

TreeHouse Droppings



Clockwise top l to r: Red foxes, Orphaned bobcat, Barred Owl foster mother with orphans

In this issue: Rehab Ramblings, Rescue Me, TreeHouse Wildlife Center Endangered Status, TreeHouse: A Day in the Life, The Start of Busy Season, Therapy Squirrel, Comings and Goings, Interns, Ed and BeeGee, Acknowledgements, Building Progress, Wildlife Explorers

35 years of giving back to the wild

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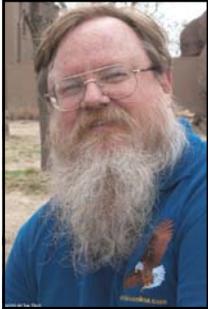
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PRESIDENT'S AERIE by Eric Bloemker



The days of complaining about the winter being too cold and too much snow are long over. Welcome the season of complaining about the heat and humidity. Wildlife never complains about the extremes of the weather. They cope as best they can. This winter TreeHouse was busy, and this spring was packed with hungry little critters. No sign that the summer will be any different.

All of us at TreeHouse thank you for your continued support. Without loyal members, we could not perform the job we are called to do. However, feeding all the abandoned and injured animals is taking its toll on us. Interns and volunteers are working overtime to keep up the feedings, and the food bills are high. It is one of our major expenses providing healthy food for those in our care. Whether permanent residents or those in for rehabilitation, getting good meals is essential for their well-being.

We've lost one of our a major sponsors and we need your help to provide for those animals in need this coming season. Additional support to the effort is greatly appreciated right now. We understand the economy is not improving, but wildlife does not realize this. Cash or checks are are always welcomed, but also consider donating stocks or bonds to avoid the capital gains. Even an old rusty vehicle can be donated. Be sure to check into your employer's gift matching program, too. Also, check out our wish list in this newsletter. Some items are in constant need, and reusing and recycling helps everyone.

Lastly, we are both excited and sad. Jennifer Yordy, TreeHouse Intern and handywoman, was accepted at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York as a graduate student. Cornell is partnered with the Smithsonian Institute headquartered in Washington DC, so Jennifer will be working with wild canids at the Smithsonian's facility in Virginia! We will greatly miss having Jen around to help Mel do whatever is needed at TreeHouse. Jen approaches every project with an open-mind, a can-do attitude, and a smile. Her new career eastbound is a credit to her hard work and dedication, but it is also a credit to all of you who support TreeHouse and provide opportunities for these young adults to serve as interns and learn. That learning spreads not just across this country, but worldwide. We'll miss Jen, but hope she'll come back for visits filled with great stories to tell.

Cheers.

REHAB RAMBLINGS by Pam Lippert

One of the more unusual and interesting admissions since the last newsletter was an adult female barn owl admitted in May from Roxana. It was found at the middle school with a fractured wing. One of the school employees had already captured it and put it in a box. Imagine my surprise when I opened up the box and discovered a barn owl, an endangered species in Illinois. I was trying to figure out why a barn owl would be in that area because they prefer flat, open habitat for hunting; and tree cavities, barns and old buildings for nesting. Then I realized the refinery property is not far, and is flat and open for the most part. There are some unused buildings at the refinery, so maybe there are some in that area. We would be interested to know if any employees have ever observed them. The barn owl had surgery to pin the wing and is healing, hopefully to be released.



Two bald eagles were admitted since the beginning of the year, both suffering from lead poisoning. Eagles ingest lead from (1) eating an animal that has ingested lead shot or sinkers while foraging (ducks, geese, swans), (2) scavenging a deer carcass that was killed with lead shot.

The first eagle was found north of Kampsville laying flat in the woods. It had a very high level of lead, 6-7 ug/dl. After about three rounds of treatment, it came down to an acceptable level. It has not yet been released as it had some vision deficit when placed in the flight cage. This could be due to the lead poisoning.

The second eagle came a month later from Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge at Brussels. Employees noticed the bird on the ground on one of the levee roads around Swan Lake. It was an adult and would go into the water when approached and then swim back. When we approached it flew low to some riprap and stayed put. Employees were able to launch a boat and capture it, but unfortunately the bird died two days later. Lab tests showed it also had a significant level of lead of 2 ug/dl. Additionally the necropsy done by a veterinary pathologist showed significant heart damage.

As far as nesting goes, we were fortunate to have several active eagle nests in our area this spring. The only great thing about having such a long winter is it took a long time for the trees to leaf out and these nests and the adults sitting on them, and in some cases the young hatchlings, were available for everyone to enjoy photographing and viewing.

