



Parrot Education & Adoption Center™

BEAK TO TAIL

Issue 78

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

4Q 2016

LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear PEAC Members,

It's so hard to believe we are publishing our last newsletter of the year. Along with the last newsletter also comes our yearly fundraising campaign. Last year's campaign failed to reach our budgeted need for \$20,000. We raised slightly over \$10,000, which for an organization of our size is nothing to be ashamed of. This year our budget has only increased by 25%, due primarily to the rising costs of veterinary care and housing needs of our foster flock. This year, we are looking at a budget of \$25,000, which goes 90% to the care and needs of our foster flock, and 10% to our educational work. This year, we may just make it, as we have an anonymous donor who is willing to match dollar for dollar up to \$20,000. This is a first for PEAC, and is absolutely amazing. So with that being said, once you receive our fundraising emails, postcards, and calls, please give generously, so that in 2017 we may continue to grow our organization in its goals of educating people in all things parrot related and providing a safe haven for birds who are in our foster flock and in need of finding a home.

To update you on our educational work, we are still setting up an informational booth at the Temecula Petco every third Sunday of the month. We are starting to fill out the application to Petsmart so that we may set up at various stores one Sunday a month. After the holidays, we will start a new program on the last Sunday of the month, a discussion at the Department of Animal Services Conference Room on Gaines Street, on a variety of topics related to parrots, both companion parrots and those living in the wild.

Just two weeks ago, we started working with our military on pet therapy sessions with the larger parrots under our care in Jamul. This is a very exciting program as we endeavor to help those in our community and at the same time get some good socialization for our foster parrots, especially those who have not had much handling in their lives prior to entering the PEAC foster flock. Due to privacy issues with this outreach program, including the HIPAA laws, we are not able to identify those participating in the project, but we definitely are able to give you updates on how the people and parrots are benefitting from it.

PEAC is always there for the parrots in our area, but we also feel strongly about participating with those people who make up our beautiful community. Being a military town, we felt it was a positive thing for the military personnel and the parrots to join ranks.

The last item I want to update you on is our greenwing macaw, Blaze, who came to PEAC in terrible condition and poor health. We found her in a 36"x36" cage with no room to move around. Due to weak muscles and bones as a result of having a blood calcium level of 30% below normal, and weighing only 845 grams, she ended up fracturing her wing and needing surgery to re-set it with a pin placed to stabilize the bones while they healed. She is having the pin removed in one week, and is now weighing in at 1031 grams and looks amazing! Her feather and skin color are healthy and brilliant and her sweet personality is coming out more and more every day. She has a long way to go before she is strong enough to leave her 24x48x24 acrylic cage that was generously donated to PEAC by San Diego Plastics, Inc., and move into a normal parrot cage and be safe to climb about and play in one of the outside aviaries. We already have someone interested in potentially adopting her, and we are hoping that this may be her forever home.

So in closing, I just want to encourage you all to reach out to your co-workers, friends, neighbors, and family to donate to PEAC during this year's fundraising campaign. An easy way to give a \$10 donation is to Text GIVE 15372 to 80-100 to donate \$10 to Save Companion Parrots through Rescue & Education. It's simple and easy! So let's together make a difference in the lives of our companion parrots by doing our part in raising this year's goal. I know it's possible, as I know how dedicated our volunteers and members are. PEAC, for 20 years, has gained an outstanding reputation, not only here in Southern California, but throughout the state as well as the country.

I want to thank all of you in advance for your generosity and hard work in reaching our goal. I wish all of you a wonderful upcoming holiday season, and I look forward to reporting to you the results of this year's fundraising campaign.

Sincerely,

Eric Kern, Director

UPDATE ON BLAZE

As you know, Blaze is a 20-year-old petite female greenwing macaw who came to PEAC after her owner passed away and Blaze was left with the mother, who was elderly and unable to care for her. After being contacted by the hospital, we rushed over to see Blaze, and found her dirty and dull-looking, living in terrible conditions in a very small and dirty cage, unable to step up and with an old, poorly-healed fracture to one leg.

While taking a shower in her new foster home a little while later, Blaze really blossomed. She began talking and flapping her wings and really seemed animated, and very unlike the bird who had been relinquished a couple of hours before. While showering, due to her heretofore unknown problems gripping with her weak feet, Blaze fell off her stand to the shower floor, fracturing two bones in her wing because of a calcium depletion condition of which we were as yet unaware. We rushed her to the vet, who set and pinned the wing.

Blaze is now staying in a large clear acrylic cage while her wing heals and she regains lost muscle strength, which is already coming back, in her legs and feet. She has been to Drs. Jenkins and Stout numerous times for rechecks with serial x-rays, dressing changes, blood tests for her elevated white cell count (which has now normalized!) and prescriptions of antibiotics (which she's now been able to discontinue!) and anti-inflammatories for pain associated with her old leg fracture.

(continued on page 10)

WHAT WE ARE

Parrot Education & Adoption Center is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to educating its members and current and potential bird owners about the proper care of pet birds. Unwanted or found parrots are accepted at PEAC and in turn are adopted to qualified applicants.

Sharing current information and correcting misconceptions about parrots are the major aims of PEAC. Our goal is to keep abreast of the latest developments in the world of aviculture and share them with you, our members.

PEAC was founded in 1996 by Bonnie Kenk, who served as the Executive Director for our first 12 years.

CONTACT US

Parrot Education & Adoption
Center
P.O. Box 600423
San Diego, CA 92160-0423

Beak to Tail
Published quarterly
Issue No. 78

Phone: 619-287-8200
Fax: 909-563-8418
Website: www.peac.org

Board of Directors

Gail Bradford
Dawn Danielson (advisory)
Teri Irvin
Margo Rose
Jeffrey Jenkins DVM, DABVP-
Avian
Brian Loudis DVM, DABVP-Avian

Executive Director

Eric Kern

Advisory Committee

April Adcock
Melanie Ariessohn
Barbara Crouse
Teri Irvin
Judy Michaels
Carrie Mix
Yoli Osana

Membership

Melanie Ariessohn

Monthly Sponsorships

Judy Michaels

Operations

Melanie Ariessohn

Social Media, Fundraising

Kelly Flynn

Adoption Committee

Melanie Ariessohn
Barbara Crouse
Teri Irvin
Jeanine Lyons
Yoli Osana
Bobbie Sevier
Dory Thompson

