



Angel Wings

A monthly journal for human angels who make a positive difference in companion birds' lives.

August 2012
Volume 7, Issue VIII

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WELCOME

Junior Angel Hannah D. from North Carolina

Angel Toys For Angels

August's Featured Toys



[Bell Paper Holder](#)
Medium Birds



[Rocket Duck](#)
Small to Medium Birds



[Busy Plate](#)
Medium to Large Birds

Check out all the
[Angel Toys for Angels](#)
now!

Happy 7th Anniversary Parrot Toy Angels
Founded August 6, 2005



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to us!!!
By Ilona Peterson & Lori M. Nelsen

We are SEVEN YEARS OLD!!!

May we boast? Just a teeny bit?

Ok...we know...officially it is our Anniversary, not birthday, but with birthdays you get CAKE!

What started with making a few toys for poor little Cassie (see Cassie's story here: [How PTA Was Hatched](#)) turned into a flurry of toy making by amazing Angels. The grand total to date is a show stopping 18,806 toys. These toys went to 117 rescues and sanctuaries. In addition to the toys, generous Angels donated money for food, cages, playpens and other necessities that made life easier not only for the birds, but for the hundreds of committed rescue people who scramble every month to make ends meet.

This year, there have been three very emotional rescues of hundreds of malnourished and unwell birds that were rescued just in the nick of time. There were filthy cages, rat infested areas, dirty water and other horrid conditions. We helped, but still much more is needed.

In addition to our Angels, PTA has found other *Angels* by joining forces with our Parrot Toy Angels Volunteers on [Facebook](#). Thank you for your generosity!

In the last 12 months, these were our projects:

[Florida Parrot Rescue](#) is a 501(c)3 all volunteer non-profit rescue with over 100 fosters and numerous birds in rescue. They also have a waiting list of parrots that need assistance.



More Florida Parrot Rescue photos, click [here](#)

[Wings of Love Bird Haven](#) - Red Oak, TX. PTA helped provide toys for the Portland, Tennessee Parrot hoarding of 116 rescued birds.



More Wings of Love photos, click [here](#)

[Florida Exotic Bird Sanctuary](#) provided safe haven to 16 parrots from the Troy, Ohio parrot hoarding situation. PTA helped to provide some of the first toys these parrots ever played with. FEBS is committed to raising public awareness regarding the moral responsibilities and physical demands of keeping parrots or other wild animals as pets.



More FEBS - Troy Birds photos, click [here](#)

Feathered Nest Bird Rescue - Brighton, Illinois is a non profit 501(c)3. Their goal is to educate, provide food, lodging and veterinary care at no cost to the owner or find forever homes for these parrots.



More Feathered Nest Bird Rescue photos, click [here](#)

[Two Feathers Wildlife Center](#) - Myakka City, FL started out with one cockatiel 20 years ago. They now protect over 100 exotic birds in about 20 aviaries. Their goal is to protect and rehabilitate exotic birds and native wildlife.



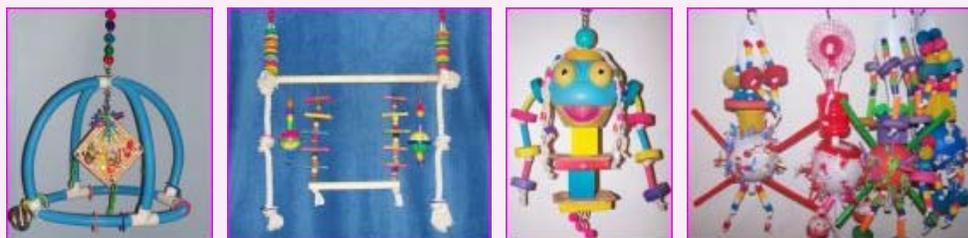
More Two Feathers Wildlife Center photos, click [here](#)

[A Parrot's Perch](#) - Springfield, MO was recently formed in 2010. They accept parrots for rehabilitation and placing into permanent homes. All surrendered parrots are kept in foster homes; receive veterinary care, a great diet and personal attention.



