



Help Build ARC (Avian Rehabilitation Center) by Donating to Our Globalgiving Project

According to the latest statistics there are **20.3 million** companion parrots in the United States today. The number in 1990 was **11.6 million**. These two numbers alone show how fast the problem is growing. Most parrot rescues and sanctuaries fill up within a few months of opening their doors.

Why are there so many homeless parrots? There are so very many reasons. Here are a few:

Someone becomes too ill to care for their parrot and/or passes away without provision for the parrot in their will/trust, and the family doesn't want the bird.

A parrot owner undergoes a lifestyle change, such as a new baby, retirement, going away to college, a job requiring travel, the need to downsize ones living arrangement to someplace where the bird is not allowed, a decrease in income, a boyfriend or girlfriend who the parrot hates, or vice-versa; this list is endless.

Someone buys a parrot from a breeder or pet shop without researching pet parrots in general or the specific species they want, and the seller of the bird does little to prepare the buyer for parrot ownership. Once the realization sets in that parrots are messy, noisy, and destructive, and without proper guidance and a great deal of work they can become aggressive, feather-plucking screamers, the next realization that sets in is that this person needs to "get rid of this thing!"

Many people buy parrots for the wrong reasons: as a status symbol, or as a holiday gift for a child, or because they think their existing parrot wants a mate. We even had a family who wanted to adopt two of our macaws because it was much cheaper than buying them at a pet store, and they planned to use them to make money, by training them to perform at birthday parties!

Once, we had a woman relinquish her parrot to us because she had refurnished her home, and the parrot's colors no longer matched her couch!

The single most important factor that complicates all of this is that **PARROTS ARE SO LONG-LIVED!!** While one may buy a puppy or kitten on impulse, without considering its future with

you as an adult dog or cat, the “problem” usually resolves itself in 10-15 years, when the animal passes from old age. With a parrot, though, this can take from 30-80 YEARS!! As a general rule, you will “age out of the system” long before your parrot does!

There is one more complicating factor to buying a young parrot. It is a myth that in order to have a parrot “bond” to you, you must buy it as a baby. We have seen, time and time again, older parrots falling in love with and bonding to their new owners. Moreover, most people who buy a baby parrot are not prepared for its so-called “puberty stage.” A parrot reaches sexual maturity between around ages 2 to 6, depending on the species, and wow - - if you’ve never experienced this, and you think life with a teen-ager is difficult, *watch out!!* Your little sweetheart of a parrot, the gentlest, loving, sweet being on earth, may suddenly turn into a screaming, aggressive, you-hating, feather plucking *monster bird* during its mating season, and in some species, this occurs twice a year! Many parrots are given up because of this Jekyll/Hyde change that their owners think is unsolvable.

The problem is not going away; in fact, it is going to increase in the coming years as the Baby Boomer population ages and their parrots need to be re-homed. If euthanasia of thousands of these highly intelligent animals whom we love is to be avoided, parrot welfare organizations such as the Avian Rehabilitation Center will need direct funding, from generous people like you, our supporters and supporters-to-be; and from the avian veterinary community, in the form of discounted medical care, as well as direct donations.

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One important solution to this staggering problem is education. Education of current parrot owners on proper physical and emotional care of their birds; education of prospective owners on the amount of time and effort, as well as the lifestyle changes, necessary to own a parrot; education of the general public on the plight of companion parrot overpopulation vs. wild parrot extinction and near-extinction; and finally, education of exotic bird breeders on the need for responsible breeding. Another is donations to increase infrastructure to support the rapid growth that will be necessary over the next 10 years.

ARC’s mission is threefold. Our first priority is education as a preventative measure to cut down on the number of unwanted parrots. We take part in educational outreach events at schools, pet-adoption expos, and community fairs. Next year, we will also be starting our Pet Therapy Program, with outreach to patients in nursing homes, children’s hospitals, and physical rehab centers.