**PEAC Volunteers
in San Diego /
Southern California**

April Adcock
Melanie Ariessohn
Anthoni Bartronie
Gail Bradford
Barbara Crouse
Lori & Kaela Duran
Russ Ewing
Kelly Flynn
Teri Irvin
Eric Kern
Jeanine Lyons
Judy Michaels
Carrie Mix
Rebecca O'Connor
Yoli Osana
Ron and Sue Peterson
Rene Pina
Adonis Reece
Bobbie Sevier
Joni & Dwayne Shaffer
Mary Taylor
Dory Thompson
Suzette Valdez

Artist

Linda Ruschat

Editor

Melanie Ariessohn

**PEAC
Policies and Procedures**

1. PEAC does not purchase birds, even to remove them from bad situations.
2. PEAC will accept birds donated to our organization.
3. PEAC does not breed birds or place any birds into breeding situations.
4. PEAC does not adopt birds to children.
5. Potential adopters are required to attend our class focusing on Basic Anatomy and Health, Nutrition, Enrichment & Environment,, and Body Language, as well as a seminar specific to the species they wish to adopt.
6. All potential adopters will then receive a home visit performed by a PEAC volunteer.
7. Potential adopters will receive a copy of our adoption application after the home visit has been completed.
8. Approved adoption applications will be placed on a waiting list if a bird is not currently in our system that would be a good match for the approved adopter.
9. Only one parrot acquisition/adoption per home or PEAC membership is allowed in an 18-month time period.
10. Adopters are required to pay an adoption fee and reimburse PEAC for any veterinary fees the bird may have incurred.
11. Adopted birds are to remain in the home and be treated as a member of the family.
12. Adopted birds may not be sold, given away, bred, or used for any type of monetary purposes.
13. After attending the mandatory seminars, those wishing to adopt a particular bird will be required to spend hands-on time with that bird at least three times under the supervision of one of our volunteers, to ensure that there is a good match between the bird and the potential adopter.
14. As a general rule, we will not place a Cockatoo, Macaw, or other noisy bird in an apartment or condominium.
15. PEAC will not adopt birds as companions to other birds.
16. Birds must remain in a 100% smoke-free environment.

Available for Adoption in San Diego/Southern California

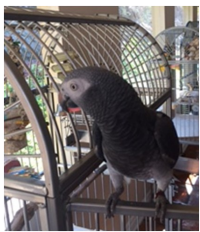
Call 619 287-8200 or email adoption@peac.org to find out more about any of these birds!

African Greys



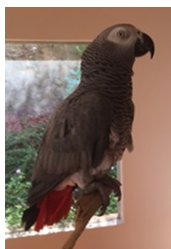
“Kasuku,” (aka “Cori”) m. Congo (red-tailed), age unk. Kasuku was found and taken in by a woman, who, when she realized after 18 months that he needed someone with more experience that she had, relinquished him to PEAC. He is not yet trained to step up

due to a significant fear of hands, but he has slowly settled in and will now take treats that are dropped into his food dish. He also has started saying Hello, his first discernible word. He plays with foraging toys and has not shown any aggression, and seems quite happy, as long as you don't approach his cage too closely. Kasuku is on a great diet. He is in beautiful feather. He will need to be adopted by someone with a lot of patience and significant experience in using positive reinforcement training with parrots.



“Pluto,” Timneh, age and gender unknown. Pluto was unclaimed after being found in El Cajon. Fortunately, while out on her own she did not have any feather loss or injuries. We are currently waiting for Pluto's DNA sexing test to come back. She has a warm and playful personality with men and will cooperate with women, but her preference is for

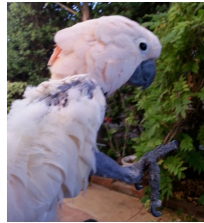
men. She has a large array of whistles and other sounds that she makes throughout the day and early evening. She has a small vocabulary but that may be due to our not being familiar with her pronunciation of words. If you make the kissing noise she will lean over to your lips or cheek and make the sound back to you. Pluto is in excellent feather, and will make someone a wonderful parrot companion.



“Rita Bonita,” 14-year-old f. Congo (red-tailed). Rita came to PEAC after the death of her owner. She is a very well-socialized CAG who is full of personality. She has a large vocabulary, as well as many whistles and sounds she can mimic. She steps up easily for both men and women, and is a really fun parrot to interact with.

She is on a pelleted diet and loves all vegetables and sprouts. Rita is a large CAG, which goes right along with her large personality. Her feather condition is excellent, and though she is not too fond of a full shower, she doesn't seem to mind a spray bottle bath from time to time. Rita is looking for a new person to call her own and share fun times with in the future.

Cockatoos



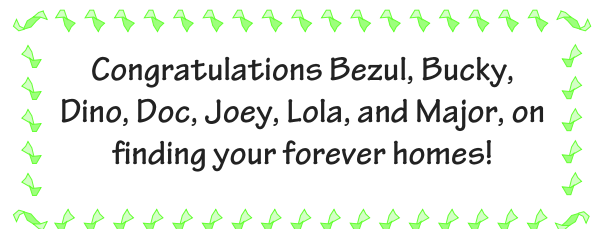
“Paris,” 11-yr-old f. Moluccan. Paris's history is not entirely clear; she was purchased at a swap meet and later turned in to a local animal shelter. Our vet estimates her age at appx 11. Like many 'toos, Paris is very social and steps right up. She seems to trust women more than men. She is quite expressive; her body language is very clear.

Paris loves veggies, and also eats pellets, fruit, and almonds and walnuts. She is not nearly as loud or noisy as most Moluccans, although she does call the flock an hour before sundown. She is a classic escape artist and knows how to pick the lock on her cage. Paris loves to chew wood toys. She is naked on her legs, breast and back, and we dress her in protective clothing, which she doesn't seem to mind. Paris seems to dislike the other birds in her foster home, and would love to be a single bird in a home with a cockatoo savvy family.



“Tootsie,” 14-yr-old f. umbrella. The couple who had Tootsie for her first 12 years moved, and had to confine her to a very small cage. Tootsie was unable to adjust and pulled most of her feathers from her chest and legs.

