

Spring 2010

Special Edition

Volume 30, #1

TreeHouse Droppings



TreeHouse's New Habitat

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30+ years of giving back to the wild

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Pam Lippert
Sherry Droste

*TreeHouse Wildlife Center has
two full-time staff members
paid through a grant.
All other staff are volunteers.

Volunteers

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If you have an animal in need of
rehabilitation please continue to use
the Brighton phone number
until further notice
(618) 372-8092 — Brighton

If you have a few hours a week to
spare, and you would like to
become a volunteer,
please contact Sherry at
(618) 466-2990 — Dow
or

www.treehousewildlifecenter.com

(The only requirement is that you are
at least 16 years of age,
unless accompanied by an adult)

TreeHouse Wildlife Center, Inc.
23956 Green Acres Road
Dow, Illinois 62022

From The President

by Lynn Schreiber

Do I believe? Six years ago our Board of Directors spearheaded a campaign to seek one-time capital funding for a new facility that would meet our needs well into the future. The Brighton center, already a quarter of a century old, continued to operate, but we desperately needed to relocate and enlarge our facility. It was a great plan, but due to the depressed economy and several other factors, funding did not come for the campaign to move forward as planned.

Less than six months ago, the board, frustrated and discouraged, voted to close TreeHouse at the end of 2010. It was also determined to gradually reduce operations by not admitting mammals during the 2010 season. The decision was not easy, nor without hesitation and anxiety. Yet having exhausted all other options, it appeared that the inevitable end was on the horizon.

As definite as that determination seemed, it was not the first time that a deadline had been proposed. In the last two years, the Board had met on other occasions to declare similar time frames for closing, but the deadlines came and passed seamlessly. Nobody was willing to make the final call, and everyone continued to operate as if nothing had happened -- with every hope that something still would. This was true testament to the endurance and persistence of a board that would not quit, and would not give up.

It is true that people will go to great lengths for the causes they believe in, even more so if they feel they are the only hope for those causes and solution to the problem. Because there was no other rehabilitation center in the region, the TreeHouse board felt that there was no other choice but to keep looking for the funding that would save our facility.

In February, we were presented with a very unique opportunity to purchase a large, contemporary rustic home on eight acres in Dow (Jersey County), with the idea that it could be transformed into a new facility for TreeHouse. Skeptical that a residence could be altered to fit our unconventional requirements, a few members of the board reluctantly went to visit the site out of curiosity.

What we saw upon our initial visit was a place that we instantly knew was "the one". The open design of the house and layout of the property were perfect, and it did not take long to envision how it could be modified to become both a rehabilitation center and environmental education center. In fact, this particular property offered so much potential and flexibility that the options seemed limitless. The Board assembled, and voted to pursue the Dow property for TreeHouse.

On the heels of that decision, plans were quickly set into motion for beginning a new fundraising campaign geared specifically for acquisition of the Dow property. A letter

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was sent to members, the media was contacted, and word began to spread about the extraordinary opportunity that TreeHouse was pursuing.

As always, our members contributed generously, and in three months, we raised the same amount of money that we had raised in the last four years. The confidence shown by the public and our supporters proved that this was something that they believed in for TreeHouse as well.

Making it actually happen came from thinking outside the box, and doing things as we had never done before. In the past, we had set goals for ourselves, but the timeframe had always been open-ended for fundraising. With the Dow property, there were contracts and deadlines, and we were forced to push ourselves beyond our limits of expertise in order to get things done. It was mentally challenging, emotionally exhausting, and our lives were temporarily put on hold as we worked to make the dream a reality. More than anything, we believed that this was our time, it was meant to be, and it was going to happen.

Belief in this new project came from not only our supporters, but from some unlikely sources that ultimately helped to open doors previously closed to us. We met a lot of enthusiastic people who dedicated themselves to our cause, some who weren't even members, but who went through extraordinary lengths to help us. It was truly a collaboration of so many efforts and random circumstances that came together to make it happen. We cultivated many new relationships, secured the trust of those who were skeptical, and in the end, took a giant leap of faith ourselves, that would see the plan through to fruition.

On June 30, we closed on the Dow property, making the Green Acres address the new home of TreeHouse Wildlife Center.

We are very excited about moving into the new facility that will incorporate the success of the past with revitalization for the future. The new center will feature several new components. An Environmental Education Center is being incorporated into the main building to provide on-site education programming that will offer activities and educational experiences for children, adults, and families. Enlarged and improved animal wards, nursery, and exam room will enhance the rehabilitation program significantly. A gift shop, conference room, and quarters for interns are additional projects planned for the near future.

While there is still much to do with cage building and other modifications, we look forward to seeing everyone at the new location. It is indeed like starting over, but with 30 years of experience, and looking back at all we have done to get where we are today, I can say, yes, I believe. We welcome the opportunity to continue the important efforts of the past, and to meet the new challenges and goals of the future, and we invite our members and supporters to share in the dream that we all helped to make a reality.