RESCUE ME by Judy Neiman

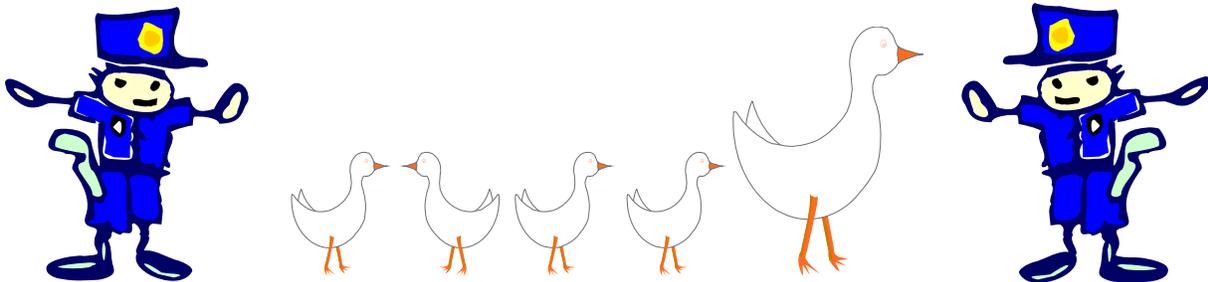
For some reason female mallards will often make their nests in the strangest places. We have had several mallards make their nest in the safety of a courtyard not realizing there is no way to get the ducklings out once they have hatched.

We got a call from Memorial Hospital in Belleville about a duck who made her nest in a courtyard designed for relaxing breaks for the employees and patients. When we arrived we were greeted with two armed guards who escorted us into the enclosure. There is an area to unwind, lots of plants and bushes and a relaxing stream running the length of the enclosure.

We found the mother and babies hiding under one of the bushes. I quickly grabbed her before she flushed and I put her in a crate. Now the hard part of the rescue was done.

If the mother flies off we have no choice but to take the babies and raise them at Treehouse. So with mom safely in a crate we turned our attention to capturing the babies. They quickly began to scatter in all directions. We caught five, six, seven and eight. The rest went into hiding so we began listening for their peeps. Suddenly two ran towards the armed guards but apparently they were too scared of the babies to grab them. Nine then ten. Now only one to go. The last one jumped in the stream and floated down under a foot bridge. My husband Jack laid on his belly put his whole arm into the water to reach under the bridge and grab the last of the ducklings.

With all the youngsters and mom in tow we proceeded a couple of thousand feet to a lake. There we opened the crates. Mom emerged and called incessantly to her babies. They came from their crate and rejoined her along the shore. Then they all swam to the center of the lake glad to be reunited.



TREEHOUSE WILDLIFE CENTER ENDANGERED STATUS

by Sharon Gwillim

TreeHouse Wildlife Center opened its doors in 1979 in Brighton, Illinois, after Adele, our founder, nursed an injured rabbit back to health and released it back into the wild. We've grown through the years, and eventually we outgrew our original facility and began the search for a new property with the space to allow us even more growth. A local private foundation stepped in and helped us secure a new property in Dow, Illinois. This was an exciting development as the new facility enabled us to make our permanent resident exhibits open to the public on a daily basis, as well as to expand our education programs.

Since purchasing the property we have been busy converting the house into a rehabilitation clinic and environmental education center, complete with living quarters for interns. We have also been building enclosures and habitats to house both rehab patients and our resident education animals. Most recently, construction was completed on a new flight training complex for rehabbed birds to test their wings and hunting capabilities. This innovative new structure, funded by grants from Ameren Illinois and the Arthur L. and Elaine V. Johnson Foundation, is extensively reconfigurable to meet the constantly changing needs of TreeHouse's patients. The structure includes an interior flight "track" that can change from 12 to 216 feet simply by sliding movable dividing walls, allowing recovering raptors to fly in a continuous circuit as they build up their flight muscles.

TreeHouse Wildlife Center is currently in peril of landing on its own "endangered list". These are difficult times for all non-profits, and we are no exception. On average, it costs \$12,000 per month for us to stay in operation. This includes food and medical care for wildlife patients and resident education animals, mortgage, utilities, salaries for one full-time clinic supervisor and three part-time assistants, as well as cleaning supplies and necessary items for general day to day operations.

TreeHouse does not receive government funding of any kind. Donations from the public, memberships, fundraisers, grants, and fees from outreach programs keep TreeHouse in operation. We invite you to take the time to come out for a visit and see first-hand what we do on a daily basis, and all of the ways in which we have been giving back to the wild for 35 years.

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Last year alone, TreeHouse admitted 464 birds, mammals, and reptiles, including a number of Illinois endangered species. Now that “baby season” has arrived, we are currently caring for over 90 patients, in addition to 45 non-releasable resident animals that delight and educate visiting members of the public.

The food bill for these patients and permanent residents is huge. During baby season the cost rises dramatically for a few months, as our total number of patients will continue to grow, and we will need to purchase specialized milk replacement formulas for each mammal species we admit.

It costs about \$60 to feed one great horned owl, \$30 for a barred owl, and \$20 for each kestrel or screech owl for a month or \$75 to feed a fox kit orphan until it can be weaned and released. This does not include the electricity for their heat and lighting, medicine for any illness that may present itself, or the hours upon hours of volunteer and staff labor devoted to the animals’ care.