Since coming to PEAC and getting an appropriate cage, Tootsie has grown back most of her feathers. She is gentle and loves to cuddle and be around her people. She LOVES her toys! Tootsie knows a few words such as “hello” and “I love you.” She requires someone with a great deal of cockatoo experience. She's a fast learner and just wants to be with a forever family that will love her the way she deserves.



 Congratulations Bezul, Bucky,
 Dino, Doc, Joey, Lola, and Major, on
 finding your forever homes!

Available for Adoption in San Diego/Southern California

Call 619 287-8200 or email adoption@peac.org to find out more about any of these birds!

Conures



“Merlin,” f. pineapple, age unknown. Merlin came to PEAC via the Department of Animal Services after having been in a fight while trying to survive

out in the wild on her own. When her foster mom leaves her cage door open so she can come out to explore, Merlin bolts to the sliding glass door. She is not easy to handle yet and her fosters are working on settling her down to finger train. When holding her, one must cuddle her against ones chest for head scratches. She is going to make someone a fun little bird to have.



“Peanut,” m. Jenday, age unknown. Peanut was found and turned in to the Bonita shelter, which tried unsuccessfully to find his home and then turned him over to us.

Peanut is quite vocal when he can see a person to talk to. He loves attention and will babble and whistle if you talk to him. Peanut is not yet comfortable at stepping up to a hand when he is inside his cage, but he is working on that. However, once out of his cage, he is very willing to step up and be carried around. He does not bite, and will make an adorable addition to someone's family.

Macaws



“Jupiter,” m. Harlequin, appx 7-10 yrs old. Jupiter and his brother Neptune came to us from Minnesota after having been fostered for the Humane Society by a woman who personally flew them out to us.

Jupiter loves attention. He has selected a few people he likes, but is still quite shy with them. He isn't too playful or interested in toys, but he savors his treats, getting every last morsel and leaving very little waste. So far he has proven to be the milder tempered of the two. He does not hesitate to step up and remains all day on his play tree or outside in his aviary. We are familiarizing the brothers with being separated, as we feel that this will increase the ability to find homes for them. Although he is progressing quite quickly, due to his personality and years without training, Jupiter is going to need a caregiver who has a good knowledge and experience in working with these large parrots. If you are interested in adopting a large companion parrot such as Jupiter, please call and leave a message so that we may coordinate a visit.

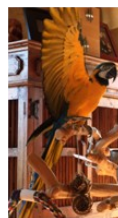


“Neptune,” m. Harlequin, appx 7-10 yrs old. Neptune and his brother Jupiter came to us from Minnesota after having been fostered for the Humane Society by a woman who personally flew them out to us.

Neptune is very outgoing when it comes to attention. He comes before Jupiter for treats, and will chase him away if treats and attention are being offered. We are therefore recommending that the birds be rehomed separately. Even though they have always been together, they are reaching sexual maturity and will only continue to become more competitive. Their separation in their new foster home has so far been successful.

Due to his personality and years without training, Neptune is going to need a caregiver who has a good knowledge and experience in working with these large parrots. He has a 2 year old's behavior traits, as he needs to be the center of attention and gets into lots of trouble by exploring the world around him. Despite his wing clipping, he still can fly a good distance.

If you are interested in adopting Neptune, please call and leave a message so that we may coordinate a visit.



“Abbi,” 31-yr-old m. blue-and-gold.

Abbi came to us after his second home in 30 yrs. In his early life, he sustained a traumatic injury, which resulted in the loss of his left eye and the use of his left wing, which was broken and never set, so he is not able to open and extend it.

Abbi shows significant signs of aggression toward women, although with men, he steps right up and loves to play, and is a remarkable companion parrot. Hillary Hankey, a well-known avian behaviorist, fostered Abbi for several months, after which time he was accepting of some women; however, his aggression toward them returned when he left Hillary's facility.

One of Abbi's favorite play behaviors is getting in your lap and playing with your fingers and hand while flipping himself on his back and having you tickle his feet. This just shows how wonderful he can be.

Abbi is a unique and amazing blue-and-gold macaw who will require a person with significant experience with larger parrots, as well as a good grasp on using positive reinforcement training with parrots.

Available for Adoption in San Diego/Southern California

Call 619 287-8200 or email adoption@peac.org to find out more about any of these birds!

Macaws (cont)



"Baby," 10-yr-old m. yellow-collared. Before being relinquished, Baby had not been let out of his cage, did not step up, and was on a high-fat diet of only sunflower seeds. A vet check after taking him in to PEAC was normal, despite his poor diet.

Baby is now eating a balanced diet and playing well with toys. He is out of his cage for about 10 hours a day. Baby is a very gentle bird. He sits with his foster mother every evening, watching television. He puts his beak around her finger but never bites. Baby enjoys playing with toys that he can shred and spends much of his time doing this. He says "Hello Baby" in a rather raucous voice but also has a very sweet "Hello". When no one is in the room he also makes other sweet, soft sounds which his foster family believes are sounds he hears from the other birds. He also enjoys being sung to at bedtime and bobs his head to Brahm's Lullaby) In fact, he becomes annoyed when he doesn't get to hear this.

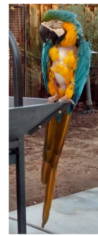
Baby enjoys human interaction and gets along with both men and women, quickly adapting after being introduced to them. He readily steps up. Although he can be very loud at times, He is a sweet, fun guy looking for his forever home.



"Iggy," 11-yr-old f. blue-and-gold. Iggy was purchased at a flea market in New Orleans, LA. On arriving at ARC, a PEAC foster volunteer's facility, she was very frightened of her new surroundings and for almost a week did not want to leave her cage. We slowly offered her sunflower seeds to entice her out, but she would just take them

and drop them, so she turned out not to be very food motivated.

Iggy has come a long way in the last several months since coming into PEAC. While she has her days when she wants to be left alone, she has as many when she is a real love sponge. She will always step up, even on her "moody" days. She likes riding in the car, and loves spending the day outdoors in the aviary. Iggy has a fairly large vocabulary, including Hello, Hi, What, Is that better, I love you, Good girl, and Night-night., as well as her native Macaw-ese. She loves to laugh in a human woman's voice, which she does to tell you she is happy! She gets along with dogs and other birds. Iggy is still learning to trust and has a bit of a way to go, but with the right person and the use of consistent positive reinforcement training, she will be an amazing companion for someone looking for a large parrot.



