

## AAV Member Spotlight: Lorelei Tibbetts, BS, LVT, VTS (Clinical Practice - Exotics)

It is with great pleasure that we present the AAV newsletter: Member Spotlight. This special feature showcases the association's most valuable asset—our members—by highlighting our diverse backgrounds, professional activities, experience, and geographic locations.



**Lorelei Tibbetts, BS,  
LVT, VTS (Clinical  
Practice-Exotics)**  
The Center for Avian and  
Exotic Medicine  
New York, NY USA  
**AAV Member Since 2004**

If you would like to be featured in this section, or would like to suggest a fellow member to profile, please complete the [Member Spotlight Questionnaire](#) today.

### What was the first bird job you ever had?

Other than owning birds since I was 6, my first job with birds was as a kennel assistant at a mixed small animal practice in NYC.

### Most memorable AAV experience or contribution?

Being invited to a board meeting many years ago. I was overwhelmed with how professional and committed the board was to making AAV better. Seeing how the business side worked towards making positive changes really inspired me to be a part of not only AAV committees, but to take part in other professional organizations. And I was also thrilled to see so many vets welcoming my input as a technician.

### What is your favorite avian species and why?

Wow... changes daily. Probably the Aratinga conures. I love how they are so loving and affectionate and also so bossy and playful. And oddly, I love noise, so the screaming is generally OK for me.

### What was the last interesting avian medical or surgical issue you dealt with in your work?

We are currently managing a very serious burn injury to both legs of a male peacock requiring a tremendous effort from the entire team with daily wound management, supportive care, multiple surgical debridements, all while trying to keep that tail intact! Not easy in a small NYC hospital.

### Best benefits of AAV membership?

The Journal of Avian Medicine and the annual conference are great, but for me I really like meeting and getting to know other professionals who work with and love birds. I guess it's the combination of the continual education with like-minded professionals!

### If you had not chosen your present career, what would you be doing?

I cannot imagine not working with exotic animals. Maybe back to my college job of bartending (also sort of working with exotic animals...)

### What was your favorite class or activity in vet school/vet tech school/college?

I really feel like I had a great vet tech education. The stand-out classes for me were pharmacology, physiology, and the large animal course.

### Describe an anecdote that would be of interest to your colleagues

When I graduated from journalism school and moved to NYC, I was bartending and unfulfilled. My mom told me about a woman who she met who owned a restaurant and a veterinary hospital, and knowing that I was unhappy and loved birds, she recommended that I call her to look for work at either or both of her businesses. Like most 21-year-olds, I told her to stop telling me what to do and ignored her. Almost 2 frustrating years later, I sent letters to every veterinary hospital in the city that saw birds hoping I could volunteer or get my foot in the door. I got 1 response, took the job immediately, and fell in love with all of it. It wasn't until almost a year into that job that my mom and I realized that it was the same hospital owned by the woman my mom told me about years before! Proof that fate is real... or, that we should listen to our mothers.