Calling All Volunteers! Calling All Volunteers!

by Sherry Droste

Do you like to build and paint and dig? Are you a super people person, or do you have a special knack with little kids? Is event planning and fundraising more your thing? Does an organized, efficiently-run office make you smile? How many of you would rather be outside with critters, dirt, grass and flowers?

With the move to our new home at 23956 Green Acres Road in Dow, Illinois, we are going to have such varied opportunities for volunteers, like you, to become actively involved in sustaining TreeHouse's mission.

Contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Sherry Droste, at 618.466.2990. She will be happy to send you a complete volunteer packet and application to get you started today!

IN HONOR OF

Dr Paul Myer and Donna Myer
Adele Moore
Mr & Mrs John Rogers, Edwardsville

Kevin & Lauren Humphrey &
Scott Moore
Carole Hemann

Rescue, Rehabilitate, Release, Rescue, Rehabilitate, Release

by Eric Bloemker

May 1, 2010, Dateline Grafton, Illinois



Photo by Carolyn Schlueter

If you haven't heard yet, your grapevine must have been down. It was a beautiful memorial for local environmentalist Bob Freeman, and many people attended. However, the Red-Tailed Hawk release did not quite go as planned.



Photo by Eric Bloemker

The hawk had its sights on Missouri. Missouri is a wee bit far across the Mississippi River at the release site, where the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers run side-by-side for quite a stretch. "Wrong Way Bob" decided to cross the rivers rather than fly toward the bluffs and woodlands.



Photo by Carolyn Schlueter

Unfortunately, having just come out of rehab, that distance proved too far. Twice he came close to the water surface. He almost made it to an island, but not quite, and adrift in the swift current, it appeared he would be a goner.

Andrea and Pam raced to Grafton Harbor and commandeered a pontoon boat and its captain, Joe DeSherlia. (Actually, they asked quite nicely, and he graciously volunteered to race downstream with the two ladies aboard. As it turns out, he had known Bob Freeman well.)

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Around this time, Grafton Police Chief Tim Connell ordered me into his police vehicle, and we raced down the River Road to attempt to follow the bird downstream. Fortunately, a log was floating near the bird and helped us track the whereabouts of the not-so wannabe waterfowl. The bird had traveled an astounding 2.0 miles downriver. Chief Connell did an excellent job of keeping an eye on the bird while radioing and telephoning various folks. When we learned that the rescue party had turned back thinking the bird was lost, Chief Connell relayed the phone tag to the pontoon captain, "Turn around! We're further downriver!"



Photo by Carolyn Schlueter



Photo by Eric Bloemker

Once again headed downstream, Joe, Pam and Andrea quickly caught up to the floating bird and plucked it from the Muddy Mississippi.



Photo by Eric Bloemker



Photo by Carolyn Schlueter

Wet and cold but alive, the bird needed warmth, and again, Chief Connell wasted no time in offering his quilted police jacket, as well as turning his vehicle into a sauna by running the heater full-blast.

"Wrong Way Bob" was taken back to TreeHouse for recovery from his ordeal. All agreed that if he got a second chance for release, we would "find a far inland site — with no water."

23 May 2010, Dateline Pere Marquette State Park

May 23 would have been Bob Freeman's birthday. He was a special person and a longtime friend of TreeHouse.

While the hawk's release at Bob's memorial did not follow the planned script, a *second* rehab session back at TreeHouse Wildlife Center got the message through to the raptor - "You're a hawk, not a duck."

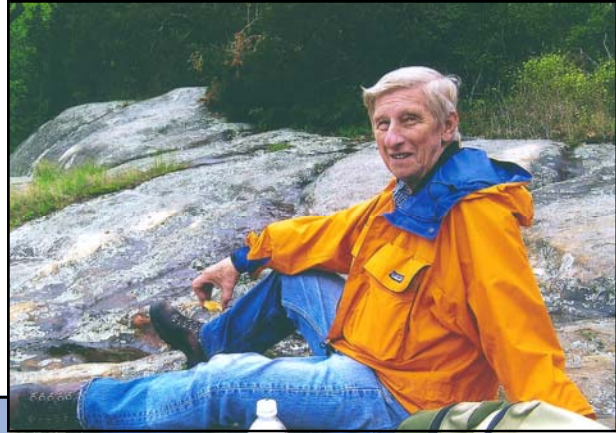


Photo provided by the Freeman Family



Photos by Cheryl Pride

Near the top of the hill in the park, the hawk was successfully re-released. Adele Moore did the honors to give "Bob" a lift off into the air. This time, he flew directly to a nearby tree limb. A few hops, and he was off to another tree. Now, gaining a sense of new surroundings, we watched him soar off above the tree line... and away from the rivers!

Should you be passing the Pere Marquette State Park area, look up. If you spot a red-tailed hawk in the dark morph, uncommon for this area, wish "Bob" happy hunting and point him inland.



