

Tamra M.

#### Volunteering for Soft Landings.

I started volunteering when I was considering getting a parrot. I wanted the hands on experience and to learn as much as I could before bringing one home. By going to the rescue I was able to learn to handle different parrots and all about their care and the different day to day things that went into having a parrot companion.

One of the days I was able to participate in a “chop” event. This is where they make fresh food in large quantities mixing in an assortment of veggies, herbs, and fruits. We then sealed the bags and they went into the freezer. This helped the rescue to provide fresh food on a daily basis to all the parrots; which I learned was essential for their diet. I had previously thought pellets would be all that they would need.

By going and interacting with all of the parrots for several months I gained valuable knowledge. I was confident and comfortable with bringing home Frodo, a blue and gold Macaw. I still have much to learn and Soft Landings is always there to help.

The other ways that I have volunteered include going to public events to promote awareness of not only the rescue but what parrots need to thrive in homes. I have also participated in Facebook auctions and donated to the rescue.

Another area that I have spent vast amounts of time in the last year is volunteering at the animal shelter where they are currently housing parrots that were seized last year. I help take care of these parrots on a regular basis that includes almost every weekend and often times daily interactions. I help by cleaning cages, changing food and water; and also social interaction. It has been a steep learning curve but one that I while I wish the circumstances were different I am grateful to be a part of. I have met and work with some amazing volunteers through this process who I consider close friends. Not many people understand the crazy world of parrots.

When starting to volunteer I had no idea what roads I would go down to or what experiences I would walk away with. I am thankful for all my volunteer opportunities that I have taken part in and look forward to many more to come. They have all expanded my horizons and have made me a better caretaker for Frodo.

