

# TreeHouse Droppings



In this issue: President's Aerie, Introducing the Director of Operations and Director of Education, Merlin, Monarchs, Wildflowers, Greenville Prison Visit, Breaking Records, Master of the Sky, Interns, Guardians, B. David Duncan, Owlfest 2016 Wrap Up, Owl Society, Acknowledgements, Explorers

## 30+ years of giving back to the wild

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## **TreeHouse Staff \***

Rachael Heaton\*\*  
(Director of Operations)  
Pam Lippert\*\*  
(Senior Wildlife Tech)  
Caitlyn Campbell\*\*  
(Director of Education)  
Libby McGinley\*  
(Office manager)  
Marcie Nagle  
(Volunteer Coordinator)  
Allison Barrows\*  
(Rehabilitation Weekend Tech)  
Michael Ward\*  
(Rehabilitation Assistant)  
Jennifer Yordy  
(TreeHouse Wildlife Explorers)

TreeHouse Wildlife Center employs  
\*\*three full-time, and  
\*three part-time staff members.  
All other staff are volunteers.

## **Photo Credits**

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## **2016 Volunteers**

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Gary Surgeon, Kelly Vandersand,  
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## **Social Network**

Eric Bloemker, Website  
Rachael Heaton, Facebook



## **PRESIDENT'S AERIE** by Eric Bloemker

Greetings all! I'm happy to report TreeHouse is doing well and growing. This is due to the kind and generous donations of time and money from our wonderful volunteers and members. TreeHouse has taken in more injured or orphaned wildlife this year than ever before since our founding in 1979. More patients means more expenses.

Our new Education Department is also growing. Stay up-to-date with new programs for kids of all ages. See our Facebook page and a link to receiving Critter Corner by Cait Campbell, Director of Education at TreeHouse.

With growth in the care for the animals and in our educational programs, we need your help. Dedicated volunteers are needed. If you can give a small block of time on a routine basis, we'd love for you to fill out a volunteer form available from our website. Volunteers are needed in just about all aspects of our operations. If you wish to work directly with the animals, training from our experienced staff is available. Office, gift shop, construction, gardening, maintenance, all requires attention to keep TreeHouse running, and you can decide where your talents get applied or developed. Welcome to the TreeHouse family!

In these busy times, your schedule may not allow volunteer work, but we would appreciate any tax deductible donation you might be able to give. Check with your employer about matching funds too. We can accept stock donations, and you can get the realized values for your tax donations without paying any of the taxes on the appreciation. Just a couple of ways that you can make your donation grow.

Estate planning is not something many wish to discuss, but critical for you to give directions about what should happen to your estate following your death. After taking care of your closest loved ones, consider a percentage be directed towards charities you loved during your life. We hope that TreeHouse can be part of those future plans. Talk to us about becoming an Owl Society Member.

The future is bright for TreeHouse, and we hope your involvement through volunteering and/or charity giving will make the future even brighter.

Come out to see our Center this Eagle Watching season, and bring your friends and introduce them to TreeHouse. This is how our family grows more and more each year.

Cheers!

## DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS by Rachael Heaton



Hello everyone! This is Rachael Heaton, the new director of operations at TreeHouse Wildlife Center. I want to thank all of you for your support of this wonderful center. Your donations help us to continue to care for injured and orphaned native wildlife. I have been at the center for nearly five years now but since I've been promoted to a leadership role at the center, I thought it was high time that I formally introduce myself in the newsletter.

My parents tell me that I have loved animals since birth. Where most kids would be out playing tag or games, I was always playing with the family pets and pretending to be one of them or out exploring the yard and watching the backyard critters. This innate passion continued and blossomed as I grew up. I was constantly reading books and watching documentaries about animals, learning as much as I could. In fact, by the age of seven, I was told that I was a good tour guide for the family at the Saint Louis Zoo, sometimes even forming a small crowd that would follow me from enclosure to enclosure. Once I entered Collinsville High School, I started filling all my extra course slots with science classes, especially if they were animal related. I continued my education at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville where I was one of the first members of the Wildlife and Conservation Biology club and excelled in my junior and senior year wildlife courses.

During my later college years, I decided to start spending my free time getting experience out in the field. Wolves were always my favorite animal so my first email and phone call was to the Endangered Wolf Center in Eureka, MO to inquire about an internship. There they recommended that I start getting experience at the Wildlife Rescue Center in Ballwin, MO before I had my internship with them. Taking their advice, I immediately signed up for the next volunteer orientation at the Wildlife Rescue Center and had my first experience in wildlife rehabilitation. As a level one volunteer, I was limited to caring for the squirrels, opossums, turtles, waterfowl, and bunnies. It was a great foundation for me!