A ceremony was held to present Grafton Police Chief Tim Connell and River Pontoon Captain Joe DeSherlia binoculars and framed photos of a very wet "Wrong Way Bob" wrapped in the police chief's quilted jacket for their service above and beyond the call of duty.



Education Director Appointed

Welcome to our new TreeHouse staff member, Sherry Droste, who is joining us as our first official Education Director. Sherry comes with 28 years of nature education experience and is also a certified teacher. She was with The Nature Institute in Godfrey for 28 years. During her long tenure with TNI, she served as a charter member of the Discovery Summer Camp staff and was the camp director for six years, and also filled the role of Education Director. Over the years, Sherry has developed and facilitated education programs for the US Army Corps of Engineers Riverlands office in West Alton, MO, the McCully Heritage Project in Kampsville, IL, and Regional Office of Education #40. Prior to her years as an outdoor educator, she was a classroom teacher in Jerseyville and Alton.



Sherry Droste, Education Director, seated in center

“This opportunity to work with TreeHouse is thrilling,” she says. “Having been a friend of TreeHouse since the early 1980s, I have had the good fortune to become familiar with the invaluable services they provide to wildlife. Marrying a full-blown education program with the rehabilitation work they do is only logical,” says Droste. “Our kids are our future leaders and decision-makers. Unfortunately, so many of them have a limited concept of the interdependent relationship between nature and people. They don’t have the comfortable connection to the outdoors that I did as a child – playing in the creek, hiking in the woods and observing wildlife up close and personal. We need to do all we can to cultivate that relationship.”

Beginning this fall, TreeHouse will be able to provide educational programming at its new location in Dow. With woods, a pond, a meadow, a nature center – and most importantly – real, live wildlife – to share with schools and the general public, Droste says it couldn’t be a better situation. Programs will also be available at school sites and for scout and youth organizations and church and civic groups.

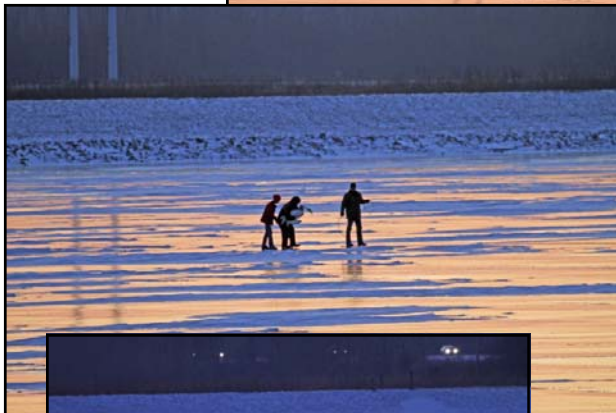
If you are interested in learning more, or scheduling a program, call Sherry at our Dow habitat at 618.466.2990. Watch for more detailed information on our web site as well: www.treehousewildlifecenter.com.

Rehab Ramblings

by Pam Lippert

Trumpeter Swans

TreeHouse received a record number of Trumpeter Swans (six) this winter, five of which came from in or near the Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area in West Alton.



The first swan was noticed December 31 as it sat on the ice near the edge of Teal Pond, lethargic. When approached, the swan would move to open water in the middle. This situation continued until it was finally able to be captured on January 9, when the ice was thick enough to safely walk on.

Photos by James Broyles

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Rehab Ramblings continued from page 8

Meanwhile, a similar situation was taking place in O'Fallon, Illinois. Neighbors had been monitoring a Trumpeter Swan who had been sitting in one spot for several days on their subdivision lake.



Photo provided by Indian Springs Subdivision Neighbors

On January 14, Adele and some of the neighbors walked a small boat out on the ice to retrieve the bird. Unfortunately, as the swan was being placed in the car, it expired. Judging by the behavior this bird exhibited during its time on the ice, we believe lead poisoning had a hand in its demise.

Other swans showing signs of lead poisoning were picked up on January 25, 27, and February 8.

Another swan was found below a power line in West Alton on January 11 with a fracture above the ankle. Unfortunately it had to be euthanized, but the US Fish and Wildlife Service notified the power company about the problem and they are taking steps to put up visual floaters on the power lines to alert birds from crashing into them.

Trumpeter Swans may be found overwintering in the Alton area. These are extremely large birds with a wingspan of nearly eight feet, and weights ranging from 21 to 35 pounds. The swans have a lifespan of 20 to 30 years.

All six Trumpeters we admitted were suffering from lead poisoning. Spent lead shot from decades of hunting lies at the bottom of our local waterways. Waterfowl ingest this shot, which to them resembles pondweed seeds. The shot breaks down in the bird's digestive system and the lead is drawn into the blood stream. All the swans were extremely emaciated – 21 pounds and lower – and subsequently died despite efforts to treat them.