Please take the time to read the enclosed story about a rehabber’s day at TreeHouse. I hope that reading this letter and story will inspire you to help us to help wildlife in any way you can. Share this letter, make a donation, or volunteer at TreeHouse, and join our mission of giving back to the wild.

TREEHOUSE: A DAY IN THE LIFE

by Jennifer Yordy

During the spring, every day at TreeHouse begins in the nursery. An animal care technician or volunteer turns on the lights and wakes up a roomful of opossums and squirrels of different ages, all ready for their morning feeding. There are probably a few turtles as well, and maybe a couple of fox kits or un-weaned coyote pups. Perhaps there is a baby groundhog or a flying squirrel. The animal care tech goes to the refrigerator and starts pulling out different types of formula and carefully heating them to the proper temperature. Then it is time to feed. Young squirrels are fed by hand from a syringe, opossums coaxed into lapping formula from a dish, and foxes bottle-fed until they too can drink from a dish. For some people it might be difficult to resist talking to the baby animals, petting them and playing with them. But for a rehabber it isn’t hard at all. A rehabber knows that a fox or coyote that is too curious about humans—even a squirrel that sees humans as anything but a threat—will quickly end up dead in the wild.

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And that is what TreeHouse is all about—that’s why we spend our days scrubbing down cages, preparing their food and hauling food and water across the grounds to our rehab patients and our resident education animals, and folding load after load of laundry. Wildlife rehab is hard work. It is physically as well as emotionally demanding, and it requires a level of commitment rarely found in most lines of work. We do it so that we can know that it is done right. When people bring us animals that they find injured or orphaned, in need of help, they are entrusting us with the responsibility to do what is best for that animal. We take that trust seriously. The animals at TreeHouse aren’t there for our benefit; we are at TreeHouse for theirs.

Every day, TreeHouse receives calls from people in the community who have found wild animals they believe need help. In the spring, we often receive a dozen or more wildlife calls in a day. To me, responding to these calls is the most important thing that TreeHouse does. We are often asked, “Why do you take squirrels?” or, “Why do you take fawns? Aren’t deer over-populated?” And yes, it is true that many of the species TreeHouse takes in are doing just fine, and probably would continue to do just fine, as a population, without wildlife rehabbers. But my answer to this is that TreeHouse serves a larger purpose than the obvious one of helping animals that can’t help themselves. More to the point, we help *people* who want to help animals but lack the knowledge or resources to do so.

A person who sees an owl hit by a car or finds a baby squirrel that has fallen from its nest and feels the pull to help that helpless animal connects with nature in a profound way. TreeHouse exists to foster that connection. Someone who finds an injured animal and wants to help it but discovers that he is unable to do so might move on from that experience with a more jaded and cynical attitude. TreeHouse gives people an avenue through which they can truly rescue an animal in need. When a person is able to save the life of an animal he felt an urge to help, a lifelong connection with nature can be forged from a brief moment of compassion.

At TreeHouse, the day ends where it began. With all the animals fed and cared for, the floors mopped and laundry put away, and all the babies settled in for the night after their final feeding, an animal care tech turns out the lights and locks up. A day at TreeHouse is exhausting, unpredictable, and sometimes frustrating, but without fail it is rewarding. Every day there is something that makes what we do worthwhile—a successful release, a sign of improvement in a critical patient, or a conversation with a visitor who grew up thinking that opossums were vermin and now understands their value to an ecosystem. Every day brings new challenges. Every day brings new frustrations and worries. But most importantly, every day brings us new reasons to rise up, put on our work boots, and fulfill our responsibilities to the animals and the people who entrust them to us.

THE START OF THE BUSY SEASON by Rachael Heaton

The piercing sound of the Bald Eagle rings out as the sun rises on a spring morning. The hawks carefully preen their feathers with the morning dew. The foxes stretch and yawn before trotting up onto one of their platforms to survey their surroundings. It's a new day at TreeHouse. It marks the end of winter and the beginning of spring. The turtles in the back pond begin to unearth themselves from the mud and come out to bask in the warm weather. The plants start to re-awaken from their winter dormancy and come into bloom much to the delight of the returning pollinators. The cottontails munch on the clovers and dandelions before preparing to build their nests. It is a season of life.



Of course, the season of life also comes with it a new time of struggle to make it in this vast, wild world. This struggle has surely been felt at TreeHouse. Our spring baby season kicked off with a bang. The spring storms and tree trimmings caused the destruction of numerous nests and many mothers lost their lives crossing roads in search of food for their young ones. It is now the end of May and our baby count total is up to 175 animals.