The summer of 2011 ended up being my launching point as I landed an internship with Global Vision International at the Karongwe Game Reserve in South Africa. What an experience this was! I spent five weeks on an African

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wildlife reserve in the middle of nowhere, tracking large animals such as elephants, rhinos, hippos, lions, and leopards. We were researching how the animals, especially the carnivores, were coexisting on a small game reserve. Every day we tracked their movements, recorded their location, and observed their behaviors. I learned a lot about tracking, telemetry, recording data, as well as the proper way to behave around wild animals. For instance, there was a time when we were observing the elephant herd that was on the reserve. I learned that they were very destructive creatures, as they always seemed to be knocking down trees. As we were witnessing such an event, the herd suddenly began to move towards our research truck. Mind you, the majority of us are sitting in open seats in the truck bed. Our driver looked forward but saw the road in front of us was blocked by elephants and then looked back and saw that elephants had also moved into the road behind us. There was only one option left and that was for all of us to freeze in place on the vehicle. The elephants were not behaving aggressively at all, just curious, but we did not want to provoke them in anyway. The herd took an extremely close look at us, one of them even putting its trunk up towards my face. How many people can say they looked down the barrel of an elephant trunk? We all stayed frozen as we had been trained and the elephants lost interest and moved on. Most people probably would have been terrified but that just made my day! After that amazing experience, I returned home and resumed my volunteer duties on Sunday nights at the Wildlife Rescue Center. While I was there, I took a Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation Course that was hosted by the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council in Wildwood, MO.

In January of 2012, my father and I heard that TreeHouse Wildlife Center was doing a Bald Eagle release at Two Rivers Wildlife Refuge. We went to witness this release being done by longtime volunteer, Melvin McCann. My interest peeked, and I had my dad follow them back to their center to check it out. Why, it was another wildlife rehabilitation center! This one was equal distance for me to drive, but being it was on the Illinois side, I could be more involved with rescues and releases since I also lived in Illinois. I picked up a volunteer application and returned it a week later and started as a volunteer at TreeHouse in February. For a while there, I was volunteering at TreeHouse on Saturday day shifts and at the Wildlife Rescue Center on Sunday night shifts while also finishing up my last semester at SIUE. I did this for about three months before I was approached by TreeHouse's founder Adele Moore where she asked if I would be interested in being their weekend intern for the summer, staying at the center from Friday night to Sunday night.

To say that I was excited would be a bit of an understatement. While this did mean leaving my volunteer position with the Wildlife Rescue Center, I was given

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the opportunity to become deeply involved in all of the aspects of TreeHouse Wildlife Center and gaining experience with more animals such as raptors, coyotes, foxes, and bobcats. So, my summer after I graduated was spent working during the week and gaining experience with wildlife on the weekend. I applied for an internship with the Endangered Wolf Center in the fall and was accepted. TreeHouse kept me on as their weekend intern and so I helped take care of the wolves during the week and continued to gain experience at TreeHouse during the weekend. As my internship with the wolf center was coming to an end, Adele approached me again to inform me that the long-term paid intern that worked during the week at TreeHouse was now getting a full-time position at the Endangered Wolf Center and asked if I would like to take her place.

A paid position at a wildlife center? There was no way I was going to pass that up. My schedule shifted to staying at TreeHouse Monday through Thursday with weekends off. Over the next couple of years, this paid internship position developed into full-time employment as the number of wildlife patients increased and the help was badly needed. For a while I was still referred to as “the intern” but eventually my title was changed to Rehabilitation Manager as I was running the day-to-day animal care at the center, answering phone calls, managing the permits for Adele, and recruiting and training volunteers and interns. I also became involved in other aspects of the center, taking over the on-site education programs when our education director at the time had to leave us, as well as helping with the fundraising committee and planning events.