Bald Eagle Gains Independence on July 3

July 3, 2010, dateline Hartford

by Eric Bloemker –

Family and friends of the late Roger Murphy met Saturday with representatives from TreeHouse Wildlife Center to release an American Bald Eagle back into the wild. Mr. Murphy served on the TreeHouse Wildlife Center's Board of Directors until his passing. The release itself was performed by Brennan Murphy, son of Roger, and Pam Lippert of TreeHouse Wildlife Center along the flooded Mississippi riverbanks behind the Lewis and Clark Museum near Hartford, Illinois.

This eagle was injured and captured late last winter to be treated for suspected lead poisoning. Eagles and all raptors are susceptible to lead poisoning by ingesting hunter's small lead shot that made another bird easier prey. Pam Lippert said, "This eagle entered TreeHouse Wildlife Center's rehabilitation treatment more emaciated than any other bird we've been able to release back into the wild." The dedication and countless hours volunteers and staff alike devote to making it possible for wildlife to live once again the wild as truly amazing as the recovery itself. Use of steel shot is recommended for hunting in the Mississippi River valley where eagles and other raptors hunt throughout the year.

Releasing an American Bald Eagle on this Independence Day weekend brings special meaning to all Americans and wildlife lovers alike. As the symbol for our country, all Americans should be able to see an American Bald Eagle soaring in the skies above them. Though their numbers declined greatly over the years, the American Bald Eagle is making a comeback. Recently, it was moved from the National Endangered List to the National Threatened List. It remains highly protected under various laws.



Photos by
Dr. Linda Whittingham



Photo by Cheryl Pride



Photo by Cheryl Pride

Rehab Ramblings continued from page 9

Oreo the Osprey

On April 27 we admitted an Osprey. These state-endangered birds feed almost exclusively on fish, by plunging into the water much as an eagle does.

This bird was found on the ground in a yard in Olney, Illinois, and a little girl in the neighborhood named it "Oreo". It had no broken bones, but had severe bruising on its side, probably the result of some type of collision.



For rehabilitators, Osprey are challenging, to say the least, because of their unwillingness to eat in captivity. I tried the obvious – live fish. Nothing. Deciding after a couple days that I wasn't going to let the bird starve itself to death, I began force feeding it chopped up pieces of fish. Surprisingly it was tolerant – it even seemed to look forward to it. I tried live fish again and you guessed it, it went after them! This was huge because it was the first time I had been able to get an Osprey to eat on its own.

On June 20, Oreo was released at East Fork Lake in Olney, not far from where it was found. This was the seventh Osprey ever admitted to TreeHouse, but the first to be released.

Photos by Bruce Peters



Rehab Ramblings continued from page 12

Eagles

Three Bald Eagles were admitted this winter. The first one, a two-year-old bird from Hardin died 24 hours after admittance. The carcass was shipped to a federal laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin to determine cause of death. The necropsy ("autopsy" for animals) report indicated severe aspergillosis (a fungal infection) which was probably secondary to something else (possibly lead poisoning).

The second eagle, a four-year-old from Good Hope, Illinois, in McDonough County, was shot in the wing. Despite months of treatment, part of the wing had to be amputated, and the bird will possibly become a permanent resident.

The third eagle came from Anderson Lake Fish and Wildlife Area in Fulton County. It was the most emaciated eagle I have ever seen survive. We began treatment immediately for lead poisoning. When the lab report came back it was negative for lead; however, the blood sample was taken after one round of treatment. The bird survived and was released July 3. (See pages 10-11: *Bald Eagle Gains Independence on July 3*).



Good Hope eagle
Photo by Adele Moore

CONGRATULATIONS

Bill McCord

Winner of the Bobcat print
during the TreeHouse booth raffle at the
"Let's Go Fishing" show

Check out
**HAPPY TAILS
THRIFT SHOP
IN
EDWARDSVILLE**

ADOPTIONS

Bradley Doubet adopted an orphaned Screech-Owl
Clara Doubet adopted an orphaned Great Horned Owl
Clarence & Sue Garvin adopted Chuckles the Red Fox
South Roxana Elementary School adopted Spuds the Bald Eagle
Kurt Werder adopted an orphaned possum and Lucy the Kestrel

Hummer Holiday

by Andrea Crabtree

In early December, 2009 I received a phone call. The woman on the line asked hesitantly, "Should I still have a hummingbird coming to my feeder?" "NO!" I exclaimed, probably blowing her eardrum in doing so.

The caller introduced herself as Gayle, a Jerseyville resident. Of course, the first thing I needed to do was verify that she actually had a hummingbird. Often callers mistake what they're seeing for something else (lots of "eagles," for example, turn into hawks on their way to TreeHouse). I knew, however, that since she was already familiar with hummingbirds, she was probably host to a wayward Rufous Hummingbird, a western species that sometimes ends up on the "wrong" side of the Rockies during its fall migration.



Through the gift of technology, the answer was almost instantaneous. The photo she promptly emailed me was of a hummingbird, not a native Ruby-Throated, either. It was almost surely a Rufous.

Much to my relief, Gayle was ready to take on the challenge of keeping a wild hummingbird alive in harsh winter weather. Her husband rigged a heat lamp so that the feeder wouldn't freeze, and when they had to go out of town, she practically made her daughter and son-in-law swear to keep the nectar available at the right times and monitor it for ice.