Our second priority is rescue, rehabilitation, and rehoming, when possible, of homeless exotic birds. Unlike dogs and cats, parrots require daily interaction. Their level of intelligence is one reason people choose them as pets, but it is also a leading reason that they are no longer wanted and relinquished. All in all, companion birds require a great deal of work, both physical and mental. ARC works with the large macaws and cockatoos, which are often the most difficult parrot species to rehome. We further specialize in birds of those species with feather destructive behavior and other behavioral problems. ARC has developed a protocol,

with the guidance of our certified avian veterinarian and based on the tenets of Bonnie Kenk's procedures for treatment of feather destructive behavior, which we have used with nearly a 100% success rate. Once our experienced avian behaviorists have succeeded with a bird's mental and physical rehabilitation, we place it up for adoption. Those birds who are not adoptable, as well as certain species including hyacinth macaws, blue-throated macaws, palm cockatoos, and Major Mitchell cockatoos, remain here in the sanctuary as members of ARC's Resident Flock and either take part in our therapeutic or educational outreach programs, or just live out an amazing new life in their permanent home here at ARC.

With the ever-increasing need for exotic bird rescues and sanctuaries, ARC needs to expand its facilities, both with macaw-sized indoor cages for sleeping, and with additional permanent outdoor aviaries for the birds' daytime use. Although we do have mister systems in place that run in the outdoor aviaries when the temperature exceeds 80 degrees F, we also require additional large play-trees for our birds to use in the "bird playroom" on days when the weather prohibits outdoor time.

The day-to-day expense involved in caring for these large parrots is quite remarkable. ARC pays the salaries of two part-time employees who provide late morning and early afternoon care for the birds and their housing. Nuts, pellets, salad, and sprouts make up the birds' daily diet, costing around \$11.00 per day. Toys, proper perching, and enrichment are very important to these highly intelligent beings, and their cost breaks down to appx \$18.00 per day. Peacocks and rare, exotic breeds of chickens, as well as certain types of cranes help round out ARC's sanctuary and educational programs; and housing expansion is necessary as these flocks grow.

The final aspect of ARC's mission is grant funding. We will start accepting grant applications on 1/1/2018; and through your donations and the Eric Kern Foundation and Trust, we will be able to fund grants from \$100 up to \$5000 to other avian 501(c)3 organizations, to assist with their capital expenditures. Grants will be restricted as to what they will fund. Daily operating expenses will not be covered by grant dollars. So often, rescues and sanctuaries are in need of newer cages and outside aviaries to provide the birds under their care with fresh air and sunlight. Though we often think the birds' daily needs, we often forget what is needed to provide for them indirectly, such as a refrigerator, storage containers for pellets and nuts, and quite possibly a dishwasher so that good hygiene can be kept with regard to the birds' food and water dishes. The second type of grant we will offer is assistance to clients of avian veterinary offices who have an emergent need for diagnosis and stabilization of their companion parrot, but cannot afford it. After teleconferencing with the veterinary office, ARC will determine whether to grant up to \$400 directly to the treating physician to assist with the bird's care.

Our founder, president of the board of directors, and financial supporter, Eric Kern, has been working with parrots for over 20 years. He has implemented many changes and improvements to the care we provide to our birds. Eric had a career as a grant writer and administrator for 17 years, with a high success rate in securing funding. The business world has changed since he received his MBA, with social media and the internet being the most

significant changes that have occurred. While serving as the Executive Director of another parrot rescue, he introduced them to the Globalgiving Platform; and in the year prior to his resigning, he secured \$20,000 in donations, so he has extensive experience in online fundraising. Globalgiving was instrumental in bringing that rescue out of the dark and into the new reality of how fundraising is done. Please help Eric in making ARC a successful and beneficial organization, not only for the birds fortunate enough to come to them, but also for potential bird owners to learn all there is to know about parrots, from their care to interaction with them, so that their relationship may be one with a lifetime of memories.

ARC is a new organization with a mission that is close to all of our hearts, from our founder and each member of our board of directors, to our part-time employees. As much as any of us love our companion parrots, we know in our hearts that no exotic bird ever should have been brought or bred here and caged up. We, as a species, are responsible for their plight, and it's up to us to try to right this grave wrong. While nobody can save them all, the Avian Rehabilitation Center, through your generosity and our novel approach to rescue, along with our strong belief in working together with other parrot rescues, feels we can make a difference not only in a bird's life, but in the life of the person who has chosen it to be a part of them. Abbi, Angel, Guy, Kikki, Sinbad, China, Joey, Romeo and Juliet, and Neo and Trinity, as well as all of the other birds of ARC, current, future, Sanctuary Residents, and Adoptable, thank you for your kind generosity and support.



Expenditures (Jun - Oct 2017)

