

Obituary

Dr. Janice Dinegar Boyd

The spirit of *Dr. Janice Dinegar Boyd* took flight over Texas on October 27, 2022, after a brief illness. Janice was born May 7, 1946, in White Plains, New York. Janice was four years old when her family moved to Los Alamos, New Mexico where she found her love for nature and wildlife in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. In high school, Janice studied sciences and math, along with German and Russian, and spent her free time in the school science labs creating numerous projects. Her studies in German were invaluable, reading scientific research written in German, as she worked to complete her senior science fair project for the International Science Fair entitled “Quantization of Direction in a Magnetic Field - the Stern-Gerlach Experiment”. After high school,



Dr. Janice enrolled as an undergrad at the University of Michigan earning degrees in Physics and Mathematics and then a few years later completed a Master’s degree in Natural Resources. Janice wasn’t sure what to do immediately after graduation, so she took a programming job working under a prominent oceanographer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She earned her Ph.D. in Oceanography at Texas A&M in 1986 and held a 20-year position at the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) in Mississippi. As the years went by, Janice found herself ready for something new. Around the same time, she adopted her first pet parrot named “Paula” and became interested in parrot conservation. NRL’s Gulf Coast location was a convenient jumping-off point to visit parrot conservation areas in Central and South America. One of those areas was the Tambopata National Reserve in Peru where she eagerly collaborated on several research projects, including a multiyear study that used tracking collars to monitor wild parrots’ migration patterns. Janice continued to work in oceanography but periodically took unpaid leave to return to her work with parrots.

In 2011, Dr. Janice decided she was ready to leave oceanography for good and returned to Texas A&M where she supported research projects and students in the area of parrot conservation. She purchased her own breeding colony of great green macaws providing her with subjects for her recent critical niche research project specifically focused on the genetic makeup of *Ara ambiguous*, commonly known as the great green macaw. The great green macaw, native to neotropical rainforests, is an endangered parrot species aesthetically similar to the military macaw - so similar, in fact, that they are often confused for one another in areas where their populations overlap. “I wanted to discover my macaws’ ethnic heritage, how closely related they were to military macaws, and if there were any genetic hybrids between the two.” Dr. Boyd’s generous support of avian research also brought her to the Lacandon Jungle of Mexico where she brought her energy and scientific professionalism to help improve protocols and implement better strategies to recover species of endangered scarlet macaws. In addition, through Texas A&M University and the University of Chicago/Field Museum, Janice mentored and supported numerous graduate students working in the fields of exotic bird conservation and the genomics of great green macaws. Janice was a dedicated aviculturist and a great supporter of wild parrot conservation initiatives.

Dr. Janice Dinegar Boyd was preceded in death by her mother, Ann Knolle Dinegar, and her father, Rev. Dr. Robert Hudson Dinegar. Janice is survived by her sister, Barbara Dinegar Menicucci (David) of Albuquerque, NM and her brother, Robert W. L. Dinegar (Kay) of Colorado Springs, CO.

Her ashes and the ashes of her special pets will be interred in Los Alamos, NM. A Celebration of Life will be held in College Station, TX in January 2023.

In lieu of flowers, please consider continuing her legacy by donating online to the “Avian Health Fund” or the “Wild Bird Health Fund” through The Association of Avian Veterinarians <https://www.aav.org/donations/>