

TGF VOLUNTEER PAST UPDATES

Update - Volunteer Name Tags 10.16.10

Currently there should be TGF volunteer name tags for *all* volunteers, both at the Aviary and at The Birdbrain. Please make sure that you wear your name tag when you are volunteering. Alas, right now there is a finite number of these name tags, and if volunteers aren't able to volunteer on a regular basis (staying current with minimum hours required) you may find that your name tag has been recycled to another volunteer. Until another order of volunteer name tags arrive, it may be necessary to use a paper label while you are working. Thanks for your understanding with this.

Being safe

When you come to the Aviary or to The Birdbrain, please, please be safe and make wise decisions as you are working around the birds. As the weather cools down, and the birds have to spend more of their days indoors, there will be more opportunities for those little escape artists to try and sneak out as you are working near them! Please remember, if a bird gets out of his/her cage, leave the room, shut the door and find a staff member to return the traveler to his cage. The staff is used to handling ALL of the parrots (and the birds are comfortable with them) and they can swiftly take care of these situations. **Do not let birds out intentionally as you are working in a room**, and ALWAYS be aware of where the birds are in their cages and what they are doing as you work in their rooms. Did I already mention make sure you've got the door shut while you are working?

Safe Perches

When you are at TBB or at the Aviary, remember to look closely at the wooden perches in the cages. Some of the perches have seen better days, as they have been mistaken for chew toys, especially by those pesky cockatoos! If you see a perch that is beginning to look precariously 'thin' or is showing signs of splintering/splitting, retrieve a new perch from the work room or from the wonderful pile of new perches and swings outside of Building C, and place it on the *outside* of the cage. A staff member will replace the perch the next time he is in the room. It's just one more way that we can all insure that the birds have the safest environment in their cages as possible! Thanks!

Newspaper rolls - There are quite a few of the rolls of newspaper print that has been sliced into 1.5-2" rings. These make for tremendous entertainment for the birds. If you are refurbishing the large pvc toys remember this: Place your finished toys on the rolling cart for distribution. Make sure you place a box of the newspapers rolls on the cart also. When those toys are placed in the cages, **the newspaper 'slices' can be slipped over the top of the new toys before hanging**. It's a *very* safe way to hang the paper in the cages.

FYI: If you are taking Beyond Bird Basics, that is not included in your volunteer hours. However, if you cut wood at home, make toys at home and bring them to the Aviary or TBB, auction items on eBay or Craigslist and donate the proceeds, pick up cages for the Foundation, etc...all that time is considered volunteer hours. Please make sure you give yourself credit in the Volunteer Logs! If you volunteer from a distance, please contact me with your volunteer hours

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and I'll make sure they get recorded - ALL volunteer hours count for the Foundation and they need to be acknowledged!

Dangerous toys! - As you come to volunteer at the Aviary and at The Birdbrain, keep your eyes out for bird toys in the cages that have seen better days and are now possibly dangerous for the birds. Look for fraying material, bent, exposed, sharp metal parts, sharp plastic pieces, sharp wood, etc. If you see a toy that you think is unsafe, notify a staff member so that it can be removed. We have dozens of small and large NEW toys that can replace these potentially harmful old ones. If the toy needs to be discarded, remove any parts that might be able to be recycled.

This applies to the outside flights as well. As you take your 'walkabout' look in the outdoor flights for toys that might need to be removed or repaired.

This is a very serious matter, and the TGF flock will be much safer if we are vigilant with this chore! Thanks so much.

GREAT toys for sale! - If you have an opportunity to shop for bird toys at The Birdbrain, be sure to take a look at two different types of toys now for sale. One type is made of colorful straws and they are the creations of Tasha, a TGF staff member! They are fun and great for hiding tiny treats for your feathered friends! The other items are from Perches by Claire. Claire used grapevine wood to make some extraordinary perches for all sizes of parrots. They can be attached in different ways, depending on the cage size/shape, and have places to hang your own toys. Check them out!