Word travels fast, even when you don't expect it to. I mentioned the find to a birder friend who frequents the "birding" list-serves for the region. He innocently mentioned it in one of his postings, and the news caught fire. On December 7, out of the blue, I received an email from Keith McMullen of O'Fallon, Illinois. Keith very respectfully requested access to the bird, but for good reasons. He is one of three people who report to the American Birding Association their unusual finds for the states of Indiana and Illinois. These finds must be properly documented, for their verification is what researchers need to study these types of phenomena.

Gayle was understandably hesitant. She didn't know me, and neither of us knew Keith. If it weren't for Keith's extreme politeness (and repeated guarantees of protecting Gayle and her home from crazy birders from all over the region) and my agreement to escort

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Keith to the house (with additional guarantees of “no crazed birders”), Gayle may have said “no.” I knew, however, that she wanted to help this bird and help science know more about it. So, late on a gloomy afternoon I met Keith in Jerseyville and we went over to the house and waited motionless at Gayle’s sliding –glass door for nearly half an hour. The little traveler finally made a few appearances before darkness began to settle in, and Keith got the photo documentation he needed.

Over the next few weeks Keith and I were in touch with state experts, who wanted permission to trap, band, and release the bird. Gayle agreed, but basically on one condition: that TreeHouse be allowed to transport the bird to the gulf coast to enhance its chances of survival. Such permission was denied from our federal Fish and Wildlife Service office; they view such wanderers as possibly genetically “flawed” and therefore do not want to artificially maintain them within the Rufous gene pool. Hmm.

So, we let nature take its course, so to speak. TreeHouse’s own Judy Neiman had a Rufous once; I asked her how long it stayed. She said it disappeared after a 9-degree night. Just before New Year’s, a cold winter blast arrived and Gayle kept me informed each day when the guest would arrive for its breakfast. January 1 was the last day the bird was seen; the temperature dropped below 8 degrees that night.

We were very saddened, but the nail-biting was over. Since Gayle and her husband never found any sign of the bird on January 2, we hoped at least there was a slim chance that the bird departed Jerseyville for a warmer climate. In at least one instance, one of these birds was known to reappear in subsequent years at the same feeder, so it’s possible that Gayle will see her friend again.



FUN TreeHouse Raptor FACTS!

compiled by Andrea Crabtree

Since 1979,

...**131** of the once-rare Cooper's Hawks have been admitted, **75%** of them within the past 10 years. Only 28 Sharp-Shinned Hawks, a more-common relative, have ever been admitted. This may be attributable to the fact that the Cooper's is here year-round, unlike the migratory Sharp-shin, and to the fact that the Cooper's population, once decimated by DDT, has finally rebounded.



Cooper's Hawk release at SIU-E
(bird is exiting photo near top right).
Photo by Dr. Elaine AbuSharbain

...**43** Bald Eagles have been admitted. Oddly, only 40 of the much-more numerous Turkey Vultures have ever been admitted.

..."Night birds" outnumber "day birds:" **2105** owls have been admitted, versus **1758** hawks, eagles, falcons, & vultures.

...Kestrels are our most common raptor patients: we've admitted **889** of them. Great Horned Owls come in second, at **825**.

... Barred Owls (**604**), Screech-Owls (**585**), and Red-Tailed Hawks (**540**), are all vying for third place. Screech-Owl admissions have dropped dramatically for unknown reasons, however, with an average of only 10 – 15 birds a year since 2000. From 1990 to 2000, the average was 25 – 30 each year.

...the West Nile Virus epidemic of 2002 contributed to the admission of **99** Great Horned Owls that year, shattering the record of 40 birds during 1999. Most of the 2002 birds arrived in August and September. Less than a dozen of the WNV-affected Great Horned Owls recovered well enough to be released.

...because of WNV, 2002 was the record year for raptor admissions: **244**.

The Owlet From Green Acres Road

Text and pictures by Lynn Schreiber



On a warm spring morning in April, I received a call from a woman who had found an owlet at the base of her tree. I drove to the property just north of where I live, to Green Acres Road, just a few doors down from the property that TreeHouse was considering. There I found the Barred Owlet, covered in down, and too young to fly.

The bird had fallen from an open cavity, high up in a dead trunk of an enormous tree, and the woman explained that many generations of owls had come from this same nest year after year. An adult Barred Owl could be seen poking up out the top of the cavity, and she spread her wings out over the remaining cavity not covered by her breadth, presumably to provide shade to the owlets still beneath her.

We raised a ladder and I tried to climb up to put the baby back in the cavity, but the ladder was too short, and because the rotted trunk wavered from the weight of it, the attempt to replace the owl was abandoned. With several predators known to live in the vicinity, the decision was made to take the owlet to TreeHouse.



Two Barred Owls peeking out of their nest cavity. Mom is in a nearby tree, and their sibling is on the ground.