"Willow," 22-yr-old f. blue-and-gold. Willow came to PEAC from the Dept. of Animal Services after being found on a rooftop. She has some feather loss on her chest. Willow immediately converted over to a pelleted diet and prefers fruit over veggies, so we are baking the latter into her birdie bread. She loves her afternoon nuts. This little girl loves being the center of attention in

a public place, as well as going for drives in the car; and she is routinely featured at the Temecula Petco, our adoption venue on the 3rd Sunday of each month. When not starring at adoption fairs, Willow prefers to be outdoors at home, playing ball or taking "hose showers," or on her playstand, where her antics are hilarious.

She says "Hi lady," "Willow," "Hola," and "Step up," and she whispers a lot. She steps up very well for women, and although with a gentle and patient approach she does step up for men once in a while, her foster family is working on this. Willow is a very playful, loving girl, who will make a wonderful companion for someone who has the time and space for a macaw.

Amazons



"Pickle," 46-yr-old m. double yellow head. Pickle was relinquished to PEAC when his third owner developed allergies to bird dander. He was in his second home for 35 years and was originally turned over to PEAC when his elderly owners could no longer care for him.

Pickle loves his foraging toys and eats a well-rounded diet. He is very smart and in his second home he learned to perform the Chargers' chant, portions of Old MacDonald, roller skating, riding a bird-sized scooter, playing basketball, turning in a circle, and spreading his wings on cue. Although he hasn't done these behaviors in a number of years, he would likely enjoy the interaction of re-learning them with a new family.

He is somewhat reserved at first, although he started stepping up after only 2-3 days in his new foster home. He is somewhat selective about which men he allows to be close to him. He is generally a very quiet Amazon, even in the presence of other Amazons. He's an amazing fellow; still very active, and climbs all over his cage and around his play areas. Despite his age, Pickle may live up to another 30 years in good health, continuing to bring happiness to the people whose lives he touches. There are many advantages to adopting an older bird; and older birds can certainly bond with a new owner, just as young ones do.

PEAC thanks the following Avian Board-certified veterinarians, who have generously agreed to provide discounts on veterinary care for our program birds:

Dr. Jeffrey Jenkins, San Diego 619.260.1412

Dr. Brian Loudis, Encinitas 760.634.2022

Dr. Todd Cecil, La Mesa 619.462.4800



**Avian & Exotic
Animal Hospital**
Serving San Diego's
Birds and Exotic Pets
Since 1987
Jeffrey R. Jenkins DVM, Dipl. ABVP (Avian)
and
Jane Stout, VMD
1276 Morena Blvd., San Diego 92110
619 260-1412
www.drexotic.com - facebook.com/aeahsd



ALL PETS ANIMAL HOSPITAL
BRIAN LOUDIS, DVM, ABVP
Diplomat, American Board of Veterinary Practitioners
760-634-2022
www.allpetsanimal.com
285 N. El Camino Real #105 Encinitas, CA 92024

Todd R Cecil, DVM, DABVP-Avian
Board Certified Specialist in Avian Medicine

Complete daytime & emergency medical/surgical services
for exotic and avian patients.

La Mesa 5232 Jackson Dr. 91941
Chula Vista 885 Canarios Court 91910

619 462-4800
www.pescsandiego.com exotics@pescsandiego.com



~ We thank our PEAC volunteers and supporters for all the sacrifices they make for our organization! ~

PARROT EDUCATION & ADOPTION CENTER 2016 SEMINAR SCHEDULE

"People protect what they love. We need to provide the information so that they can love."
- Jean-Michel Cousteau

We encourage everyone to attend our Volunteer and Adoption Required Seminar, "Understanding this Unique Wild Companion Pet," which is a comprehensive seminar for everyone, incorporating the latest information on everything parrot, from anatomy and behavior to care and enrichment. To ensure that the education in this seminar is disseminated in the most effective way, it will now be held one-on one, or at most, in small groups, at the home and ARC parrot facility of the Director of PEAC. To register, leave a message at 619 287-8200, and we will get back to you to discuss possible dates/times. On the last Sunday of each month, there will be a seminar with special topics at 5480 Gaines St., San Diego, the Dept of Animal Services.

Our first last-Sunday-of-the-month Special Topics Seminar will be held on 1/29/2017. Check back often on our website and Facebook page for the topic. We hope to see you then! The Volunteer and Adoption Required Seminar will continue to be scheduled as described above.

Seminar fees (per person/day):	PAY WHEN REGISTERED	AT THE DOOR
PEAC Members:	FREE!	\$5.00
Non-members:	\$10.00	\$15.00

Registration is due by the Wednesday prior to the seminar; no exceptions. Seminars are subject to cancellation if not enough people are registered by midnight Wednesday.

REGISTER ME!

Sign Me Up in Sunny San Diego for these 2016 Seminars:

DATE	TITLE	# PEOPLE	AMT
			\$
			\$
			\$

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Email: _____

Credit Card #: _____ (VISA MC AMEX, DISCOVER) Exp. ____/____

Signature (for credit cards) _____ CVV (3 digits on back of card) _____

Make checks payable to PEAC and mail with this form to PEAC, PO Box 600423, San Diego, CA 92160

Or fax credit card payment to 909 563-8418 or email credit card or PayPal to parroted@peac.org.

PEAC RIVERSIDE COUNTY 2016 SEMINARS

We encourage everyone to attend our Volunteer / Adoption Required Seminar, "Understanding this Unique Wild Companion Pet" which is a comprehensive seminar for everyone, incorporating the latest information on "everything parrot," from anatomy and behavior to care and enrichment.

Our seminar will be held on an as-requested basis. If you would like to attend our seminar in Riverside County, please call us at (619) 287-8200 and we will return your call with available dates.

"Understanding this Unique Wild Companion Pet"
(required for adoption and volunteering)

Seminar fees (per person/day):	PAY WHEN REGISTERED	AT THE DOOR
PEAC Members:	FREE!	\$5.00
Non-members:	\$10.00	\$15.00

Registration is due by the Wednesday prior to the seminar; no exceptions. Seminars are subject to cancellation if not enough people are registered by midnight Wednesday.

REGISTER ME!

