

Article from "The Mickaboo Bird Rescue Companion"
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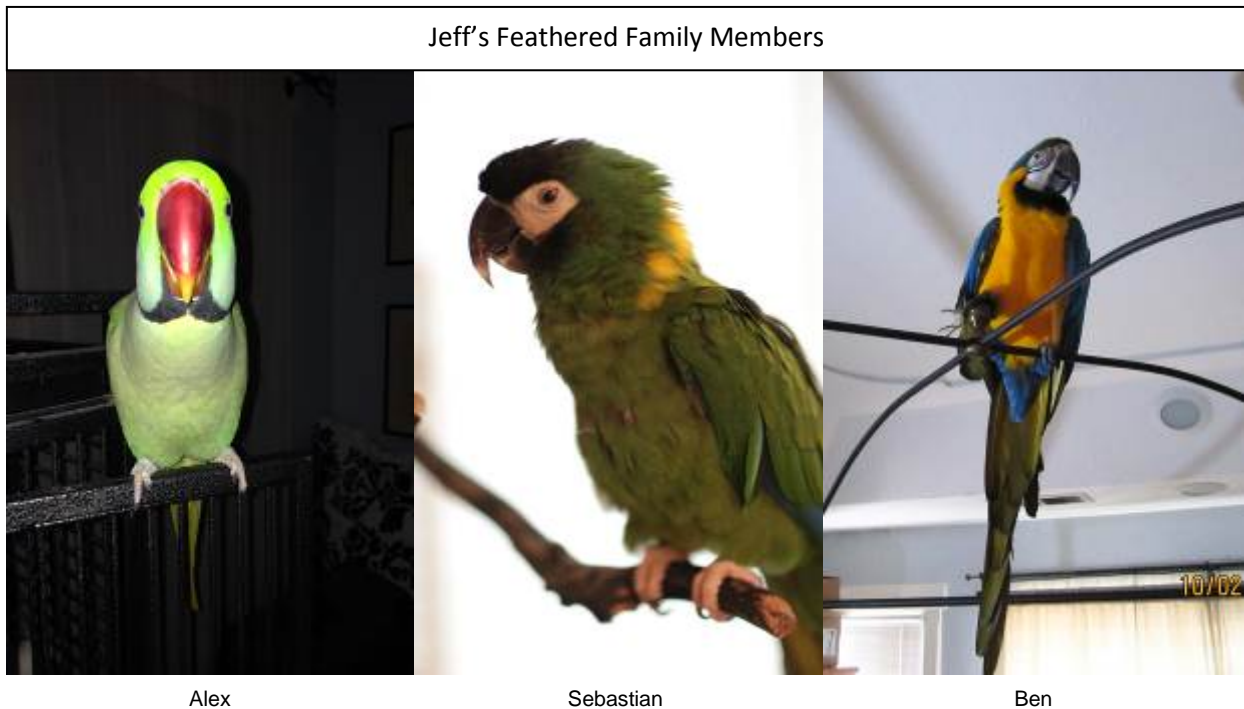
Featured Volunteers: Jeff Kondo and Sarah Lemarié By Shauna Hill

Mickaboo was once again asked to help bring a parrot out of the cold. Fancy, a beautiful military macaw, had been coming to a kind couple's front yard looking for food. They wanted to help Fancy but not having experience with a big macaw they contacted Mickaboo for assistance. Two volunteers, Jeff Kondo and Sarah Lemarié, went into action, leading a successful rescue effort. They were kind enough to take some time and let me interview them.

First up is Jeff...here's what he shared about himself:

SH - Tells us a little about yourself.

JK – I've been in the high tech industry in engineering for HP (and its spinoffs) in Corvallis, OR; Portland, OR; Boeblingen, Germany and finally San Jose. I started with birds as pets with my wife - she came with an African Ringneck. We soon ended up with an Indian Ringneck that was found on a back porch. He lived with us (or ran things) for the next 27 years. In the mid 1990's we got a yellow-collared macaw that was named Sebastian from an Oregon rescue. Both birds had frequent flyer miles going to Germany and back. The paperwork for moving the birds to and from Germany was more complicated and took longer to process than our relocation. We now have three happy (spoiled) parrots noisily running the house.



SH - How did you hear about Mickaboo and what made you decide to volunteer?

JK - During the relocation to the Bay Area, I did some online research for bird organizations and avian vets that could treat our birds (beyond the Fish and Wildlife home quarantine).

With an old arthritic ringneck, it was only a matter of time before we would need to get another bird to replace him, hence the search led to Mickaboo. Three years ago we fostered for a short while and then adopted an Alexandrian Ringneck (a much bigger version of the Indian Ringneck, and with a MUCH more powerful bite). I learned to read the macaw body language from the mini-macaw I fostered and applied it to the big macaw.

