

Article from "The Mickaboo Bird Rescue Companion"
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Neighbors Helping Neighbors By Shauna Hill



Mickaboo is often contacted about taking in birds whose owners are unable to care for them. A takeaway from this story would be a reminder to plan for your bird's care in the event they outlive you, or illness prevents you from being able to care for them as you used to. That is a very important topic but that's not the focus of this article. It's to share how neighbors banded together to care for their neighbor's cherished birds until the birds could be moved into Mickaboo foster homes. These neighbors are the kind of neighbors we all wish for, the kind that have your back and pitch in to go above and beyond bringing in the mail or mowing the lawn.

Mickaboo was contacted by one of the neighbors about a couple parrots he and another neighbor had been taking turns feeding and watering in the owner's home (their neighbor). They had been doing this for months before finding out about Mickaboo. The neighbor who contacted us was concerned because the birds were left in the house when their owner became ill; the owner would most likely not return to the home. This was going to be a challenging situation as 1) we could not remove the birds without the owner's permission and surrender paperwork, 2) we didn't know if we had enough foster homes for them as our foster home capacity has been running low.

After a telephone call to the neighbor we found there were not just two amazon parrots, but also a cockatiel that had plucked a lot of its feathers and a blind dove living in an indoor walk-in aviary. Our first course of action was to see what foster homes were available. I reached out to Mickaboo's volunteers and to our sister rescue Palomacy (<https://www.pigeonrescue.org>). Thankfully we found volunteers willing to foster all the birds. Step one completed!

Our next step was for the neighbor to reach out to the owner and their family and have a heartfelt discussion about the birds' future. Not an easy topic and a hard decision to make for the owner who had these birds for 20 years or more. The owner appreciated that the birds would be cared for and formally surrendered his birds to Mickaboo. Onto the next phase.

Now that we were ready to take these birds, the last challenge was the physical transfer of the birds to their new homes. A date was set for all the volunteers and one of the neighbors to meet at the home. These birds had not had much recent interaction and were about to be removed from the only home they had known for many years. The removal was a process we had to undertake carefully, especially as these were not young birds.

The first bird to be moved was the blind dove. Palomacy volunteer and dove/pigeon whisperer Jill calmly gathered up the frightened older dove and safely loaded him/her into a carrier. Next, two members of the cockatiel team (Martha and Sheila) discussed strategy for catching the cockatiel, who had free range of the walk-in aviary. Sheila was able to catch the cockatiel quickly. Then came time for the two amazons, a bonded pair named Edgar and Bonnie. A male can be protective over its mate. Thankfully after some protest they were both loaded into their carrier. Then their cage was loaded onto Martha's truck and the last of the birds were off to their foster home.



Dove, cockatiel, and two amazons before going to their foster homes

These birds will need vet care and will soon be available for adoption. It was amazing how many people came together to help with this rescue. It was also amazing how these two neighbors stepped up to reach out to help their mutual neighbor in his time of need. This incident was a wonderful example of human kindness and compassion. The neighbors didn't just care for the birds but went the extra step to find a rescue to help the birds find new homes. This gave the owner peace of mind knowing the birds were being cared for in the long term.

Updates on the birds:

Edgar and Bonnie – These two are settling nicely into their foster home and just had a visit to the avian vet. We are awaiting test results. One of the amazons has a fatty growth but otherwise both appear pretty good. They have another amazon they can chat with at the foster home along with other feathered and furry friends. They are enjoying expanding their diets with fresh vegetables and fruits. They accept food by hand from their foster family. Their foster mom says they are a pleasure to have around.



Pris and her new friend

The blind dove has been named Pris – She is doing very well for an older gal, settling in with her foster mom and slowly starting to accept loving head rubs from her. She has also had a visit from a friendly dove in the foster home. Her foster mom is taking things slowly, since Pris is older and blind. Pris is learning what companionship and a loving touch feel like.

The cockatiel has been named Ruth. She is also settling in well though is skittish. She has only known life in an aviary for many years; once quarantine is over we will determine if she might enjoy life more in an aviary with other cockatiel friends, rather than with a human companion. Time will tell.



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If you would like to help these birds, there are many ways. Mickaboo's [website](#) has information on how to donate so we can continue to help birds like these. We also have information on how to [foster or adopt](#) and other ways to [volunteer](#) (transporting birds or cages, helping at our outreach events, for instance).