WHITE ERASE TASK BOARD Please remember to check the white erase board in the A/B corridor for more urgently needed volunteer tasks that staff will post. These are jobs that come up on a day-to-day basis. The staff will mark them with a priority number. One (1) will indicate that there is an immediate need; two (2) will mean not as urgently needed; and three (3) will mean that the job is needed but is not a high priority. If you have finished your task for the day and you still want to stay and help, please check this board. If there is nothing posted there, you may refer to the list of jobs posted on the Volunteer Board that are ongoing tasks that always need attention (sweeping the hallway, delivering phone books to cages, making toys, etc.)

STAFF SCHEDULE BOARD When you come to the Aviary to volunteer and want to know when and where staff members are scheduled for the week, you can now find that information on the large dry erase board mounted at the end of the hallway (right-hand side) in Building A.

SIGNING UP FOR TGF VOLUNTEER TASKS When you are able to volunteer at the Aviary in Elizabeth or at the Birdbrain in Denver, *it is extremely helpful to the TGF staff if you would first send an email to me, whether you have taken a task off of the weekly Volunteer Opportunities attachment or if you just want to drop in and help with on-going tasks!* My job as the volunteer Volunteer Coordinator is to inform the staff ahead of time (via a staff calendar/schedule) that you will be on site, what time frame you will be there, and what task you will be

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doing. They can then expect you. Thank you so much for helping me with this interim step in the process!

There are a number of dedicated volunteers who have committed to volunteering weekly on specific days for specific jobs. Those people will remain on the weekly volunteer opportunities unless I am notified that their plans have changed. Once again, thank you to everyone for spending your valuable time working for the flock at The Gabriel Foundation.

SIGN IN AND OUT When you come in to volunteer at the Aviary in Elizabeth, remember to sign in and out at the small table in the corner as you head into the bird rooms. There is also a log in/out book for volunteers at The Birdbrain. Tracking your volunteer hours is very important to the Foundation.

VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED!

Volunteers are always needed to repair and replenish pvc toys, make foraging toys, hang phone books on the large birds' cages, wash cages, and tackle our perpetual weeds outdoors.

HELP NEEDED IN BUILDING C – SUNDAYS

If you would like to spend your early Sunday afternoons with the wide variety of parrot species that reside in Building C, please respond to this email.

WALL CLEANING IN BOARDING MODULAR, HOSPITAL MODULAR & BUILDING C

1 - Dr. Opitz, DVM, has requested volunteer help in both of the modulars with a cleaning project. The walls in both buildings need to be washed down on a weekly basis. This task could be done any day of the week, excluding Sundays and Mondays, and would initially be supervised by Dr. O. The cages in the hospital also need to be regularly cleaned. Please reply to this email if this is a task you could help with. This is a Tier One Task.

2 - Portions of the hallway walls in Building C also need to be washed down on a regular basis. Colleen or Travis would be the staff contacts for this job. Once again, please reply to this email if this is a task you could possibly help with! - This is a Tier One Task.

H2O PATROL When you come to volunteer and take your 'walkabouts' keep your eye out for empty water bowls and dishes in the outside flights. The birds need to have access all day long to fresh supplies of drinking water. As you know, bowls can be tipped, pitched, or depending on the day and heat, the water may even evaporate. If you see an empty bowl or dish, let a staff member know so that the bowl can be refilled with fresh water.

TOY MAKING Put your create caps on! TGF has had many generous donations of toy making materials, and they've all landed on the toy supply shelves in the corridor between Building A and B. Most of the new toy parts are for smaller birds (hurrah!) and they are begging to be

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attached to the smaller pvc toy pieces. If you want to spend some time volunteering by making some of these toys, please do so...the little birds will appreciate it very much!

When making foraging toys for the TGF birds and you're including a bit of bird seed, a nut, a couple of Cheerios, etc., make sure to put your finished products in a tight-fitting container in the A/B corridor to await distribution to the birds' cages!

Update 9/18/10: If you are making foraging toys for the birds here a couple of tips: You don't need to put food in the containers at all, if you choose. It is enough enrichment to give the birds something to tear apart and then discover the contents. If you *do* choose to use edible treats, make sure it's just a very small amount (as mentioned above). And second, if your container is bulging at the seams because of all of the goodies you have crammed inside, use a piece of sisal rope or a thin leather strip to hold the box together. Do not use tape of any kind on the foraging boxes. The tape can be harmful to the birds. (And a nice knot in the rope or leather just gives the birds another puzzle to solve!) Thanks!