Sign Me Up in Wild, Wild Wildomar for these 2016 Seminars:

DATE	TITLE	# PEOPLE	AMT
			\$
			\$
			\$

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Email: _____

Credit Card #: _____ (VISA MC AMEX, DISCOVER) Exp. ____/____

Signature (for credit cards) _____ CVV (3 digits on back of card) _____

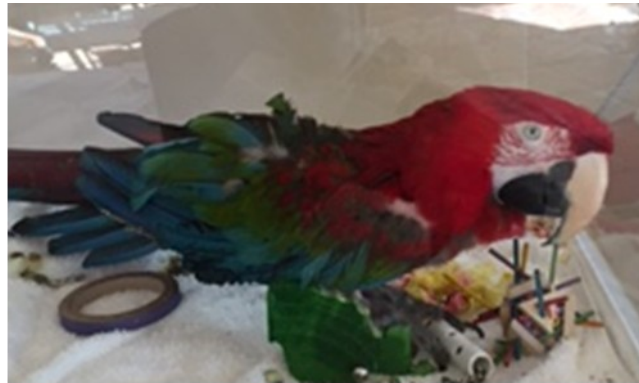
Make checks payable to PEAC and mail with this form to PEAC, PO Box 600423, San Diego, CA 92160

Or fax credit card payment to 909 563-8418 or email credit card or PayPal to parroted@peac.org.

UPDATE ON BLAZE (continued from page 2)

Blaze is due to have the pin in her wing removed this coming week, and she is able to shower again, on a perch that's 12" from the floor in case of a fall, although she does prefer standing on a mat on the shower floor. She loves playing with her ball and other foot toys, which she picks up in her beak and throws around. Her skin and feather color are becoming brilliant, and her sweet personality is beginning to come out. And one of our members is interested in her and has driven 600 miles round trip to meet her to see if they are compatible!

We want to give a special thanks to all of the people who have made donations specifically for "Blazie." In addition to the overwhelming response with a cage and numerous cash donations for her veterinary care, we are also extremely grateful to Karen Stacy and San Diego Plastics, Inc., who so generously custom made a 24x48x24 clear acrylic "cage" on only two days' notice and donated it to PEAC for Blaze. (Please see page 12 for their logo and website.) Had we bought this, it would easily have cost \$2000-\$3000. Her medical bills to date amount to \$5000, but after such a sad start, things are looking way up for Blaze's future!



"Yo y Mis Pericos"
(Me and My Parrots)
Frida Kahlo, 1941

PEAC will have a booth at the 6th annual Jingle Paws Walk for Pets on December 3, 2016. Jingle Paws is put on by the ACES Foundation, a 501(c)3 that raises money for the El Cajon Animal Shelter, a no-kill facility. Registration for the walk starts at 8; the actual walk is from 9:30-noon. There'll be pictures with Santa, a silent auction, pet/owner costume contest, door prizes and much, much more! Come see us at the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College!

VOLUNTEER MEETING

- The next Volunteer Meeting will be on January 15.
- 11:30a Advisory Meeting. General Volunteer Meeting to immediately follow. DAS on Gaines St.
- Please submit suggested topics to Eric or Melanie by 7 days prior to the meeting.

OUTREACH EVENTS IN TEMECULA!

PEAC is appearing at Petco Adoption Fairs in Temecula!
Come check out our booth!

There will be no event in November or December

1/15/17 Sunday 2:00-5:00 pm

Program birds will be present for you to meet and greet!

Location:

Petco at the Promenade Mall in Temecula
40474 Winchester Road
Temecula, CA 92591
951 296-0388

BRING YOUR FRIENDS! WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

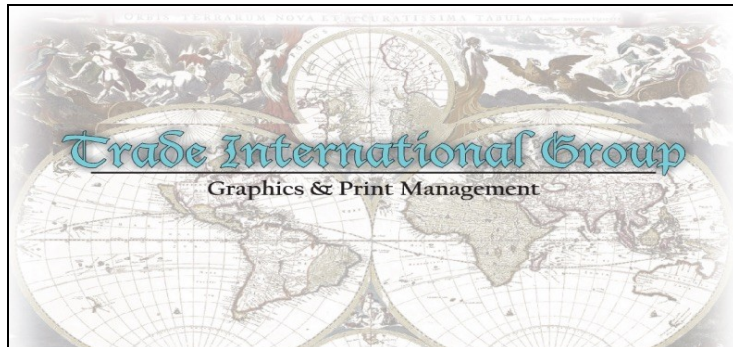
Thank you to the following people
who have so generously donated to the birds of PEAC:

Alan Crouse	Jeffrey Beckett
Allison Schacht	Jonathan Poh
Ann Palik	Judy Michaels
April Adcock	Kathy Fraga
Arlene Gussin	Kelly Flynn
Audrey Reisenauer	Lisa Stevens
Catherine Bourne	Maria Brinson
Charla Mora	Mary Taylor
Curtis Froschheiser	Michelle Warn
Daniel Kuttner	Rene Pina
David Hiipakka	Ronald and Nancy Anderson
Diane Koczur	Stephen Hartfield
Elisa Patkotak	Steve Velasco
Gale Chan	Tina Hauer
Jessica Niehoff	Tracey Janssen
Julia Rues	Rhonda Mitchell
Linda Stuart	Michelle Armbrust

Arthur Lazanoff, in Memory of Bubbles
Leroy H. Polliard, in Honor of Lynn C. Conley

PEAC would like to give special thanks to the Thiem family. Not only did it take an extraordinary family to open their hearts and home to Surfer (now Santiago), the scarlet macaw with arteriosclerosis and foot arthritis, but the Thiems have also donated their time and expertise in website design and videography, as well as the services of their printing company (Trade International Group) to us, and have printed hundreds of business cards, Avian Basic Care brochures, PEAC brochures, and fundraising materials, and now our hard copy newsletter in color, at no charge to us. Please look to them for your printing needs, as a way of saying thanks for their generosity to PEAC.

www.tradeintlgroup.com



PEAC is extremely grateful to Karen Stacy and San Diego Plastics, Inc., who so very generously donated a custom-made clear acrylic "cage" for our injured greenwing macaw, Blaze, to live in while she recuperated from a fractured wing, low blood calcium, and atrophy of a previously broken and improperly healed femur that was never set and healed.



Please look to them for your plastic needs, including plastic sheeting,

SAN DIEGO PLASTICS, INC.

them for your plastic needs, including plastic custom acrylic

products, plastic polish and scratch remover, marine plastics, custom aquariums, and much more!