It has been an unusual baby season, perhaps in part due to the harsh winter our area experienced. Normally it is a big deal to even admit one fox squirrel here, but within a few weeks of each other, we admitted eight orphans this year. It could just be a fluke year for them but it leaves us speculating on



whether or not the difference in weather is related. Perhaps the fox squirrels do better when there is a harsher winter? Gray squirrels tend to out-compete fox squirrels so perhaps the winter kept the gray squirrels in their nests longer. After all, we received the fox squirrel orphans before the gray squirrels started to roll in. No wildlife rehabber would ever complain however. Fox squirrels are easier to work with than grays. There was more than one round of bantering amongst the volunteers on who would get to release them.

Another animal that appears to have been affected is the opossum. Opossum orphans were almost completely absent from the first round of spring baby season. Opossums are not well adapted to colder environments due to their tail,

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feet and ears being devoid of fur. The opossum joeys started coming through our doors towards the end of the first round of spring baby season and have picked up more with the beginning of the second round which begins around the end of May. We just recently



joey. All of the come in so far have color that we see in observations over the warmer winters tend occurrence of black through our doors show a very low absence of the black orphans. This year has proven no different, leaving us to speculate whether or not the black opossums are even less equipped for whatever reason to survive the harsher winters.

Finally, the most unusual phenomenon that has occurred at TreeHouse this year is the admittance of fourteen red fox kits. Generally in this area, we hear reports of red foxes with litters of around three to four kits. On a normal year, three to four kits is about how many we see come through our center. This year however we were getting reports of foxes having about six to eight kits. Unfortunately, one of these litters lost their mother to a car and all six kits were admitted at our center as well as a few weeks later. We also admitted one kit who was from a litter of eight who had not his siblings. The rest their own. Thirteen kits have survived to the delight of our foster foxes, Zorro our gray fox, and



help us raise orphan foxes every year. They care for them, make sure they all are well fed, and teach them what it takes to be a fox. Of course, Chuckles and Zorro are used to only fostering three or four kits. When we first introduced this army of kits to them, they seemed a little in shock at first. Fortunately, they fell into their role as foster parents rather quickly. Chuckles had been waiting for this moment for she had already started calling to the kits a couple weeks before we brought them out to her. We're glad that our two permanent residents can happily give back to their species by providing a role model for younger generations.

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As far as birds go, the year has been a typical year so far for the raptors. One of our permanent resident Barred Owls has happily adopted all six of our orphaned Barred Owlets (see cover photo). It is amazing how many animals will be willing to adopt a baby that is not their own. Perhaps we just trick them into thinking it was theirs all along when we put them into an enclosure together. Maybe they just get tired of the babies demanding food. Whatever is going through their head, we're so grateful that it works out so that the orphans can grow up with their own species. It is very important for young birds to grow up with their own kind due to imprinting. In the first few weeks of a young bird's life, whatever they see taking care of them is what they will think that they are. Therefore, it is vital that they be adopted and raised by foster parents at our center so that they identify with their own species.

We also have one of our Great Horned Owls in rehab taking care of five Great Horned Owlets, as well as a permanent resident Screech Owl who has taken in three Screech Owlets.



Now that the first round of baby season is coming to an end and the second round is just beginning, we expect that the season should slow down. It is the first round that has been renowned for bringing in as many as thirty orphans in a weekend but the second round tends to be more relaxed and spread out. It also signals the beginning of fawn season and our outdoor fawn enclosure is ready and full of vegetation for them to nibble on and trample over.



Lastly, it is time to say goodbye to our bobcat kittens that came in last year. All three have grown into beautiful adults cats and were released in early June in a remote area far from people.

Feel free to come out and visit TreeHouse to see all of our animals first hand. Do not forget to look out the back windows of the education center and see our new pond residents: a family of Mallards, a couple Canada Geese, a Common Gray Goose, and of course Melvin the Muscovy.



THE THERAPY SQUIRREL by Doc

He arrived at the institution with a bad attitude and a reputation for violence. I scheduled an appointment with him and before I could even leave my office, he became embroiled in a verbal conflict with one of my coworkers and had to be escorted from the department. Not long after he left, I was cautioned to “leave him alone. He’s pretty agitated and he can be dangerous.” “Hmmm”, I thought, “that’s my specialty.” I agreed to not call him back down to my office but I made sure people understood he and I were going to have a conversation today. I decided to approach him when he came to eat the noon meal.

I stood outside the dining hall, waiting. As I did so, I was approached by several coworkers who attempted to explain to me my folly of talking with this man. “I’m a shrink”, I said, “it’s my job to talk to people.” I saw him walking across the compound and shrugged off all the well-meaning advice of my coworkers. I began walking towards him and as I got close, I spread my hands in front of me in the universal sign of non-aggression. He stopped and tightly said “I don’t want any trouble.” “That’s good,” I replied, “I don’t want any either.” I explained I needed to speak with him and he said he didn’t like crowds. I suggested he come to my office after he ate and we could talk then. I assured him there would be no crowds. He agreed.