I feel as though I have seen TreeHouse grow from a little-known rehabilitation center that barely saw any visitors and where the work could be completed by one or two people to the large and busy center that it is today. Now we get visitors daily, we have a large gift shop, we’re receiving phone calls about animals in need every day, and we’re building a larger volunteer base. As I became involved in all aspects of the center, Adele decided it was time to retire, and TreeHouse needed a new leader. Not long after that, the board of directors asked if I would like to step up as Director of Operations and continue my duties but also have the authority to make decisions for the center. If anyone had told me when I wandered onto the TreeHouse grounds with my father in early 2012 that I would one day be leading this center, I wouldn’t have believed them. I am honored to have been chosen for this task and with the help of my fellow staff, awesome volunteers, and dedicated supporters, we will strive to keep making the center bigger and better so we can save more of our native wildlife.



## REHAB RAMBLINGS by Pam Lippert



In mid-October we received a call about a hawk trapped in a church gymnasium in Gillespie, Illinois. Apparently a door was left open while preparing the gym for an event, and a songbird flew in being pursued by the hawk. They left the door open and the songbird found its way out but not the hawk. Twenty-four hours later the bird was still there, and while they were concerned for its well being, there was going to be a dinner held in the gym the next day, so obviously it needed to be out of there.

Since I was not at the center when I got the call I did not go all the way back to get a net and other equipment I would need. I stopped and bought a net, a length of PVC pipe and a roll of duct tape. I met the caller and her mom at the gym, and duct taped the pipe to the net handle. Unfortunately the pipe was too flimsy and it whipped back and forth when you raised it to the rafters. A piece of metal pipe was substituted, which worked better, although since it was a lot heavier it whipped back and forth because of our lack of strength! What I thought was probably a Cooper's Hawk since chasing birds into buildings is typical for them, it ended up being a Merlin, a type of falcon. After about 45 minutes of taking turns throwing rubber balls into the rafters to keep the bird moving, and manning the net, we finally caught it. I brought it back to TreeHouse for a bit of R&R fed it for a few days, then released it.

Merlins are a small falcon, a little larger than our more common American Kestrel (sometimes called sparrow hawks). Merlins are considered an uncommon migrant, so we typically only see them during spring and fall migration. I just discovered an article documenting the first nesting of Merlins in Illinois in 2016. The Field Museum in Chicago received bird carcasses to be used as study skins and among them was a nestling Merlin from northwest Cook County. Apparently it was found weak and starving under the nest tree and did not survive, so hopefully one day we will see them other times besides migration.

## A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Introducing Caitlyn Campbell, Director of Education

Wildlife rehabilitation provides us at TreeHouse Wildlife Center a vastly unique opportunity to educate others. The importance of environmental education is increasing exponentially given the expansion of our society and use of the land for our livelihoods. As staff and volunteers we have both the ability and obligation to expand concerns that a person has for an individual animal they bring to us, to a deeper appreciation and awareness that comprises populations and the environment as



a whole. This can lead individuals to a better understanding of the plight our wild counterparts are facing and ultimately a feeling of connection to the natural world.

I was drawn to environmental education halfway through college following a minor departmental change and internship with TreeHouse Wildlife Center. While my interests are and will always be intertwined with animal veterinary care, I am a person that seeks different experiences, those of which sometimes lay just outside my comfort zone. There was a time in my life that I was never one to jump at the chance to speak to large groups of people. Yet there's a clear separation between speaking to others about a topic you don't necessarily have a connection with, (think required speech courses in college), to a topic that is deeply rooted in your passions. And I love it. I have always had a deep attachment to the outdoors and there have been certain individuals that have come and gone through my life that have nurtured that tender affection into a lifestyle. My experiences through my internship with TreeHouse many years ago, my work experiences with other nature and rehabilitation centers, and my past university schooling and continuing education have cultivated a seemingly impossible childhood dream into a reality.

Following graduation from the Natural Resource and Ecology Management program at Iowa State University and a move from the concrete jungle of Chicago to the river town of Alton, I was hired on as director of education at

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TreeHouse Wildlife Center in June of this year. I am constantly aware of the power of my position as an educator, especially with the youth of today. I am humbled that I have the ability to mold the minds of the leaders of tomorrow so that they may go forth in the world as environmental stewards and advocates for native wildlife.

I have focused much of my time these past six months on nature education for children. We wrapped up our third year of the Go WILD! summer camps that I originally helped spearhead back in 2014. This year our camps were broken down into three themed programs with two sessions for each. Our “Wild About Wildlife” for our 6-8 year olds focused on the basics of what makes mammals and birds unique from one another. Children had the opportunity to see many of our educational ambassadors up close and learn about the adaptations of different animals that can easily be found in their very own backyard. Our “Junior Naturalists” camp for our 9-11 year olds focused on the roles of species in their respective ecosystems and campers discovered identification tricks via hands-on activities. Lastly for our 12 and 13 year olds, our “Junior Wildlife Rehabbers” camp highlighted the ins and outs of a rehabilitation center. Participants had the chance to learn about our career field and immerse themselves in daily tasks. We are excited at the opportunity to continue growing and developing our Go WILD! summer camps into the 2017 year, so be on the look-out for information on this unique educational opportunity for that budding young animal lover in your life!