(619) 477-4855

www.sdplastics.com

Testing for Zinc in Parrot Toys, Play Gyms, and Cages

by Ed Harris

Originally Published in *Companion Parrot Quarterly*, Issue #53, Summer 2001

Revised November 12, 2006

Last fall, I became concerned that our new baby Timneh African Grey parrot Scooter might have come down with zinc poisoning. His symptoms were consistent with this diagnosis – lethargy, loss of appetite, excessive urination, and diarrhea. And his favorite thing to chew on is the metal parts of toys or the quick link connectors that fasten the toys to his cage or play gym. It turned out that he was fine, but I started to wonder how prevalent zinc was in parrot toys and play gyms. Before I talk about how to test for zinc in parrot toys and play gyms, it is worth briefly talking about the problem of zinc toxicity (also called zinc toxicosis) in pet birds. (It should be noted that dogs are also quite susceptible to zinc poisoning, usually from swallowing metal parts that are coated with zinc.)

The Diagnosis of Zinc Toxicity in Pet Birds

Zinc is a heavy metal that is used to coat iron or steel in a process called galvanization to prevent rust. Galvanized wire and toy parts are common sources of zinc. Unfortunately, parrots are often drawn to shiny objects. They also have a lot of spare time to play with, suck on, chew, and destroy anything within reach.

Signs and symptoms of zinc toxicity can be very similar to other illnesses. The bird just feels bad and may regurgitate, have diarrhea, excess urination, or reduced appetite, and lose weight. The bird can become anemic and develop a bluish coloration due to lack of oxygen. In severe cases, the bird can become weak and develop seizures. Feather picking can also result. Feather color changes can also occur.

Diagnosis of zinc toxicity is done by a combination of x-rays and blood tests for zinc levels. In some cases the x-rays may show metal present in the bird's digestive tract. Most laboratory values are normal with zinc toxicity, which may lead to an incorrect diagnosis of a "mild infection." Treatment is often with injections, followed later by an oral drug to bind and remove the zinc. This is known as chelation therapy. A laxative may also be used to help remove the metal by flushing the digestive tract. If caught early, treatment is usually successful. The issue of zinc toxicity is very controversial within the avian community. Some vets feel that the problem is under-diagnosed and there are a significant number of cases of zinc toxicity that are diagnosed as other problems, especially by non-avian vets. On the other hand, other vets feel that there is little evidence that the problem occurs with any significant frequency.

This article does not take a stand on this important issue and I feel that this is an appropriate topic for discussion with your avian vet. The focus of this article is to provide information on how to test for zinc in parrot toys if you are concerned with this issue and what to do if you do find zinc coated metal parts on your parrot's toys, play gyms, or cages.

Testing for Zinc in Parrot Toys and Play Gyms

The first question you need to ask yourself is whether or not you even want to deal with the potential problem of zinc coated metal parts. If your bird does not chew on the metal parts of toys, then you don't have a problem even if the toy parts are zinc coated. I am not a fanatic on this issue – my budgie, Billy, does not chew on metal toy parts and I have chosen to leave his play toys and play gyms unchanged, even though I know that many of his toys contain zinc plated parts. There are many great parrot toys on the market that are either constructed of wood, plastic, and leather parts only or are made entirely with stainless steel. There is a partial list of companies that sell only parrot safe toys at the end of this article, as well as some companies that sell stainless steel components you can use to reduce or eliminate the potential problem. For example, if you have a play gym that has screw eyes to fasten toys, it is very likely that the screw eyes themselves are zinc coated. Rather than go through the potentially dangerous process of testing the screw eyes for zinc, it probably makes much more sense to simply replace the screw eyes with stainless steel screw eyes from one of the companies listed at the end of this article. Another easy to deal with problem is quick links. If you are unsure whether or not the quick links used to fasten the toys to the cage or play gym are safe, you can replace the quick links with stainless steel quick links. This can get fairly pricey however if you have a lot of quick links to replace.

Another very easy and very cheap alternative to quick links is to buy inexpensive cable ties from a hardware store. These typically come in bags of 10 to 100 ties and are very inexpensive. The disadvantage is that the ties are not reusable: if you need to move a toy, you will need to cut the tie and replace it.

(continued on page 15)



The "Chicken" Memorial Sponsorship Program

Many people have been asking why, in a parrot rescue organization, requests are being made to sponsor chickens! Here is that story:

Chicken, a Festive Amazon (*Amazona festiva*) was imported in about 1970, as an adult, wild-caught bird. He was first owned by an elderly woman, a chain smoker, who had him for about 15 years and taught him to be a phenomenal talker. When she passed away, Chicken was left to her two sons, neither of whom liked him, and they kept him in isolation. Their sister rescued Chicken and gave him to a vet tech at the hospital where he was a client. The tech kept Chicken for a few years, until becoming engaged to someone who was allergic. In 1993, she called Layne Dicker, who would later become involved with the now-defunct PEAC Anchorage Chapter. Layne was doing bird adoptions, and he immediately fell in love with Chicken. He said that Chicken was affectionate, personable, and completely trustworthy. He would sit on Layne's shoulder for an hour with his head down, getting scratched, and if Layne stopped, he'd nibble at his ear and make a little growling sound. In 1998, Chicken passed away from lung cancer, and Layne never completely got over his passing.

PEAC has set up a memorial fund to help homeless birds with stories like Chicken's. But we can't do this without your help. Just one of our Amazons or macaws requires a new toy at least once a month, at a cost of \$40 to \$100, in addition to food costs. And we have numerous birds of all sizes waiting to enter our program! We are appealing to you as a fellow parrot lover to help us help these homeless birds. Please consider enrolling in our Sponsorship Program. For a monthly contribution you can sponsor one or more of our birds. In return, you'll receive the satisfaction of knowing that a parrot's life was enriched by your donation, and your name will appear, if you wish, on our Donor List in the quarterly newsletter. All donations are tax-deductible and directly benefit our birds.

Simply fill out the enrollment form and return it with your first donation, by check. For credit card or Paypal donations, please leave a message at 619 287-8200 and we will return your call as soon as possible.. For your convenience, each month afterward you will receive an envelope in which to return your donation. The birds are waiting and thank you for your contribution!