The owlet had to spend the night with me before I could get it to TreeHouse. I had been so preoccupied with the property acquisition that I had not been out to the center in several weeks, so having the owlet to observe for a brief time was welcome therapy, and proved to have greater personal significance as well.

For months I had anguished over the realization that TreeHouse might be closing, and in recent weeks, had begun to distance myself emotionally from the animals and the center, trying to prepare myself for the inevitable end that appeared to be coming. Yet here sat this little owlet from Green Acres Road, a helpless bundle of fluff, and as I watched him look about, I began to reflect, and remember the reasons why we do the work that we do.

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It reminded me of the importance of wildlife rehabilitation as it relates to the greater environmental community. Many wonder why we save one animal, or why we save a particular species. By saving these creatures, there are greater lessons to be learned that have wide ranging implications affecting everyone. All of these animals have significance. It is why their circumstances bring them to us, and they stand testament to the challenges and fragile complexities of the environment.

The animals that come to us would not survive without our help. History and experience have taught us that we can accomplish much more, in the greater scheme of things, by modeling compassion, tolerance, and understanding. We learn from these animals as they fulfill their role within the natural cycle, and the ultimate question becomes easy to answer: what lessons do we teach to future generations by helping an animal? What lessons do we teach, if we don't?

Birds and Oil Don't Mix

by Adele Moore

TreeHouse Wildlife Center has washed oiled waterfowl in the past—usually just one or two at a time—as they would land in waste-oil retention ponds at the refineries back in the day. We admitted 21 birds, however, during a 2,000-gallon diesel fuel spill on the Mississippi River on January 13, 1999. Dr. Erica Miller, DVM, and her staff from Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research Center in Delaware—one of two international oil-spill specialists—arrived to assist us. An 80-gallon hot water heater and water softener system were installed in our hospital building, and tubs, hoses, gloves, and gowns were purchased.

As a veteran wildlife rehabilitator, I've looked back on tasks I've had to master in the past 31 years that I had no clue at the beginning I'd be involved in. Euthanizing wildlife that have no chance to be returned to the wild comes to mind as one of the most depressing, but washing oiled birds is far and away the worst. Having been trained in this endeavor and experienced it firsthand during local spills, I can attest to the fact that it is one of the worst jobs a wildlife rehabilitator is called to do. To give you a little taste of what's going on in the Gulf of Mexico with the BP oil spill right now, the following are steps involved with cleaning an oiled bird.

Handling oil-soaked birds is inherently toxic, which necessitates wearing protective gowns and gloves. Once we're suited up, the prewashing duties begin. Because birds have no doubt ingested oil while trying to clean their feathers, the inside of their mouths are wiped out with gauze. Birds are given Pepto-Bismol™ to soothe their digestive tracts, as well as rehydrative fluids by way of a gavage tube inserted down into their gut. Sterile saline solution is applied to the eyes, and the wash line is set up.

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A high concentration of Dawn dish detergent is added to several tubs of water heated to 104 degrees. The water needs to be the same temperature as the bird's normal body temperature to help to cut the oil. The bird is washed and transferred from one tub to the next as each tub of water turns black with oil. Depending on the size of the bird, it takes anywhere from two to three people an hour to wash each bird. Feathers cannot be scrubbed, so great care is taken around delicate feathers, eyes and nostrils. Of course, someone has to be responsible to maintain the bird's head above the water, and in such a way that the bird cannot injure the caretakers. The washing continues tub to tub until the water remains clear.

At this point, the rinse cycle begins, and it ends when the bird is "rinsed dry." A sprayer is used to rinse the birds free of soap until the water starts beading up, leaving the feathers dry. This is where the term "water off a duck's back" comes into play. If the water does not bead up, there is soap or oil residue left on the bird and the washing process begins all over again. Towels and heat lamps complete the drying cycle. Everything associated with the cleaning has to be picked up and disposed of by hazmat crews—towels, gowns, gloves, tubs, and hoses, as well as wash and rinse water. The birds are monitored closely for a couple weeks to make sure they are eating and defecating normally, and they are exposed to pools of water to ensure feathers are fully waterproofed.

Good friend and colleague Dr. Erica Miller from Tri-State is often shown on television, washing birds at the BP oil spill. I know the TreeHouse crew was exhausted after washing just 21 birds. I cannot imagine washing the hundreds of birds—mostly pelicans—brought in from the BP spill. From what I understand, the Gulf oil cleaners have to pretreat their birds with vegetable oil to help cut the crude before washing can even begin. I don't know what's worse, the fumes from the oil or the sickening sweet smell of the high concentration of Dawn. In addition, you're bending over tubs all day, you're wearing hot-as-hell gowns and gloves, and you have your hands in 104-degree water trying to hold on to a slippery bird who's thinking only of escaping the predator that's holding on to him.