HELP NEEDED AT THE BIRDBRAIN (1025 ACOMA, DENVER, CO)

There has been an incredible amount of remodeling that has taken place at The Birdbrain, TGF's retail store! As you all know, the birds from the Pueblo Rescue are residing at The Birdbrain, and this has raised the bird population considerably. All Pueblo birds were recently moved out of the modular into their own space in the store. If you have been wanting to volunteer but have been unable to come to Elizabeth because of time and distance issues, there might be some volunteer tasks that you are able to do.

Please look at the list below and contact me (via email) if you are able to help at The Birdbrain. Being able to commit to volunteering on a regular basis would be a tremendous help to the staff and birds. Thank you so much for considering this.

- Days and Times: **MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS 11 AM - 4PM**
- Staff Contact Person(s): Julie Murad, Hector and Brenda (re: bird information and toys needed)
- Tasks needed:
- 1 changing newspapers, sweeping, cleaning bird rooms
 - 2 changing water in cages
 - 3 spritz/showering the birds
 - 4 cage enrichment (with staff supervision)
 - 5 making foraging boxes
 - 6 cutting/drilling wood for toys (staff approved)
 - 7 repair, replenish and string pvc toys
 - 8 prepping donated fresh food and separating good from non-usable foods

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TAKE A WALKABOUT AT THE AVIARY! We would like you to TAKE A BREAK when you're volunteering with TGF. Really! Your eyes become 'ours' when you come to volunteer at the Aviary, and we would like you to take a walkabout around the outside flights, weather permitting, and just enjoy the birds in their flights. At the same time, please look closely for birds that might be being bullied by others, birds that are staying on the ground for an unusual amount of time, birds that seem anxious/upset, toes or beaks that might be caught in a toy, and/or just situations that don't look normal to you. Report anything unusual immediately to a staff member.

Your keen observing skills may help to save a flock member's life! If the weather is inclement, the same procedure will apply. TAKE A FEW MINUTES from your task and just cruise indoors through the different species' rooms in the building where you're working and observe the parrots in their cages. It will be good for you, and good for the TGF flock as well! Thanks so much.

HOURLY BUILDING CHECKS Consider doing your walk-about with more in-depth intent. The Aviary is looking for volunteers willing to be mentored by staff members who would do an hourly building check using a check-off sheet of their observations. Volunteers can do this task as well as whatever other job they are participating in. "Hourly" means ideally it will happen in each building every hour. You would be only responsible for one official walk-about while you are at the Aviary volunteering. Consider this task: It will hone your skills as an observer of parrot behavior and body language!

TGF VOLUNTEER WISH LIST

When you volunteer at The Gabriel Foundation or at The BirdBrain and believe that there is something that will make caring for the TGF flock easier/better, first ask a staff member if that item is already available. If it isn't, contact me and I will post it in this space and possibly someone will be able to make that much needed donation. You can also add the item to the Wish List that is posted on the volunteer bulletin board in the corridor between Buildings A & B at the Aviary. Thanks!

BIRDIE BUDDIES AT TGF!

Do you have a favorite feathered friend that catches your eye (and your heart) when you come to volunteer at the Aviary? The Gabriel Foundation wants to offer you an opportunity to choose your very own TGF Birdie Buddy. A tag will be attached to the cage of your "Buddy" identifying the parrot as your Buddy.

You might wonder what difference this can make in the life of this bird. Two words: A LOT. As your bird's Buddy you will become an extra set of eyes and ears for TGF. When you visit your special friend, you can take note of droppings, behaviors, health, and report anything out of sync to a staff member. You might be an important lifeline for him/her. You can also relay any wonderful behaviors or quirks that you see!

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You can make/bring toys for your Buddy and give this little guy or gal a regular spritz shower. You can just spend time talking and visiting - just giving your Buddy some special, much-needed attention. This is not necessarily a hands-on relationship...a lot can be accomplished through the cage!

With the hundreds of birds on site at the Aviary, you can imagine what a great help this would be, not only for the staff but for the well-being of the TGF flock! Consider this...and when you come to volunteer keep an eye out for that one Birdie Buddy that is waiting for a good friend...YOU!