THE CHICKEN MEMORIAL SPONSORSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Sponsorship Levels (monthly):

- \$50/mo. Macaw/Large Cockatoo \$25/mo. African Grey/Amazon
 \$15/mo. Mini Macaw, Eclectus \$10/mo. Conures, other small species
 I wish to remain anonymous. Do not print my name on the Sponsorship list.
 I am unable to give a monthly donation, but I would like to help with a one-time donation of \$ _____.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ E-mail: _____

Make check payable to PEAC and mail with the registration form to
 PEAC, P.O. Box 600423, San Diego, CA 92160.

Testing for Zinc in Parrot Toys, Play Gyms, and Cages (cont from page 13)

One cautionary note: many of the larger parrots can easily chew through nylon cable ties and potentially swallow the resulting small pieces. If your bird is a chewer, you should avoid the use of cable ties and stay with stainless steel quick links. In any case, if you do choose to use nylon cable ties, be sure to make sure that the resulting loop is small enough so that it doesn't become a hazard to your bird.

A Note about Parrot Cages

Parrot cages are available in a wide variety of finishes. The most common finishes are chrome, brass, painted metal, powder coated metal, and stainless steel. Stainless steel cages are completely safe, but are substantially more expensive than other options. Many powder coated cages come from major manufacturers and are fairly expensive. It is my understanding that the powder coating used in these cages is zinc free and even if your bird chews the powder coating off the metal, the steel underneath is not zinc plated. That makes powder coated cages a good choice.

When you get a small parrot cage from a pet store, you are much more likely to find cages that are either painted metal, or brass, or chrome plated. Unfortunately, the methods described below cannot be used to test for zinc in either painted or powder coat cages. I am looking into ways to test paint for zinc, but have not yet determined a simple way to do this. It is worth noting, however, that even if there is a small amount of zinc in the paint; this is not as bad as zinc plated metals which are essentially pure zinc.

Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc. Cages that are brass plated will tarnish over time and since the plating is not too strong, it can easily be chewed off by an aggressive parrot. While the zinc content is lower in a brass plated cage than a zinc plated cage, brass plated cages should be avoided.

Chrome plated cages can either be nickel or zinc plated. As described later in this article, it can be difficult to tell by looking at the plating. If you have a chrome plated cage, I recommend testing it for zinc using the methods described below. I would be especially concerned if the cage is "home made" by a small shop since they are much less likely to be aware of the zinc problem than a large, reputable manufacturer.

Is It Stainless Steel?

Depending on whom you purchased your toys or play gyms from, you may already have safe toys. Testing for stainless steel is very easy. Take a magnet and see if the quick link, screw eye, chain, metal wire, etc. is attracted to the magnet. Stainless steel is not magnetic, so if the metal part does not stick to magnet, the odds are very good that the part is stainless steel and is completely safe for your bird. Note, however, that some lower grades of stainless steel are *slightly* magnetic. They will be attracted to a magnet but not at all like a regular steel part. So far the only parts I have seen which have this property are some metal o-rings I purchased to fix some toys.

One cautionary note however: while I haven't yet seen any toys made with aluminum parts, it is possible that some toys are made with aluminum wire or rings. Aluminum is also not magnetic. I am not aware of any safety problems with aluminum and birds, but since I am not qualified to address this issue, I would suggest either discussing this issue with your avian vet or avoiding aluminum if possible. Stainless steel and aluminum look very different. Typically stainless steel has a fairly bright finish (although not as shiny as some chrome plated metals), while aluminum is usually a dull color. Also, aluminum is very soft. You can easily scratch aluminum with a knife while stainless steel will be very scratch resistant.

Can I Just Ask the Toy or Play Gym Company?

It is my belief that no toy or play gym company wants to put out toys that are dangerous to pet birds. Some of the companies go to great pains to make sure that their toys or play gyms are as safe as possible for birds. Unfortunately, for the most part, parrot toy and play gym making is mostly a cottage industry.

(continued on page 18)

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT:



Avian Behavior International



Diamond Avian



The Laughing Parrot
(coupon code PEAC15)

Pet Terrific



Petsmart



Rebecca K. O'Connor/CAITEC
/Project Parrot Positive



Petco Foundation



Jungle Toys

The Purring Parrot



Bird Toys Etc Bird Toys Etc



Avian Rehabilitation
Center



Come visit us on the web!

“Like” us on Facebook

[Parrot-Education-and-Adoption-Center](https://www.facebook.com/Parrot-Education-and-Adoption-Center)

Follow us on Twitter

@PEACsandiego

Check the updated calendar and interesting articles on our website

www.peac.org



SUPPORT



Donate now by filling in the information and mailing to
PEAC

PO Box 600423

San Diego, CA 92160

membership@peac.org

In order for PEAC to continue

the work it does in Southern CA we need your financial gift. No matter how small the donation it all will go to help PEAC continue its ongoing projects focusing on education in all things parrot and just as importantly financially assist with the care of the parrots that make up our foster flock. At no other time in PEAC history going back to 1998 have we ever needed your support more. Each year we see more and more

parrots needing assistance in being rehomed either by entering our foster flock or obtaining our help in locating another organization.

Credit Card number

Exp Date

CVV Number

Billing Zip Code

Name and email

Testing for Zinc in Parrot Toys, Play Gyms, and Cages (cont from page 15)

Many of the people who make parrot toys are simply not aware of the problem with zinc toxicity. And even if they are aware of the problem, they may not want to use stainless steel parts because they can be difficult to find and they can add significantly to the cost of the toys. Stainless steel is also harder to cut and work with than less expensive metals.

If you are ordering toys from a mail order or Internet company or from a local pet store you should certainly ask if the toys contain any zinc-coated parts. My experience has been that most dealers assume their toys are safe but unless the toys are specifically noted as being made only with stainless steel parts, they have no way of knowing for sure what the toys are actually made of. If you buy toys from a bird fair, you sometimes are buying directly from a local company who makes the toys and you can ask them about how their toys are made. However, in many cases the folks who make the toys simply do not know. If you are buying toys or play gyms directly from the manufacturer, you should directly ask the question about how the toys are constructed. However, as I recently learned even the best-intentioned toy or play gym manufacturer may be unaware that their toys are not completely safe. I recently purchased a beautifully designed wooden play gym from a very reputable manufacturer. Before ordering I specifically asked about the metal parts. I was told that the metal parts were all stainless steel. However, when I received the gym I did the magnet test and quickly discovered that none of the parts were stainless steel. When I called the company to ask about this I learned that the company thought that it had been purchasing stainless steel parts for their play gyms. When I explained that the parts were not stainless steel, the play gym company immediately contacted the vendor who supplies their metal parts, including screw eyes, chain, and quick links. The play gym company called me back to indicate that although the parts were not in fact stainless steel, they were nickel plated steel and were completely safe.