He arrived at my office with tension clearly written in every line of his body. He attempted to explain his behavior earlier in the day, citing a long litany of grudges and anger that made him suspicious of others. I waved him off and reached into my bag, pulling a small bundle out. “Do you want to see something?” I asked. He backed away. “Is it a snake? ‘Cuz I don’t like (expletive) snakes!” I shook my head and opened my hand, revealing a small, gray shape. “What is that?” he breathed, coming closer. “A baby squirrel” I replied. “A baby squirrel! Where did you get it?” I told him about TreeHouse. “It’s time for her to eat” I said. “Would you like to feed her?” He looked at me with amazement. “You would let me feed her?” Sure, I nodded. “I don’t know how.” “I’ll show you” I assured him. I explained how to hold her, about aspiration, and showed him how to feed the formula slowly. He held her gently and carefully and fed the formula. He talked to her softly and lovingly. He explained to her how he had never done this before, that he would be careful, and thanked her for her patience with him.



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When she had finished her meal, he very gently wiped her little face. He handed her back to me almost reverently. "Can I come do this again?" he asked. "Sure", I told him. "How about every Friday?" He agreed. And that is how a tiny squirrel, only a few inches long, still deaf and blind, bridged the gap, melting the defenses of an angry, unhappy man, and giving him at least one bright, shining hour every week.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We suddenly lost one of our beloved volunteers recently. Bob Ruland was truly one of a kind and will be missed by all. Besides rehabbing, Bob made sure the piles of laundry got done, as well as keeping the education center vacuumed. Bob originated the idea of TreeHouse Explorers, a group for kids, and Jennifer has implemented the Explorer program and newsletter. A fellow volunteer summed it up best:



Today I attended the funeral of my buddy, Bob. We met at TreeHouse as volunteers. Bob was a great guy....funny, cheerful, gentle, and kind. He loved animals (except for Einstein the turkey vulture!) and he had a way of making everyone feel welcome and important. His family said he used to tell everyone 'nice you came' when he got to spend time with them and that those simple words conveyed so much feeling. I'm glad I met you, Bob. I'm gonna miss you. Nice you came....



As stated in the president's article, Jennifer Yordy is headed east. As recent Vanderbilt graduate, Jen started at TreeHouse in 2011 and worked in both the rehabilitation and education areas as an intern and later hired as staff. Later she was the person interviewing interns and managing their schedules. She also participated in designing and building cages. Good luck with graduate school at Cornell, and working this summer for the Smithsonian. We will miss you! As Bob would say, "Nice you came!"

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Volunteer Spotlight: Elaine Perkins

by Amanda Dixon

Every once in a while, on the weekend, TreeHouse will hold work days. Volunteers will gather to help toil away on a project that can range from cage building to landscaping. One of the rewards for those who donate their time is a free lunch. Since I am the part-time animal care technician on the weekends, I get excited for workdays because I get to sneak some food for myself. The best part, though, is not just the idea of free food (I'm a college student; we thrive on freebies); it's who makes the food, and the head chef is often Elaine Perkins, better known as Perky.



Perky, whose nickname fits her happy, quirky personality, started volunteering at TreeHouse in October of 2010. At the time, she was volunteering hours as a therapy dog handler, but when a fellow handler and TreeHouse volunteer Marcie Nagle presented the idea that Perky come out to TreeHouse, all she could say was, "Well, what's TreeHouse?"

"Marcie told me it's like a sanctuary for birds. I looked at her and told her I don't want to work with birds. They bite!" Perky explained with her usual pizzazz. "She then explained to me that there was a lot I could do, so I started off doing office work."

She continues to help with office-type work by compiling volunteer hours and by keeping track of the visitor logs, both of which are important sets of data that can be used for purposes such as applying for grants.

Perky is also responsible for making one of TreeHouse's best selling items- ugly owls. The tiny guys that are so ugly they're cute can be seen adorning a tree in the gift shop like adorable misfit Christmas ornaments.

Perhaps my favorite of Perky's many talents, though, is her cooking. My goodness does she make some good pastas! Lasagna, macaroni and cheese, mostaccioli, pasta salad. (Is it obvious I'm a fan of Perky's pastas?)

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“I like to feed the people, not the birds!” she said with a laugh. “Cooking is my way of donating to TreeHouse.” Judging by the many full bellies I’ve seen, it can be reassured that none of those who have feasted upon her “donations” were anything less than satisfied.

Speaking of feeding birds, when I asked Perky what her favorite TreeHouse resident was, her answer kind of surprised me. She adores Einstein, our turkey vulture! For someone that was hesitant to work at TreeHouse for a dislike of birds, that is one animal that should strike fear in hearts of many. The screech owls are another favorite of her’s.

“I like these guys because they can’t get rowdy with me. The first bird I ever held was Char (red-phase screech owl) at the Fishing Show in Collinsville. Since I was sick at the time, I was holding her and just kind of rocking back and forth. Next thing I know, Pam (our head vet tech) said Char was asleep!”

To top off all of the office work, cooking, and ugly owl making, Perky enjoys being a greeter on the weekends, especially during our Eagle Days events, which run through the months of January and February.