As for volunteering, it started with working with Scott [Mickaboo's macaw team leader] and Michelle [Mickaboo's CEO] to foster Ben the blue and gold macaw. After getting the big macaw experience, Kelly [also on the Mickaboo macaw team] called once because she could not get anyone else in the South Bay to pick up a surrendered macaw. The macaw we picked up was Papilloma-positive, so she went to another home [specializing in Papilloma-positive birds] for a better life and we had to disinfect the car, our shoes, our clothes and us. Either way, the volunteering has focused on helping birds and taking pictures.

SH - I have seen pictures and updates from Shelley [foster parent for Papilloma-positive birds] on Jasmine [the Papilloma-positive macaw]. Jasmine is doing amazingly well at Shelley's! It's hard to imagine an experience that would top Fancy's rescue but have there been other experiences since you have joined Mickaboo that you have enjoyed?

JK - Actually getting Merlin (now Jasmine) was more of an intense but rewarding experience. Second would be taking pictures of the birds for the Mickaboo [calendar](#). Last would be Fancy because I did more explaining and supplying food than actual work. Moving the cage and "torturing" Fancy by toweling and bringing him to the vet took just a few hours, Corrine and Troy [the homeowners around whose home Fancy was staying] did the real work; they were the ones that Fancy woke up by screaming in the morning for food just after sunrise.



Jeff with the newly-captured Fancy

SH - Your photography is truly stunning. Folks reading this article who have not picked up a 2015 Mickaboo [calendar](#) – check it out to see Jeff's wonderful photos. Last question for you, Jeff...why would you recommend volunteering with Mickaboo?

JK – The volunteers have a set of common interests and it's a rewarding activity for the little free time I have. Just keeping up with the "rat race" in the Bay Area is a little harder than in a less stressful area.

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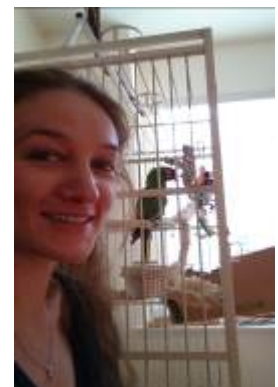
Thank you, Jeff, for being a part of Fancy's rescue and for all you do for Mickaboo.

Now let's meet Sarah Lemarié. She was coordinating efforts to help the couple around whose home Fancy was staying, keeping communications open between our volunteers and the couple. Here's what Sarah shared with me about herself:

SH - Tells us a little about yourself?

SL - I'm a Scots girl married to a Frenchman who moved from London to the US - my accent has had quite the identity crisis. My (British) parents live in Texas now just to make things more complicated!

We have a cat (a rescue we've had for ten years) that moved with us when we came to the US, and two budgies that are Mickaboo fosters. I grew up with cats and dogs that were mutts and mongrels from shelters. We had a toothless Persian, a farm cat, a wonderful Labrador... always one dog and one cat.



Sarah with her new foster, Fancy!

I work for Sony Network Entertainment on their TV, music and video services. I've been with Sony for twelve years.

SH - A British accent with a southern drawl sounds unique and lovely! So tell me, how did you hear about Mickaboo and what made you decide to volunteer?

SL - I have watched almost every parrot video on the internet at this point. At some stage one of those referenced Mickaboo somehow and I looked it up. I decided to volunteer as I love parrots but have never had one as a pet or lived with one because I never wanted to encourage the bird breeding / pet store industry; however, this is a way to experience birds without doing so, and help some creatures in the process.

SH – It's excellent to hear that this video referred folks to our organization and we are so glad you decided to look us up! It's hard to imagine an experience that would top Fancy's rescue but have there been other experiences since you have joined Mickaboo that you have enjoyed?

SL - The Mickaboo holiday party! I really enjoyed putting names to faces and learning a little bit more about some of the lovely people who do some of the most challenging jobs as part of their contributions to Mickaboo. And I now have a wonderful, cruelty-free pair of feather earrings that I adore!

Also I don't know about enjoyment, but we helped with a macaw surrender in the South Bay that left a big impression on me, even if it wasn't a happy occasion. Everyone was trying to do the right thing and we were glad to be able to help make that happen.

SH - Why would you recommend volunteering with our organization?

SL - The volunteers have wonderful personalities and a great attitude and while some of the opportunities might be challenging, nothing is more rewarding than helping out and knowing you made a difference to another being for the better. Also if you love bird poop this is the place to be. I have learned a lot about myself in the short time I've been involved in ways that have really surprised me (and not all related to bird poop). And I have a feeling the learning has only really just begun...

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Thank you, Sarah, for taking to answer these questions and for your part in getting help to Fancy so she could come out of the cold before that huge storm!!! It's wonderful of you to step up and become Fancy's foster mom. The rescue has come full circle back to you now.