More A Parrot's Perch photos, click [here](#)

[A Helping Wing Parrot Rescue](#) - Blairstown, NJ is a home based 501(c)3 registered non-profit parrot rescue. The goal is to provide education and to find the best possible home with qualified individuals for every bird in need.



More A Helping Wing Parrot Rescue photos, click [here](#)

Wings Over the Rainbow - Montgomery County, Ohio - Supporting the Greater Dayton Human Society with the rescue of 139 Parrots from the Wings Over the Rainbow. The parrots are being held by the GDHS while the court case is still continuing.



More Wings Over the Rainbow photos, click [here](#)

[Nature First, Inc.](#) - Navarre, FL has been a 501(c)3 non-profit animal rescue organization since August 2001. Karen and her husband Mike have made their home an animal rescue center. Their goal is to build a combined indoor/outdoor aviary so the birds will have a more natural life as opposed to living in cages.



More photos of Nature First, Inc. coming soon

The reality is, there will always be another parrot in need, another sanctuary or rescue filled beyond capacity and worse, another call for help that we have to turn down. A few people can only do so much. Please find the time join us as an Angel or on Facebook.

Can't make toys?

Not a problem. We have a Toy Central with toys that can be purchased for the projects. No shipping cost to you.

Don't have time to look through all the toys?

No problem! We offer Chip-in on [Facebook](#). Even the smallest donation helps, and there is always someone willing to match your donation.

Looking for gifts?

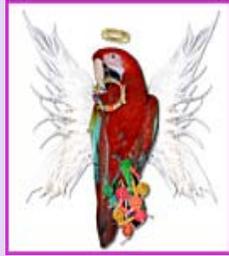
Are YOU lucky! We have two Auctions annually with wonderful gifts for you, your birds and your friends.

So, we blew out the candles on our cake and made a wish. Will you help make it come true? Join us...help just one bird...we guarantee joy in your heart when you ease one little bird's pain, make one little life happier.



ANGEL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Watch for upcoming events, news, website updates, etc. here



NEW NEW

ON THE SITE:

♥ [New Items](#) ♥

♥ [2012 Project Pictures](#) ♥



Figgy Pops
By Toni Fortin

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 cup steel cut oats
- 1/2 cup food processed figs (fresh or frozen)
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. red palm oil
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 cup chopped, shelled pumpkin seeds
- Paper lollipop sticks

Spray cookie sheet with a little olive oil. In a bowl combine flour and oats. Mix in the rest of the ingredients except the pumpkin seeds. Roll into 1" balls and pat down. Dough will be very thick. Press into chopped nuts. Insert a lollipop stick into flat balls. Bake at 350 for 15 minutes in the middle of the oven.

Yield: 26 pops
Pops freeze well.

From the Angel's Toy Chest

By Wyspur Kallis

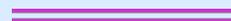


This awesome toy is 18" long with nine 1-1/2" square wood blocks and ten plastic whiffle balls all strung on stainless steel wire. Plastic chain is used to hang this large toy. It is suitable for large birds such as Cockatoos, Macaws and other birds similar in size. This toys is available for sale at www.parrottoyangels.com and every purchase goes toward helping birds in need.



Why buy a Bird Cage from Bird Cages Galore?? Because we do not "just sell" top quality cages at reasonable prices, provide free shipping and a free toy with each cage; we offer first rate customer service and will answer your questions about most bird-related matters. Visit us on the web, browse our selection, join our discussion forum and sign up for our free Newsletter, [The Caged Bird Courier](#).

We are here to help, because we care about your bird!!





On Being An Angel....

♥ What a warm, good feeling it is to be a part of an organization that helps these birds...Toni F.

♥ A Lot of dedicated toymakers and volunteers who contribute where ever they can (newsletter, financial, etc.)...Bridget W.