In October we launched new in-house education programming for school groups, scout troops, and similar organizations as a way to provide more educational opportunities for our community. In addition to our popular guided tours, we now proudly offer five 1-2 hour education programs for specific age groups. Our education programs incorporate hands-on learning as well as in-depth group discussion on the selected topic. We diligently work to cater to the needs of the group and are happy to accommodate certain topic requests for those looking for specific subject matter. Alongside these programs, we have been working to offer more open-program opportunities for the community. In the new year we plan to host free or affordable lectures, workshops, and events for individuals to participate in as we further our mission to share our knowledge and passion with others and facilitate a growth in appreciation for our native wildlife.

I look forward to the opportunities that this position has offered me and the opportunities that I may offer you. As TreeHouse continues to grow, I am excited at the possibilities that 2017 holds for our center on the educational front and look forward to meeting all of you during my time here!

## MONARCH MANIA

Visitors to our education center this past summer may have encountered a vastly different and unexpected creature compared to what is anticipated when visiting a wildlife rehabilitation facility. Two mesh laundry basket-looking objects were carefully placed on a table within the entrance foyer of our center, soft green leaves littering the bottoms of these tall objects. Upon closer inspection, tiny colorful critters could be spotted among the plants, chewing their way through the foliage and growing plumper with each bite. These little guys would in time morph into one of the most recognizable airborne insects with one of the most incredible life histories known to man: the monarch butterfly.

This year TreeHouse decided to join the ranks of other nature centers and devoted individuals in raising these extremely important pollinators. This project was facilitated by one of our devoted volunteers, Bill Crawford. Bill is the Riverbend area butterfly guru. He has raised monarchs on his own, growing milkweed (the most important plant in the development of monarchs) in his home garden. Daily he would scour the leaves of the flowers and carefully pluck monarch caterpillars to bring into his own butterfly hatcheries. There they would continue to feed on picked milkweed leaves in the safety of the hatchery, as many other insects like to feed on caterpillars, until they would later develop into butterflies.



Bill planted and tended to a beautiful species of milkweed at our center that had proven to be a favorite among adult monarchs. Assisted by Caitlyn, our director of education, the two would go through the same motions that Bill had done on his own with his butterflies: inspect the leaves every morning for “baby cats”, which we like to call them, and bring them into the center to the mesh hatcheries Bill had brought for TreeHouse to use. The leaves in the enclosures would be changed daily, caterpillars would be brought in, and the “baby cats” would grow bigger and bigger until it was time for them to form their chrysalis. When that day came, the caterpillar would crawl up the side of the hatchery until it reached the top. There it would soon begin to hang in a j-shaped form before literally turning itself inside out in a matter of minutes to form its

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lime-green pupa! For up to two weeks the chrysalises would hang undisturbed as the once vulnerable caterpillars completed their metamorphosis into a beautiful butterfly.

Once emerged from their pupas, the butterflies were carefully plucked from the hatchery and tagged with a special sticker. As part of the conservation aspect of raising this disappearing pollinator, we received numbered stickers from MonarchWatch, a research project dedicated to tracking monarchs and their population fluctuations. Each sticker had a special number that we entered into a national database, which would then be used to track the monarchs during their lifecycles. Many of the monarchs we raised were the late summer generation destined for the unbelievably spectacular migration down to their overwintering homes in Mexico. Some of the monarchs who make this trip travel up to 3,000 miles, and some even roost in the same trees their ancestors had previously! Thanks to our gracious volunteer gardener Bill, we were able to share in this awesome story of the monarch butterfly and in turn educate the public about the plight our native plant pollinators face.



Predator and Prey both with fractured front legs but with different outcomes. The fawn's prognosis looks good for release. "Apache" the coyote will be a permanent resident of TreeHouse



Basket of orphaned nestling American Kestrels (left).

