



PARK DISTRICT of OAK PARK

Ann Marie Buczek
Communication and Community Engagement Manager
Park District of Oak Park
(708) 725-2121
AnnMarie.Buczek@pdop.org

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The Oak Park Conservatory Says Goodbye to its Beloved Parrot George

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It is with great sadness that the Park District of Oak Park announces the passing of its beloved double yellow-headed amazon parrot, George on August 26, 2023. George lived and was cared for at the Oak Park Conservatory.

George brought great joy to thousands of Oak Park Conservatory visitors each year, especially children. Known as Big George, he was considered the star of the show engaging visitors through his expansive vocabulary. George always greeted visitors with his signature “ello!” He was intelligent, entertaining, talkative, and loved a good conversation.

The Conservatory’s long-time bird caretaker, Chris Denne, encouraged the other Conservatory parrots, Sarah and Skipper, to be more like George noting “George was not a picky eater and ate a wide variety of foods; banana chips were his favorite. He set a great example for children.”

George was donated to the Oak Park Conservatory in the 1990’s. Amazon parrots, like George, are long-lived birds, with a 25–70-year lifespan. While the true age of George was not known, he was considered by avian veterinarians to be a geriatric bird and one of the oldest in the Chicago area.

Patti Staley, the Oak Park Conservatory’s Director of Horticulture & Conservatory Operations, stated “George will be greatly missed by the Oak Park Conservatory team and all who loved him. We would like to thank Chris Denne, bird caretaker, for his many years of dedicated love and care for George and Dr. Scott McDonald, Avian Veterinarian, for his years of care and Midwest Bird & Exotic Animal Hospital.”

For the next month, the Oak Park Conservatory is inviting visitors to share their stories, pictures, and drawings of George. Visitors can place these items in his home at the Conservatory, 615 Garfield Street, Oak Park, IL or email their submission to oakparkconservatory@pdop.org. Pictures, cards, and stories

will be shared on social media to honor George and his connection to the community. Follow the Conservatory's Instagram page @OakParkConservatory to view the montage.

Memorials can be made in honor of George to support the continued care of the Oak Park Conservatory parrots at pdop.org/oakparkconservatory/donate.

About the Oak Park Conservatory: The Oak Park Conservatory, owned and operated by the Park District of Oak Park, is located at 615 Garfield Blvd. in Oak Park, Illinois. It carries the distinction as one of the top three historical sites in Oak Park, drawing over 50,000 visitors annually. Free to the public, The Oak Park Conservatory offers a rich atmosphere of flora and fauna throughout three indoor Conservatory showrooms including a Mediterranean room, Tropical room and Desert room. Urban outdoor gardens surround this city escape, representing Illinois native ecosystems in the outdoor Elsie Jacobsen Discovery Garden & Rubinstein Garden. Learn more at www.oakparkconservatory.org.

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