♥ This group is dedicated to making a difference, one bird at a time, one toy at a time. It is more than a group helping birds, it is a group of friends helping friends through love, generosity and support. No one kicks you when you are down, instead they offer to hold you up. It has been a steady rock of friends for me as I know it has for others. I am not very good at putting in writing how it makes me feel but...it's like the group has a heart and a soul of it's own...Vicki H.



Our newest Junior Angel, Hannah working on foot toys



Touched By An Angel

By Stephanie Chambers,
[A Parrot's Perch Rescue](#), Springfield, MO

Anyone who runs a rescue knows the difficulties you face. As the director of A Parrot's Perch Rescue, I am no stranger to those difficulties, but sometimes an "angel" steps up and takes the pressure off for a small period of time. In this particular case, that angel was Parrot Toy Angels.

When Lynn contacted us regarding their choice to feature A Parrot's Perch Rescue, I was ecstatic. In fact, I let out a little squeal. It was a feeling of recognition and a reminder that we are going down the right path. It also happened to be our busiest time since we opened. Do you remember

Rikki Sez

Rikki will try and answer frequently asked questions here.



Rikki, My cage has two sticks in it. I

what Christmas morning felt like when you were six? Well that was what it was like each time a package arrived in the mail. Opening each box and seeing what was inside was so much fun.

Parrot Toy Angels provides a vital service to parrot rescues across the nation. Too often, people overlook one of the big expenses in avian rescue - environmental enrichment. That month of being featured as the rescue group takes a certain amount of stress from the rescue. For me, it felt as if someone said, "You know what? We will cover the toys this month. You focus on the rest."

I could never say enough thank you's to cover how I felt and how lucky we knew we were for being chosen. I urge anyone who can to support this wonderful group and recognize the service they provide to the avian community. Parrot Toy Angels reminds us that no matter the negativity out in the avian community and the rest of the world, there are still wonderful people striving to help others.



Angel Tips

♥ I have golden bamboo that I cut small bits off and tie in a bunch for my guys to chew up.

♥ Dry grasses can be gathered and tied together for the littles. You just need to know the types of grasses that are safe.

♥ Place rocks in a shallow dish and drop seed so it sifts through the rocks. Pebble size would depend on the size of the bird.

♥ Add live wheatgrass on the cage floor.

♥ If you have a poop free zone, buy a container or plant some seeds on a small shallow cookie sheet with 1/2" or so sides. You could also do sprouts.

♥ Use an untreated wicker paper plate holder, sprinkle soaked seed, place in a colander and keep moist so seeds sprout right in/on the untreated wicker. It could be hung or placed on the cage bottom.

think they are called perches. They make my feet sore because I have to stand with my toes scrunched up the same all day and all night. How can I tell my people that I need several sticks, of many different sizes so I can exercise and relax my toe-toes?

Signed, Toe Tired in Florida

Dear Toe Tired, Most pet stores sell natural branch perches, which have different sizes and textures. Perhaps if you can get your people to get some for you, your toe-toes will get better. I have a friend that got something called Bumble foot, and the Vet said it came from my friend having to sit on the same perch all the time. I hope that doesn't happen to you.



Rikki, Mom is up to it again! She's trying to make us start eating pellets again. She says it's good for us and puts a little in with our food. I just throw it out which makes her mad. Now she's thinking of baking some into cornbread for us to try. I love Nutriberries, which we do get. How do we get her to stop? Signed, Wondering

Dear Wondering, Your mommy knows that you need to eat a balanced diet, with all the things you need to stay healthy. Pellets have those things called nutrients. She also knows that if she offers them to you at every meal, eventually you will give in and try them. You will probably find that you like them. But it takes time for us to want to change from seed "candy" to food that is good for us. Your mommy will still give you treats but is trying to get you eating healthy. Parrot nutrition is a very new science and the humans are learning what it takes to make us healthy. Pellets are a very good place for them to start. They should also be adding fresh green leafy vegetables, and some of the yellow ones too. A little seed now and then is okay, too. Cornbread is a yummy place to start eating all of these healthy foods.



