

About Parrot U

Parrot University is located in Pineville Towne Market at 321 So. Polk Street, Suite 2C, Pineville, NC 28134. Pineville is 15 minutes from uptown Charlotte and the S.C. state line.

Our business hours are 10am-7pm Monday thru Friday, 10am-6pm Saturday and 12pm-5pm Sunday. Parrot U carries a full range of products for your companion parrot. Our toy selection is large and diverse, with toy parts available for “make your own.” We offer a wide variety of food including Harrison’s, Roudybush, Zupreem, Lafeber, Volkman, Goldenfeast, Halo, Beak Appetit and Crazy Corn. All kinds of perches, swings and boings are available. We stock full spectrum lighting, mister bottles, Avix health products, water bottles, food bowls and crocks, cleaning supplies, and gram scales. Cages, play stands and travel cages are in stock or can be ordered. We will be happy to ship to you if you can’t come to us!

As the focus is EDUCATION we carry various books, magazines and DVDs on a variety of topics. The current issues of Bird Talk and Good Bird magazine are always in stock. Classes on a variety of topics are held monthly. Behavioral consultations are available. Parrots are available for adoption through “Companion Parrots Re-homed.”

KAREN’S BACKGROUND

While I have had other careers in my life, animals have always held a predominant role. I have owned many cats and dogs, as well as rescued many.

As a four year old child I met my first parrot, Poncho, a wild caught DYH amazon. Forty plus years later I discovered he was still alive and visited him several times before his death at age 52. In December of 2000 I acquired my first parrot, a CAG named Cheeko. Having owned MANY pets and worked at a veterinary clinic I felt certain I would be a good bird owner. Thankfully I scheduled a wellness visit immediately. There I discovered I knew NOTHING about caring for a bird! I threw myself into learning all I could to care properly for Cheeko. I fell into the “Lay’s Potato Chip Syndrome” where I quickly owned four parrots! I added a white-capped pionus (Emma

Ruth), cockatiel (Sydney) and two peach-faced lovebirds ('Lil Bird and Sweet Peaches) to my flock.

I read everything available at the time by Sally Blanchard, Liz Wilson, Phoebe Linden and Pam Clark, to name a few. I attended conferences and seminars all over the U.S. absorbing all I could. In an attempt to know more about avian medicine I volunteered as a vet technician for my avian vet. I performed her client education for new bird owners. With her encouragement I started "From a Bird's View" providing in-home caregiver education and behavioral assistance.

The greatest impact on my education has been studying with Dr. Susan Friedman. She has opened a whole new world to parrot owners teaching ways to better understand and relate to their birds, as well as dealing with behavioral issues. I am a graduate of "Living and Learning with Parrots", an on-line course based on Applied Behavior Analysis taught by Dr. Friedman. I attended the first Companion Parrot workshop offered by her and Steve Martin, nationally known animal trainer and owner of Natural Encounters Inc. I will be participating in the Advanced Workshop in 2007. I take advantage of every opportunity to hear Dr. Friedman speak. At Parrot Festival (a wonderful conference held every January in Houston) I met Barbara Heidenreich. She is also a nationally and internationally known animal trainer, author of two books on companion parrot behavior and editor of "Good Bird!" magazine. Attending several of her workshops I have honed my skills in training. I am very proud and honored that I can call both Susan and Barbara friends. They have been so supportive.

Through this educational process I learned of the severe problem of birds requiring new homes. I found such wonderful adoption/sanctuary organizations as The Gabriel Foundation, PEAC and Phoenix Landing. When trying to assist owners locally I started taking in birds to re-home. The numbers rapidly grew. Also, providing education on a one-to-one basis was frustrating. So much to accomplish, so little time! Thus Parrot University and Companion Parrots Re-homed were born!

I am also very proud to say that I receive support and encouragement from two area avian veterinarians, Dr. Lauren Powers, Diplomate ABVP (Avian Practice) and Dr. Frank Rutowski, DVM. Both are always available to answer any questions and address any concerns I may have.

Parrot conservation issues are another huge concern. I have taken eco-tours to Panama and Costa Rica to see the birds in the wild. Recently I attended the International Parrot Convention and visited Loro Parque in the Canary Islands. The three day event focused on preserving habitat and breeding for species conservation in both the wild and captivity. Man has exploited (and driven near and to extinction) these wonderful creatures. We **MUST** give back to protect and preserve them. Please visit our library for more information.

I am **PASSIONATE** about what I do. For me it always has been, and always will be, “**ABOUT THE BIRDS.**” Come visit Parrot University. See what I mean!