Sadly, Perky will be moving to Tennessee come August. While we are all sad to see her go, we are excited for her to begin a new adventure. Her enthusiasm and spunk will most certainly be missed by us all at TreeHouse. I’m sure I can speak for us all when I say we are so grateful to Perky for all she has done for us the past four years. I know I will miss her dearly.

Thank you, Perky, for helping to make TreeHouse a better place for both animals and people alike.



Retired and looking for something to do one day a week?



Oh, so you’re not excited about working with animals? Not a problem!

TreeHouse needs volunteers for the following jobs:

Cage construction, general maintenance, mechanics,

light housekeeping, greeters, landscapers, cooks for workdays.

Call 466-2990 for details

COMINGS AND GOINGS



Extern, **Jessica Richert**
Hometown: Freeburg, IL
School: Gustavus Adolphus College
Career Interests: Conservation,
environmental education



Extern, **Brianna Harbison**
Hometown: Brighton, IL
School: Northwest Missouri State University
Career Interests: Wildlife ecology



Intern, **Brianna Nielsen**
Hometown: Elk Grove, IL
School: Illinois State University
Career Interests: Animal training, wildlife
rehabilitation



Extern, **Monica Murphy**
Hometown: Greenfield, IL
School: Illinois College
Career Interests: Occupational therapy



Intern, **Claire Buchheit**
Hometown: Columbia, IL
School: University of Missouri
Career Interests: Veterinarian,
wildlife rehabilitation, or research



Extern, **Kayla Meisner**
Hometown: Piasa, IL
School: University of Illinois
Career Interests: Humane education,
animal training



Intern, **Caitlyn Campbell**
Hometown: Chicago, IL
School: Iowa State University
Career Interests: Currently enrolled in Natural
Resource and Ecology Management Program study-
ing for a degree in Animal Ecology with a minor in
Animal Science. Interested in wildlife rehabilita-
tion and species conservation.

Interns are students from out of town

Externs are local intern students

ED AND BEEGEE by Rachael Heaton

It is a new year at TreeHouse which means saying hello to new friends! We have two new permanent resident education birds at our facility. They are Ed, an American White Pelican, and BeeGee, a Pileated Woodpecker. Both of these birds were injured in the wild but unfortunately their injuries were not fixable, leaving them both unable to fly. However they now spend their days at our facility with all the enrichment, shelter, and food that they could ever want. They also act as ambassadors for their species by helping educate our visitors about the local wildlife.

In November of 2013, Ed was first found wandering a road near Lake Taylorville unable to fly. He avoided capture during that first sighting but was caught the next day and brought to TreeHouse. He was very weak and skinny. His right wing was broken in two places but unfortunately the break was old and had already healed, leaving it frozen in place. When we went to give him fluids, since he was too weak and skinny to eat any solid food, we also discovered that he was absolutely full of internal parasites. Most of the parasites were flukes, which is a type of flatworm. Pelicans and other fish eating birds often pick up these parasites from their food. We also discovered that Ed was full of external parasites, particularly feather mites. Long story short, poor Ed was just a mess!



We started Ed on a liquid diet and treatment for his parasites. It was rough at first. The medicine was effective but with so many parasites, they were being purged out of both ends! We also dusted his feathers to rid him of the external parasites and they were just falling off of him. Slowly but surely Ed began to improve. He was wary of us at first but as he started to feel better and as soon as whole fish were added to the picture, he decided we were his favorite people ever! Once he was strong enough to move to solid food, he started demanding fish to the point where he was eating a pound of fish in the morning and a pound of fish in the evening. His antics were hilarious as he would put his wings slightly out, grunt a lot, toss his head all over, and follow us around. Everything in your hand must be a fish! Everything you do must be related to fish! With his goofy behavior, he reminded many of us of the hyena, Ed, from The Lion King.

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Now that Ed has settled more into his TreeHouse life he has come to realize that fish is plentiful, so he may as well only eat his favorite ones right? Ed now prefers his fish freshly thawed and straight. If they are too warm or curvy, he drops them on the floor. In response, we've lowered his fish amount from two pounds a day to a pound and a half. Basically, Ed has become quite the diva with his own room service, fresh fish, and sometimes he will grace touring guests with his presence and greet them with a loud grunt and a silly dance. We do love our pelican and we hope he will be with us to help educate the public about pelicans for a long time! Be sure to keep an eye out for him at larger booths. We are also in the process of getting an outdoor enclosure built for him soon so that everyone can meet him.



Our other new permanent resident bird, BeeGee, has a different story. BeeGee lived in the wilds of Wisconsin when he flew into a window and broke his wing just before Christmas in 2011. Several releases were attempted before it was declared that his wing was broken beyond repair. He lived at the residence for a couple years, teaching neighboring cockatiels how to speak woodpecker and spending lots of time chipping wood. He was first called Terry for pterodactyl, then Woody, then one day they saw him bobbing his head like he was dancing to "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees and the name BeeGee stuck.