Several weeks later their down is disappearing. When their adult feathers emerge they will be placed in a cage outside before release



## APRIL SHOWERS WILL BRING MAY WILDFLOWERS TO TREEHOUSE!

by Kelly Vandersand

TreeHouse is making plans to open a prairie area for native wildflowers. Native wildflowers are usually considered plants that were established in North America before European settlement.



Native wildflowers flourish with little to no maintenance and provide important food and habitat for native wildlife and pollinators. They are more resistant to disease and drought and use less water, save money and natural resources. Roots grow up to 18 feet deep to help control soil erosion and protect water sources from contamination. Illinois has a variety of beautiful, interesting native wildflowers that bloom from early spring to late fall that TreeHouse will cultivate. If you wish to take advantage of the beauty and low maintenance qualities of wildflowers on your own property, please visit <http://extension.illinois.edu/wildflowers/> to learn more.

Visit TreeHouse to watch our progress. If you would like to donate to our project, donate tools, are interested in joining our gardening club or helping with our native wildflower prairie, please contact Kelly at [treehouse.kelly@gmail.com](mailto:treehouse.kelly@gmail.com).

### REHAB RAMLINGS continued

We received another raptor in early November that we typically only see during migration — the state endangered Osprey, sometimes called “fish hawk”. This bird was found between Belleville and Millstadt and has a fractured wing. It appears to be a second year female as it has the gold eyes, but still has the white scalloping on the edges of the feathers typical of a younger bird. It has the dark markings on chest (necklace) typical of a female. While Ospreys do nest in Illinois, (Carlyle Lake comes to mind) they are not common. There is currently a “hacking” program in Illinois where young Osprey are removed from an Air Force Base in Virginia and taken to three areas where they spend time in a hack box and are fed until they are flying and catching their own food.





## TREEHOUSE PERMANENT RESIDENTS VISIT GREENVILLE PRISON

By Marcie Nagle

On May 26, 2016, TreeHouse staff members Rachael Heaton and Pam Lippert and TreeHouse volunteer Marcie Nagle provided a presentation on TreeHouse, its mission, and native Illinois wildlife to an audience different from the norm — federal inmates. The presentation took place at the Federal Correctional Institution in Greenville, IL, a facility that houses medium security male and minimum security female inmates. TreeHouse personnel were enthusiastically greeted by the inmates but all eyes were glued to the permanent residents who accompanied them; Emrys the bald eagle, Einstein the turkey vulture, Chili the barred owl, Casey the red-shouldered hawk, and Buddy, the screech owl.

Four presentations were made that day, two in the morning to the female inmates and two in the afternoon to the male inmates. The audience, many of whom had never seen these animals before, let alone up close, was attentive, asking questions and marveling over the beauty of the birds. The presentations were the talk of the institution for many days afterwards and already there have been repeated requests for further presentations. Many inmates expressed appreciation for the presentation, stating how they felt less stressed afterwards and had something of interest to discuss with their families, particularly their children in subsequent phone calls and visits. It is once again a reminder of how valuable an impact animals and the environment have on us all.



### **Retired and looking for something to do one day a week or one day a month?**



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



Mel & Ray building  
Emrys' eagle nest.



## **BREAKING RECORDS IS A PASTIME** by Rachel Heaton

Here at TreeHouse we are dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of our local native wildlife. We came from humble beginnings in Brighton to Dow where we have grown to a larger center. Every year since we've been here, we've admitted more animals than the previous year. We expect this trend to continue for years to come as more people are utilizing our service and learning about their wild neighbors.

When Adele Moore first founded TreeHouse in 1979, we admitted a grand total of seven animals that year. After that, in 1980, we jumped up to 62. From then on it took off and we never saw less than 100 animals. In fact, for several years we admitted between 400 to 500 animals, with a significant number of our patients being birds such as raptors and waterfowl. In the last couple of years however, we have been seeing our patient count jump up significantly with a higher increase in mammals as well as a minor increase in birds. In 2014 we admitted a total of 629 animals. 286 of those animals were birds, 328 were mammals, and 15 were turtles. In 2015 our number jumped up again to 727 animals for the year with both birds and mammals being in the 300s. This year we are topping that again. We have admitted a total of 755 animals so far with mammals making up nearly 500 of that count. With one more month to go, we expect we will near that 800 number.

With the increase of wildlife patients, our need for public support also increases. Taking care of all of these animals requires a lot of funding. Thanks to the support of people like you, we have been able to take on these patients and rehab them for release back into the wild. We hope you will continue to support us and spread the word to help us gather more support. If this patient count trend continues, we will be over 800 animals next year, and we will need all the help we can get to care for these animals. Again, we thank you for all the support you have given us! Your donations truly do make a difference in the lives of these Illinois native animals that we save.