I then checked all of the metal parts using the method I will describe later in this article. It turned out that the chain and quick links that they were using were in fact nickel-plated steel and were safe. However, the screw eyes used for holding toys were zinc-plated and thus not safe for birds. I then called the company back with my findings. I was very pleased with their response. They apologized for the problem and indicated that they would immediately send me out replacement stainless steel screw eyes for the two play gyms I had purchased from them (which they did). Also, they decided to stop shipping play gyms until they could replace the screw eyes with stainless steel ones. This is the kind of company I like dealing with.

So what can you conclude from this? If a major toy manufacturer indicates that all of their metal parts are safe, there is a reasonably good chance that they are, but you are not guaranteed that this is the case unless all parts are stainless steel (non-magnetic). At the end of this article I will give some guidelines for visually inspecting metal parts that can help you identify at least some unsafe parts.

Testing for Zinc Coating

According to the American Zinc Association, zinc is almost never a component of steel, but rather a coating to prevent rust. Even if steel is partially made from recycled metals that are zinc coating, the re-melting process burns off the zinc. As an impurity, zinc causes steel to become brittle so it is not a component of the steel itself.

The good news is that since zinc is a coating it is relatively easy to test for zinc chemically. The bad news is that the chemical used to test for zinc is hydrochloric acid, which is dangerous stuff to work with. While hydrochloric acid is generally not available to the general public, there is a somewhat diluted form of hydrochloric acid called muriatic acid which is easy to obtain and a little less dangerous to work with.

WARNING: Any handling of muriatic acid for testing for zinc should be done outside in a well-ventilated area. You should be wearing rubber gloves and lab type eye goggles with sides. You should also wear long pants and a long sleeve shirt to minimize the chance of getting any acid on your skin. Also, you should have water readily available so you can quickly wash off any acid that accidentally splashes on your skin or clothing.

(continued next page)

Testing for Zinc in Parrot Toys, Play Gyms, and Cages (cont from page 18)

If in spite of these warnings you want to test for zinc, here are recommended steps to follow:

1. Muriatic acid can be purchased at most paint stores or hardware stores that have a paint department. Typically the smallest quantity you can purchase will be in a quart bottle. It is not very expensive.
2. You can test for zinc using a single drop of acid, so it is safer to transfer a small amount of the muriatic acid to a small container. I recommend that you obtain a new empty glass medicine bottle with a dropper built in. I was easily able to purchase one for 50 cents at my local pharmacy.
3. Working outside wearing protective gear, transfer a small amount of muriatic acid to the medicine bottle, being careful to not breathe in the fumes. Since the top opening of the medicine bottle is small, you should use a small plastic funnel to pour the acid into the medicine bottle. Do not use a metal funnel unless it is stainless steel – the acid will probably dissolve it. Alternatively, you can pour a small amount of the acid into a glass measuring cup with a pouring spout and then carefully pour it into the medicine bottle. After the transfer is complete, you should close the bottle and wash the outside thoroughly with water (as well as the funnel or measuring cup) to remove any remaining acid. This is actually the most dangerous part of the testing. Once the acid is transferred to the medicine bottle you will only be using a drop or two at a time.
4. To actually test things for zinc, you will need two things: 1) a bucket filled with cold water which you will use to dunk toys and other metal parts to quickly wash off the test acid, and 2) a glass plate or baking dish which is where you will place the item you are testing. (See below for suggestions on how to test cages.)
5. When muriatic acid is put onto a metal part with zinc coating, you will see an immediate and vigorous foaming reaction. The area where the acid touches the zinc will sometimes turn almost black, although this does not always happen. In order to get an idea of what type of reaction you are looking for, I suggest you obtain a galvanized roofing nail from your hardware store, building supply store, or your friendly neighborhood handyperson. Working outside and wearing protective gear put the nail on the glass plate and put a single drop of acid on the nail. You will get a vigorous chemical reaction. Then try the same thing with something you know is stainless steel, such as a piece of tableware. You will get absolutely no reaction when the item is stainless steel. This will also be the case if the item is nickel plated rather than zinc plated.
6. Use the same procedure to test toys. Note that a toy may have several metal components, for example, chain, quick links, a metal loop fastening chain to a plastic object, a metal wire used to string together wood or plastic parts, etc. As soon as you have tested the metal parts of the toy, immediately dunk the toy in the bucket of water to dilute the acid. You should thoroughly rinse the toy later before using it with your bird.
7. Play gyms usually have metal screw eyes or other metal parts for hanging toys. Remove one of each type of metal part from the play gym and test it for zinc. This includes any nuts or bolts that hold things together. One of my plastic play gyms has metal toy hangers made out of stainless steel, which is great. However, the toy hanger is fastened to the play gym using a regular nut and a wing nut, both of which turned out to be zinc coated!
8. Testing chrome plated cages can be a bit tricky. Since it is not safe to test for zinc indoors, you need to move the cage outside to test it. I have noticed that most cages that are chrome plated are small portable cages, so moving it outside is not a problem. If you have a large parrot cage, you will need to move it outside, which may be a bit of a challenge, especially if the cage won't fit through the door! In any case, once the cage is outside, remove any perches or toys that might be damaged by water. Have a garden hose handy to rinse the cage after testing. All you need to do is put one drop of acid on the cage bars and see if you get the zinc reaction described above. As soon as you do the test, thoroughly hose down the cage to make sure that all of the acid has been rinsed away.

(to be continued in our next issue)

BEAK TO TAIL
PARROT EDUCATION & ADOPTION CENTER®
P.O. Box 600423
SAN DIEGO, CA 92160-0423



Parrot Education & Adoption Center®

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 3, 2016

Jingle Paws (see page 10)
(San Diego)

January 15, 2017

Petco Adoption Fair
(Temecula)

January 29, 2017

Specialty Seminar, topic TBA
(San Diego)