

Build A Better Bird Club

Here are 6 tips to help keep bird clubs alive and vibrant.

By Melissa Kauffman

- 1) When a group stops being fun, people no longer want to participate. Scolding lectures, negative members and political infighting can destroy a club. Set rules and boundaries regarding positive interaction between members. Plan shows and events with fun in mind and hire a professional party planner to help with the event.
- 2) Put your meetings and events on a webcam so members that can't physically attend can attend it virtually. They can even participate with questions and comments through e-mail.
- 3) Mail, fax and email press releases to media local pet stores, avian magazines, local papers, magazines, radio and television stations. Send three alerts about an event: a heads up, an official invite and a reminder. Make your club the media's go-to organization for bird information.
- 4) With many organizations, a handful of people do most of the work. "Worker bees" quickly burn out, and club members who aren't involved will not be vested in the club. Have a backup position; someone to delegate to and someone to take over if the position becomes vacant.
- 5) New club members should be assigned a mentor for six months to show them the ropes and to remind them of events. Assign new members a task in an upcoming event so they feel involved in the club. Designate a New Member Director who is responsible for creating programs to attract new members. Make your club appeal to younger generations with events geared especially for them to keep the club growing.
- 6) Instead of relying on what's been done in the past, get creative with your club events: a bird-themed casino night, pet photo night, fashion show, cooking school or movie night — some clubs even offer ecotours. These are just some of the creative ways clubs are having fun and even raising money.