Do you have a question for Rikki?
Please send it to The Editor at
editor@parrottoyangels.org

Thank you Shauna and Lori



Featured Fid ~ Major Mitchell Cockatoo

By Sue Christie-Cox



This stunningly beautifully colored, large sized cockatoo also know in some places as Leadbeater's Cockatoo, is found in the more inland areas of Australia, often in large flocks. MMs spend most of the day feeding on the ground or among the branches of trees and shrubs. They eat nuts, fruits, roots and seeds, particularly the seeds of cypress pine.

Its pale peachy pink coloring and bright yellow/orange and scarlet crest coloring make this cockatoo really stand out. They are popular and delightful when young, but can become aggressive and choose one person as they mature. Constant training and positive reinforcements will be needed to maintain acceptable manners in this bird. The sexes are very similar, but can be distinguished in a mature bird by the eye color. A hen has a reddish brown iris while a cock has a dark brown to blackish iris.

Being a larger bird, they require a minimum cage size of 4ft. x 3ft. x 4ft. They are also known to be very loud, so could be a poor choice for those who live in apartments or condominiums. Ideally, you should provide a roomy aviary that also needs to contain non-poisonous native plants growing which the birds can safely chew. Many toys to chew and destroy will be appreciated, as well as puzzle type toys to stimulate these intelligent birds and to stave off boredom, which can lead to very loud calling. Because the Major Mitchell's require so much attention, they are recommended for experienced bird owners who are familiar with keeping large parrots.

Major Mitchell's Cockatoos can be prone to weight gain, so their fat intake should be monitored. They are active birds, and they need plenty of exercise to maintain their physical condition. They are used to flying many miles a day in the wild, so plenty of out of cage time is essential. In the wild these birds nest in hollow tree limbs lined with wood dust and bark. When kept as pets, a large nesting box or a large hollow branch should be provided and lined with wood shavings if possible.

Major Mitchell's Cockatoos have been known to live up to 75 years. My uncle had one who reached 80 years old.



Humid Summer Season

By Angel Savannah

One of the problems caused by all of the humidity many of us are experiencing this summer is mold, a

Swingin' Safely

By Kim Perez

To further enrich our birds' lives, not only do we buy them a lot of beautiful toys to destroy,

silent killer. There are many kinds of mold and it can be found just about anywhere. It can grow on surfaces, in water, on vegetation and inside of seed hulls. Mold spores can easily become airborne and cause respiratory infections in all of us - people and pets.

For my family, living in the Midwest, we have kept the doors closed and the central air on. This has kept the humidity level in our house at a comfortable level for our breathing comfort. It aids in preventing mold growth, too. We change the papers in the cage trays a little more frequently than normal to stay ahead of the moisture issues, especially since our birds are highly skilled in splashing during bathing.

It's also a good idea to completely empty your food dishes as opposed to simply adding food to them. Leftover seed hulls, pellet powder and veggie juice can become breeding grounds for mold spores. Avoid feeding peanuts which are prone to fungal toxins. Remove uneaten fruits and vegetables before they are able to spoil. The mold spores that accumulate in food or cage bedding are known to cause Aspergillosis in birds. This is a disease which can progress undetected for many years inside of a bird and can then be found during a necropsy. It can be very widespread inside of a bird, with no explanation as to how they lived as long as they did with the disease.

One other noteworthy aspect of mold is that 20 birds can be living in the same air space and one may get a mold related disease and the other 19 could remain perfectly healthy. There is no good rule for how that works, although baby birds, immune-deficient birds and elderly birds are at the highest risk.