BeeGee was transferred to TreeHouse this past January and has since made a name for himself here as the wood chipper. He is almost like a twelve hour wood chipping machine that starts at sunrise and ends at sunset. Occasionally he may take a break to eat, get a drink, or talk to the birds that land on the bird feeder outside of his window. At first we just looked at it as free wood chips but then we realized that the larger pieces left had interesting shapes. BeeGee wasn't just a wood chipper; he was a wood carver as well! He has made some pieces of wood that are shaped similarly to other birds, hollowed out like a canoe, look like rock formations, and even one that looked like a golf club. Amazed by his talent, we decided to start collecting his pieces and they will soon be on display by his enclosure and be available to buy at our center or at events as Woodpecker art. Be sure to come inside our facility to meet BeeGee!

He is in a large bird enclosure located to the right when you walk into our education center. To keep him busy, we provide him with numerous logs and branches to peck or climb on all day. He is fed a suet that has all the nutrition

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that he needs and mealworms every day. Mealworms are his favorite and he will eat them as soon as he sees them. To make him work for them so they last a bit longer, we now tie a paper egg carton to the side of his cage and hide the mealworms in that. He will still normally get them with minimal effort what with that beak and his long tongue but if any mealworm proves too difficult to get, he just tears the egg carton apart. This is great enrichment and gives him a chance to perform his natural behaviors.

Not many people ever get the chance to see these two birds up close! We are happy that we can provide a safe and comfortable home for our two new TreeHouse family members as well as give the public a chance to see these birds in person. Ambassador animals have an important mission. They help the general public to learn more about their species and therefore be more likely to care for them and keep their species safe. Ed and BeeGee have joined numerous education animals at our center in taking on this role. If you would like to learn more about our education animals, feel free to come visit our center and meet them in person! They are located inside our facility on the main floor as well as in the enclosures located in front of our building. Check out BeeGee's video on the TreeHouse YouTube channel. Updates about our animals and the general day-to-day life at TreeHouse can also be found on our Facebook page.



A special thank you goes out to **Belle Valley School, and Dr. O.** in Belleville where the students raised funds by selling TreeHouse Gift Shop items before the start of school for several days. This fundraiser was co-chaired by 8th grade students **Madison Eason and Michaela Wittlich.** We appreciate your support!



A special thank you also goes out to the **Granite City High School Science Club** where students raise funds for TreeHouse, and volunteer community service hours one Sunday a month during the school year.

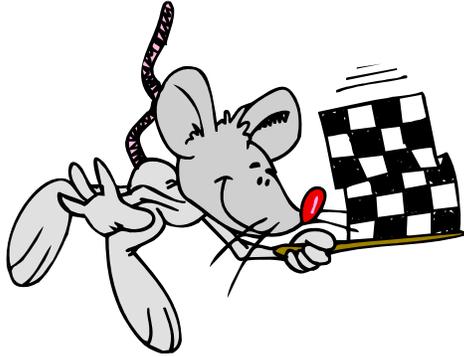
COINS FOR COYOTES fundraiser chaired by Blessed Sacrament 7th graders involved science, math and art classes. Money was raised to purchase coyote feed, and the students made paper mache social enrichment balls filled with treats for Zuni and Trickster



Several of the Blessed Sacrament 7th graders visiting the coyotes



Presenting a check to Adele Moore from the Coins for Coyotes Campaign



Our 2nd annual Mouse Race at the Godfrey KC Hall was a success due to the many sponsors, businesses, and TreeHouse volunteers donating to our silent auction.

We are looking forward to the 3rd annual Mouse Race in 2015!

A Special Thanks to Our Mouse Race Donors

Quality Buick, Pontiac, GMC, Cadillac
 Scott Bjorseth * Kim Dixon * Sierra Club
 David and Carol Stevenson
 Grafton River Adventures * Hawg Pit
 St. Louis Bread Company
 Hawthorne Animal Hospital
 Wang Gang * Formea Animal Hospital
 Grafton Winery * Grafton Zipline
 Piasa Winery * Unleashed Pet Supplies
 Fred's Barber Shop * Arndt's Fudge
 The Audubon Center at Riverlands
 Mississippi Half Step * Logo It!
 The Loading Dock * Iron Décor & More
 Andy's Tire and Auto * Rob's Mufflers
 Pope Animal Hospital * Jake Schneider
 The Eagle's Nest Restaurant
 Wild Birds Unlimited * Kimberly Sloan
 Amarillo Tex's Steakhouse & Saloon
 Robert Sanders Waste Systems
 Melvin & Shirley McCann
 Granite City High School Science Club
 Hollywood Tan, Wood River
 Sandy's Hair Salon * Kumar's Cafe
 Pizza World, Godfrey



National Conference

This past March TreeHouse was well represented when several of our staff and volunteers attended the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association's (NWRA) annual symposium in Murfreesboro, TN.

