

In memory of

Cheryl Ann Durgan

Cheryl Ann Durgan, 59, of Gardiner Road died Wednesday, May 2, 2012, at her residence.

She was born in Troy, N.Y., on Jan. 14, 1953, a daughter of William H. and Rose P. (Snyder) Hoffman.

She graduated from Averill Park High School in New York in 1971. She attended many colleges and was recently attending University of Maine.

She was employed by the City of Bath as head of general assistance for 18 years. On Oct. 1, 2001, she was employed as activities director for Augusta Rehabilitation, Country Manor in Coopers Mills, Field Crest Nursing Home and as a coordinator for Catholic Charities in Augusta.

Cheryl Ann was always positive. She loved her birds, dogs and cats. She would go to the animal shelter frequently and come home with a new pet.

She was president of Maine State Caged Bird Society and president of the Capital Area Wheels R.V. Club/Good Sam.

She is survived by her husband, Richard A. Durgan, of Dresden; two sons, Bryan Lewis, and his wife, Alyason, of Maryland, and Brett Lewis and his wife, Melissa, of Maryland; one sister, Darlene R. Schnoop, and her husband, Mike, of Augusta; five grandchildren; many great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Eduard J. Hamilton

By Josef Lindholm III, Curator of Birds, Tulsa Zoo

I saw Elvis in Tijuana. It was Elvis in his decline, heavy-set, in that iconic white high-collared suit glittering with rhinestones. His hair was a brilliant orange yellow. But all that garishness did not compare to the burden he bore: Five boxy wooden cages, each with at least a dozen male Painted Buntings, strung down his back. It was the end of the day, and this bird seller was heading home. In those pre cell-phone days of the early '80's, I sorely wished I had a camera.

My guide was Ed Hamilton. Most of my visits to Mexico were in his company, including my first one in 1980. They were definitely aviculturally edifying. In those days there were stacks of cages along the street, filled with Painted and Indigo and Rainbow Buntings, and Northern Cardinals. There were also Emerald Toucanets and Green Jays. There might be a few Silky Flycatchers, ornate relatives of the Phainopepla. Those were usually sold by the same person who offered Jilgueros (Brown-backed Solitaires) and Clarinos (Slate-colored Solitaires), prized songbirds. In 1980, I found it disturbing that the value of these Solitaires, right there on the street in Mexico, was eighty US dollars, and wondered how long they could withstand such demand. Somehow, these two species (*Myadestes occidentalis* and *M. unicolor*) managed to do so, and today neither is considered at risk by conservationists.



On the other hand, the Green-cheeked (or Red-fronted) Amazon is today unarguably endangered, with a Mexican wild population of less than 2,000. In 1980, Ed showed me cardboard boxes full of half-grown chicks, their feathers treated with hydrogen peroxide, resulting in bright yellow heads combined with the red foreheads they already had. While munching an enormous pork rind he had bought out of another cardboard box on the sidewalk, Ed explained that because the Green-cheek was not valued as a talker, they were thus disguised and sold as "Azteca" Parrots. Similarly treated were the cages of Half moon (Orange-fronted) Conures, masquerading as Carolina Parakeets. Every so often some of these "enhanced" birds would appear over the border and cause some minor excitement.