Dr. Miller, Adele and Mel washing a duck

Over the many years and throughout the world that this cleaning process has been refined, studies show that once oiled birds have been washed and released, the prognosis is a good one. The BP birds have to be sent elsewhere for release. In most cases, migration back to their breeding grounds ensures their survival—but in this particular spill, it will become a death sentence.

SCENES FROM AROUND THE CENTER AND BEYOND



Andrea holding a two-year-old Red-Tailed Hawk that had been struck by a truck and lodged in the grille.

Note the one red tail feather — it will be a mature bird next year sporting all red tail feathers.

This bird sustained a dislocated shoulder and broken feathers and was brought to the Bond County Humane Society before being transferred to TreeHouse.

The Red-Tail was released in Greenville.

Photo by Rebecca Clausen,
Bond County Humane Society

Ready, Set, Go!

Hawthorne Animal Hospital held their annual **Canine Easter Egg Hunt** at their Troy location.

Dogs of all shapes and sizes participated in the event that benefited TreeHouse.



Did you know that Hawthorne constructed a Free Dog Sports Park at their Troy location? The park is open seven days a week to the public and has a gated agility course.

Hawthorne's free Countryside Dog Park in Greenville is open seven days a week as well.

Photo by Adele Moore

SCENES FROM AROUND THE CENTER AND BEYOND

“Mess? What mess?” Orphaned Barred Owls after a night of partying.



Hershey, the dark morph Red-Tailed Hawk (like the one we released at Bob Freeman’s memorial) has been a permanent resident of TreeHouse since March 8, 1997. She roomed for almost 13 years with Becky, before her death last year, so we gave Hershey another roommate. Even though Hershey and Becky got along, Hershey found the new roommate more to her liking and immediately laid eggs (infertile) on the ground.



These orphaned Great Horned Owls with their foster mom look like they might be saying, “Don’t mess with momma!”

Photos by Adele Moore

Unfortunately two long term permanent residents will not be making the move to the new location.

Kohoutek, the Bald Eagle, a big gal who never failed to pose for a camera, passed away this spring.

For several years Kohoutek layed eggs every spring, so she possibly became egg bound due to her advanced age.



TreeHouse obtained Kohoutek in 1986 from an eagle breeding facility that had closed and she was a mature adult (at least five-years-old) at that time.



Kohoutek photos by
Don Johnson

Cody the Coyote passed this year on June 5. Cody was born the year of the great flood in 1993 in Hull, Illinois. A DNR officer found the young pup locked in a cage. The officer told the resident, who said he had saved the pup from the floodwater, that he would come back the next day to confiscate the pup.



Upon arrival the next day the officer found the cage door open and the pup missing. Meanwhile the local sheriff's department called DNR to report a mother had come home to find her son in his bedroom feeding a coyote pup beef jerky.

Due to the fact that "Cody" had become acclimated to humans, it was decided that she would become a permanent resident. By the way, young school children often choose the coyote as their favorite animal at TreeHouse



Photo by Adele Moore

IN MEMORY OF

William Wohnlich
Marjorie Johnson
Trixie Buffy the dog
Robert Clark, Godfrey

Jeff Keffer
Royal Marsh
Shadow the dog
Jenny Schwedt

Charlie Asbury (former volunteer)
Joan Lee Oram (volunteer Deana Browne's mother)



Photo by Adele Moore

Volunteer Mel McCann (with his back to us) is talking to the "Chili Guys" at open house. These two gentlemen have showed up at our event for more years than we can remember. They were the first ones to arrive, the first ones to order food, and left behind many silver dollars they spent on food and t-shirts. We always joked that open house is open for guests when we spotted these two walking up the driveway. With **Gordon Jasper's** (on the right) passing, Open House won't be the same.

THANK YOU

Dodge Moving & Storage, O'Fallon, Il
 First Unitarian Church, Alton
 Granite City High School Science Club
 Carol Heinz
 Michele Kasten

Thanks to the legions of you that are responsible for TreeHouse's new property acquisition, including, but not limited to:

Char McAllister and Lee Suarez
 Gordon Rahe, Cornerstone Bank, Jerseyville
 TreeHouse Members and Supporters