Attending were (l to r) Rachael Heaton, Sandi Konopelski, Judy Neiman, Pam Lippert, Marcie Nagle and Amanda Dixon. Not shown were Jennifer Yordy and Adele Moore. Adele presented a one hour paper on TreeHouse's new Raptor Rehabilitation Complex, and the attendees brought back helpful information, and many new ideas from speakers and workshops. Our thanks to Eric Bloemker who made it possible for the staff to attend.

STEP BY STEP — FRAMING A CAGE
Thanks to Justin Buettner's Eagle Scout Project



Framing and materials donated
and constructed by:

Justin Buettner
Troop 529

Eagle Scout Project
10 May 2014

BUILDING PROGRESS REPORT

Listed below are several building projects that are still awaiting funding. If you, your friends, family, or company would be interested in funding one of these projects or volunteering on our construction crew, please contact Adele at TreeHouse for more details:

Small Mammal Rehab Cage Complex: \$10,000

Permanent Resident Raptor Complex: \$5,000

Permanent Resident Small Mammal Duplex: \$7,000 (partially funded)

Permanent Resident Waterfowl Exhibit: \$10,000

Storage Facility and Mouse House: \$20,000 (partially funded)

The **Avian Ward** plans are still fluid due to the fact that plans had to be altered to accommodate our changing needs. As large waterfowl such as trumpeter swans and white pelicans increasingly migrate through our area, more and more of them are admitted with injuries. For example, in a two week period recently we received an injured white pelican and three injured trumpeter swans (two of which were lone survivors of a group that was shot, and the other group hit power lines). The third injured swan was also shot.

Trumpeters can weigh up to 40 pounds with an 8-10' wing span and a neck that allows them to peer around corners, so besides increased hospital cage sizes and a walk-in freezer to store food, we need to incorporate an indoor area for these birds to swim to restore their waterproofing ability before release to the wild. The current avian ward structure will be expanded to include the in-ground pool that already exists. This will be a great facility to rehab these magnificent birds.



Rachael and Einstein making an appearance at Principia College



TreeHouse Wildlife Explorers is for kids aged 14 and under, and it's designed to teach kids about wildlife and the natural world in a fun and engaging way.

Members will receive a one-page monthly newsletter keeping them informed and in the loop about the animals being cared for at TreeHouse; a personalized membership card to be used for special offers and discounts; and an invitation to a special annual event just for TreeHouse Wildlife Explorers and their families.

YES! I would like to join the TREEHOUSE WILDLIFE EXPLORERS
My \$15 membership dues are enclosed

Name _____

Date of Birth _____
 (mm/dd/yyyy)

Street Address _____

City _____

State _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Make checks payable to:

TreeHouse Wildlife Center

and send to

TreeHouse Wildlife Center

23956 Green Acres Road

Dow, IL 62022

attn: Jennifer Yordy

Other Locations:

Troy Hawthorne
(618.667.4900)

Adair Gardens
(618.235.2744)

Countryside
(618.664.4420)

Hawthorne Animal Hospital
#5 Cougar Drive
Glen Carbon, IL 62034
p. 618.288.3971
f. 618.288.3977
www.hawthorne.vetsuite.com

THANK YOU

Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge

Gene Sands

Grafton Chamber of Commerce

greatriverroad.com

Thanks to all those groups and individuals who provided much needed donations of time, cash and supplies!

IN MEMORY OF

TreeHouse volunteer:
Robert Lee Ruland

Karen Land

Linda Reedy

Bea Bacus

For more stories please check out

**TreeHouse's Facebook page,
YouTube channel, or
the intern's blog at:**

<http://treehousenotebook.wordpress.com>

Pied-billed Grebe





Einstein

Wish List

33 gal. trash bags

Paper towels

Dry dog food

Welding gloves

Fishing nets with handles (all sizes)

Garden hoses

Sweatshirts & sweatpants

Cash donations

Tractor with scoop or
(Mechanical) Bobcat

Mini van with stow & go seating

Walk-in freezer

Did you receive a gift card you're not going to use? We can use gift cards from any store

If you have an animal in need of rehabilitation, call
(618) 466-2990 Dow
or the
BiState MO/IL Wildlife Hotline at
www.wildlifehotline.com or
Toll free (855)-945-3435

If you have questions about becoming a volunteer, or if you would like to book a program, please call
(618) 466-2990

or check out our website at
www.treehousewildlifecenter.com

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



Company Gift Matching

Many companies offer Charity gift matching programs.

Ask your employer or check our website for a list of employers who will match your contribution to TreeHouse

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

TreeHouse Wildlife Explorers Membership consists of a minimum donation of
\$15.00 annually

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

TreeHouse is registered as a non-profit corp. 501 C (3). All contributions are tax deductible

- I would like to **renew** my membership to Treehouse Wildlife Center 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**.

Remit via Pay Pal or Mail check to:
TreeHouse Wildlife Center
23956 Green Acres Road
Dow, IL 62022

**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**