If you do see a little spot of mold somewhere, you should scrub the entire area (and beyond) with a bleach and water solution. Be considerate in not having your bird around the harsh bleach odor. Air the space out and then allow your bird to re-enter.

but we also buy them swings to play on. Some birds really enjoy swinging, regardless of the type of swing. Some birds only like certain kinds of swings. There are some who truly act as though a swing is their kiss of death!

For your bird's first swing, there are certain factors you should consider. Make sure you check out how many connectors there are to the cage top. One connector means that the swing can swing in all directions and this would be the least stable, most scary swing that you could get. If you have two connectors, the swing will be more stable and much less frightening to most birds.



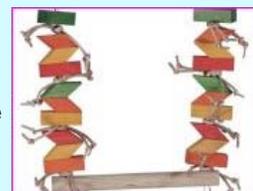
The next factor should be what the swing is made of. There are a lot of different types of parts to choose from, including plastic, wood, wire, rawhide, rope and many combinations thereof. A very plain, basic swing

will probably have a wood dowel perch and wire sides.

These swings are inexpensive, and very commonly found. You can find this same style of swing offered by different manufacturers using plastic or concrete for the perch.

How do you decide what the perch should be made of? It needs to be something that your bird can either sit on or grip easily. Always go bigger than you think for the diameter. Birds like the opportunity to have their feet stretched open as it is very relaxing for them. When their feet are tightly gripping a small perch, they get tired, just like our feet get tired. Concrete is a great pedicure medium, but it isn't always easy for them to grip. If you accidentally get something that is either a little too small in diameter or difficult to grip, you can use vet wrap (coflex) to wrap the perch. The more you wrap, the thicker you can make it. (Helpful hint: I also do this with pedicure perches that a couple of my birds over-use to the point where their nails get very short.)

Another example of a type of swing available is a natural branch perch. The sides can be any assorted parts strung onto wire, rope or chain. Here is a picture of such a swing.



You could run a dehumidifier in the room where your birds are.

There is also a product for removing humidity from the air. This is not something I would leave where the birds could possibly get to it, but you can place it inside of an empty cage. It can then be effective and your birds will be safe.

By being so meticulous with your birds, you will also be doing all of the humans and other pets in your house a favor, keeping everyone safe from mold and mold-related issues.



When you buy a swing, watch for what the side pieces are strung onto. If they are strung onto rope or chain, you need to monitor what your bird chews. The flexible sides, if exposed, can be a danger zone that your bird could wrap around its neck. With my birds' swings, I use wire sides only. These sides stay in place and pose very little threat to your bird.



Another type of swing very popular with bird owners is one covered in rope. Although many types of rope are available, the most popular swing material is cotton rope. These come in many configurations. The picture to the left is a popular and fairly simple model.



Help Us Help the Birds...

Our Angels generously donate their time making toys for our needy feathered friends. Quality toy-making supplies are expensive and shipping charges are outrageous. That's why we need your support to help keep us going. Every dollar amount, large or small, is gratefully accepted. Donations are tax deductible.

We also welcome donations of toymaking parts and supplies. A receipt will be issued for every donation. Contact us at [Parrot Toy Info](#) for further information on donating.



All donations tax deductible.



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This is the official newsletter of the Parrot Toy Angels. Members and subscribers are encouraged to submit articles/photographs for publication. PTA reserves the right to reject, edit, or use only portions of items submitted. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the PTA Editor, Directors, Officers, or the general membership.

While PTA at all times tries to ensure any information provided in this newsletter is accurate, all articles are submitted by volunteers, and we are not avian professionals and make no claim as to the suitability of featured products, food, or toys for your particular bird. PTA strongly recommends that you ensure that all toys are safe, that you make sure your bird is fed a well balanced diet, and that you always provide continuing medical care through your avian vet.

Do you have a question or comment? Perhaps you have an idea for our newsletter, or simply want to share a story on how an Angel has touched your life. Drop us a line at: editor@parrottoyangels.org



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