Jack McCann
 Jim Droste
 Patty Hagen

Pat McGinnis
 John Mabry
 Charlie Deutsch

TreeHouse Wildlife Center Financial Statement for 2009					
2008 Balance Forwarded	Checking			\$ 63,896.00	*
INCOME					
Earned Revenue					
Memberships		\$ 3,990.00			
Program Fees		\$ 1,825.00			
Donations <\$250		\$16,905.00			
Sales		\$ 195.00			
Bequests		\$ 2,630.00			
Miscellaneous		\$ 1,182.00			
Fundraisers					
Summer Solstice	\$ 905.00				
Italianfest	\$ 5,390.00				
Open House	\$ 9,276.00				
Other (Concert)	\$ 3,192.00				
	\$ 18,763.00	\$18,763.00			
Earned Revenue Total		\$45,490.00	\$ 45,490.00		
Contributed Revenue					
Foundation Grants		\$24,500.00			
Corporate Contributions		\$ 4,792.00			
Individual Gifts >\$250		\$ 7,750.00			
Events/Booths		\$ 2,745.00			
School fundraisers		\$ 175.00			
Contributed Revenue Total		\$39,962.00	\$ 39,962.00		
Earned & Contributed Total			\$ 85,452.00	\$ 85,452.00	
Restricted Revenue					
Building Fund				\$ 14,638.00	
Total Funds Available for use				\$163,986.00	\$ 163,986.00
EXPENSES					
Payroll (Salaries, Benefits, Taxes)	\$ 27,258.00				
Rehab: Feed, Meds. & Splys	\$ 14,198.00				
Utilities	\$ 10,096.00				
Fundraising	\$ 5,923.00				
Other	\$ 4,494.00				
Building Splys & Materials	\$ 3,112.00				
Vehicle Gas & Maintenance	\$ 3,068.00				
Office	\$ 2,979.00				
Total Operational Expenses	\$ 71,128.00				\$ 71,128.00
DECEMBER 31, 2009 BALANCE (Checking)					
					\$ 92,858.00
Building Investment Account (Money Market)					\$ 1,360.00
Building Investment Account (CD's)					\$ 6,562.00
					\$ 100,780.00

2009 Patient Census — 363

Mammals

4 Woodchucks
 3 Beaver
 3 Fox Squirrels
 56 Gray Squirrels
 2 Flying Squirrels
 2 Red Foxes
 2 Gray Foxes
 1 Coyote
 32 Fawns
 21 Opossums

126 Total Mammals

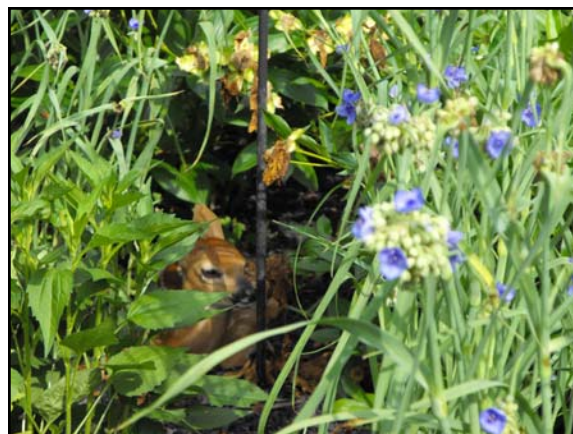
Birds

43 Mallard Ducks
 13 Wood Ducks
 20 Kestrels
 25 Great Horned Owls
 38 Barred Owls
 16 Canada Geese
 25 Red-Tailed Hawks
 1 Broad-Winged Hawk
 11 Screech-Owls
 7 Barn Owls
 1 Saw-Whet Owl
 14 Cooper's Hawks
 1 Sharp-Shinned Hawk

Birds continued

2 Peregrine Falcons
 1 Bald Eagle
 1 Turkey Vulture
 1 American White Pelican
 2 American Coots
 2 Hooded Mergansers
 1 Bonaparte's Gull
 8 Great Blue Herons
 1 Mute Swan
 1 Wild Turkey
 1 Killdeer
 1 Solitary Sandpiper

237 Total Birds



Can you find the fawn in the picture on the *left*?

Adult deer routinely leave their fawns for several hours a day while feeding.

The picture on the *right* shows the youngster bedded down to the left of the larger group of blue flowers in a yard in Collinsville. If the fawn looks bright and alert, leave it alone because the mother will return.

Photos by Adele Moore

TREEHOUSE WILDLIFE CENTER MEMBERSHIP

TreeHouse receives **NO** state, federal or county funding.
Our only funding comes through you, the concerned public.

One way of helping TreeHouse operate is through purchasing a membership.
You will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have helped us
give something back to the wild.

TreeHouse Membership fee consists of a minimum donation of
\$20.00 annually.

Senior Citizen Membership fee consists of a minimum donation of
\$15.00 annually

Lifetime TreeHouse Membership fee consists of a **one-time** minimum donation
of **\$1,000.00**.

- ☐ I would like to **renew** my membership to Treehouse Wildlife Inc.
- ☐ I would like to **become** a member of TreeHouse.
- ☐ I would like to make an **additional contribution** to TreeHouse.
- ☐ I would like to make a **donation** to the **TreeHouse Building Fund**.

Please check the appropriate box and mail this form with your donation.

☐ \$15.00 ☐ \$25.00 ☐ \$50.00 ☐ \$ _____ Other

- ☐ I would like information on becoming a **volunteer**.
- ☐ ☐ I would like information on **volunteering to staff a TreeHouse booth at fundraisers**

Send to:
TreeHouse Wildlife Center
1825 Fosterburg Road
Brighton, Il. 62012

If you would like to receive an expanded online color version of
TreeHouse Droppings by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to
treehousewildlifecenter@gmail.com

TreeHouse **does not** sell or share our mailing or e-mail lists with anyone.