them. A good time was had by all and there was some spirited competition in bidding between Mary and several others, we had several auctioneers including Nick who raised the bar on the bidding. A good time was had by all.

Also from Nancy is a happy story about her little Budgie, Mac.

### **Mac, The Little Budgie Who Can**

Mac is a male gray and white budgie of unknown age. I don't know anything about his early life because he was found in an apple tree in a backyard in Troy Michigan in late 2007 or early 2008. The woman who found him took him in, did some research on parakeets and joined an on-line forum. She got him a good size cage and also got him a friend to keep him company, a male green budgie named Kiwi who was hatched in March 2008. The woman who had them works nights and after a while the noise and mess was more than she wanted but she wanted them to go to a good home. She posted this on the parakeet forum in the spring of 2009 and since I lived nearby and my male budgie Sweetboy had just passed away I told her I would love to take them. So on June 17 Mac and Kiwi came to live with me.

Mac is a very sweet, somewhat hand tame boy who loves to fly laps around the living room (as does Kiwi). Before they went into the flight cage they would go visiting the other budgies in it. One morning I went over to their cage and saw blood coming from Mac's tail. He had broken a blood feather and while the bleeding had stopped I didn't see the broken feather although there was a feather on the floor so we went to the vet. She confirmed that he had broken a blood feather but had pulled it out himself! Mac's next visit to the vet (Dr. Marsh) happened when there was what looked like a wound on his chest and I was worried one of the others had attacked him but in fact he had an infected feather follicle. Dr. Marsh cleaned it out and he was

on antibiotics for 10 days. Luckily Mac is such a sweet tame boy that is was not too difficult to give him his medicine.

Then a few months after that, I noticed a large lump on Mac's lower abdomen. It literally appeared overnight so we went back to the Dr Marsh, this was on a Sunday. She also said that it had grown fast since he had shown no signs of any tumors when he was last there. Mac seemed to be his normal self and we discussed the options. Budgies do not always survive surgery since being given anesthesia is often too much of a strain and if the tumor was attached to any internal organs it would kill him. But if nothing was done he may not survive long. She told me to think about it and decide. I had decided to have her do the surgery the following Friday but when I woke up Wednesday morning Mac was bloody in the area of the growth. I washed him off and saw that he was not bleeding anymore but we went to see Dr. Marsh that morning. She said that if she didn't do anything he likely wouldn't last much longer and said she could operate in about a half an hour. She had us wait in the front exam room and Mac was enjoying watching the macaws outside the window. He was sitting on a perch in the travel cage and chirping away like nothing was wrong.

After they took him into surgery I went for a walk to see the Creature Conservancy animals and was only back in the room about 5 minutes when the vet tech came in with a big smile on her face. She said Mac survived the surgery, was sitting o his perch and they would bring him in for me to see him. He saw me and started chirping. Dr. Marsh said she wanted to keep him for a few hours to make sure he was ok and also fit him with a collar so he would not be able to pick at the incision. It turned out that he had a large sebaceous cyst that was benign. I went home and came back about 4 hours later to get Mac. They said to keep him isolated from the other parakeets so no one could pick at his wound or pick on him. The vet tech said it would be better to keep him in the small travel cage and in 3 weeks bring him back for a checkup and to have his collar removed.



After one night in the travel cage I saw Mac was not happy in such a small cage so I put him into a spare cage I had that is a good size for one budgie (about 18x16x22). The next day I had the door open to clean it and also take a picture of Mac in his collar and Mac, being the ever adventurous boy, took off flying laps and landed on the flight cage to visit every one. This became his daily routine, he had to stay in the small cage but in the morning and evening would go out and fly a few laps and visit everyone through the cage bars. Maybe because he was alone during the day he became even more affectionate and would often land on me, especially if Princess my green cheek conure was in my lap. I think Mac wanted to visit Princess as well.

After 3 weeks we went back for Mac's post-op visit. His incision had healed just fine and his collar was removed. He was happy to be back in the big flight cage with his friends. He continues to be a playful boy and is a true survivor.

**Cape Parrot Project and Wild Bird Trust News:**

Mary Wieske has provided us with a way to keep up to date on daily events happening at the Cape Parrot Project and Wild Bird Trust. They are now on Twitter! If you Tweet, follow the link: <http://twitter.com/drsteveboyes>