## MASTER OF THE SKY

The sun was shining bright and warm across the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Young Bald Eagles were perched in the trees surrounding Ellis Bay, watching for fish to come to the surface. Ducks and geese were sunning themselves on the sandbars or bathing in the waters. The tall grasses were swaying in the light breeze and all was calm and peaceful. It was a perfect day. People were gathering at the Audubon Center in anticipation for the day's event. They sat on the benches and stairs on the back of the center, looking out on Ellis Bay, or waiting inside to use the scopes and having friendly discussion. No one would have thought that it was a tragic event that led to the gathering of people on that afternoon.

Just ten days prior, on October 6<sup>th</sup>, a police officer by the name of Blake Snyder lost his life while on the job. His wife, Elizabeth Snyder, had been an intern at our center the previous year from May to August. That morning of October 6<sup>th</sup>, while we were downstairs taking care of the animals in our hospital, we received a phone call from our founder Adele Moore who informed us what had happened. Whenever someone volunteers or interns at our facility, they become a part of our TreeHouse family and we always like to keep in touch or hear about what they've been up to since their time at the center. We had kept up with Elizabeth through Facebook, seeing her happy family and celebrating when she landed a job at the Saint Louis Zoo. When we received the call from Adele, we were all in absolute shock. Work at the center stopped for a time as we absorbed the news and looked up reports online to get more information. When the shock had finally begun to clear, we started thinking about what we could do for Elizabeth and her family. What could we possibly offer in the wake of such a tragedy?



Intern Elizabeth Snyder  
2015

After some talk and quiet contemplation, an idea began to form. There was only one thing that we could offer, and he was back in our flight enclosure ready to be released any day. This young Bald Eagle had been admitted late the previous year after being found on the ground in the Clarence Cannon National Wildlife Refuge. He had been very weak and had not eaten for some time. He also had severe feather damage which made it clear that he was going to be in our care for a while, as it takes a full year for a bird to molt and grow new feathers. Eagles have been revered by cultures all over the world as the masters of the sky. They were thought to be able to fly between our world and the heavens, and thus act as a messenger between the creator and the people. It was believed that

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to see an eagle meant that your prayers were being answered. The Bald Eagle was chosen as a symbol of the United States of America to symbolize our freedom, bravery, and power as a nation.

Blake Snyder had served his country as a police officer, committing his



life to protecting and serving people. It would only be fitting to release this Bald Eagle, a symbol of our country, in his honor. After an agreement was made at TreeHouse, we sent a private message to Elizabeth to let her know that we would like to do this for her and her family. A few days later, we received a response and started to move forward with our plans. We asked Elizabeth, since she had been an intern with us and handled raptors, if she would like to release the Bald Eagle herself. She accepted and seemed excited about it.

The following Wednesday, when the funeral procession came through our area, we closed TreeHouse and all of us went to stand on the side of the Great River Road to see her and all the police officers as they drove by. It was a sight to behold. We stood there for forty-five minutes until the procession was over before returning to the center, in awe of what we had witnessed and the amount of people that had come out to show their support. We kept watch on the news as we saw the events going on in the area for Elizabeth and her family in honor of Blake. We felt proud to be servicing such a loving and supportive community.

So then came the afternoon of October 16<sup>th</sup>. We put the word out for all that wanted to come that we would be releasing a Bald Eagle in Blake Snyder's name at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary outside of the Audubon Center. Many of people showed up, filling the center and finding places to stand behind the center where they would watch the release and support the family. The TreeHouse van arrived and drove up behind the





center onto the flat grounds, carrying the young Bald Eagle that was ready to return back to the wild. When all was in place and Elizabeth's family was ready, we addressed the crowd. We talked about how we knew the family and then the symbolism of the Bald Eagle. We then guided the family over to TreeHouse van where Pam, Rachael, and Elizabeth prepared the Bald Eagle for releasing, making sure he was settled in Elizabeth's and Pam's hands. We allowed the family to see the Bald Eagle up close, especially Blake Snyder's small son Malachi. Rachael then started a countdown from ten and then at the end of the count, Pam let go of her end of the Bald Eagle, and Elizabeth launched him into the air. The moment of truth for all wildlife rehabilitators.



It was perfect! The Bald Eagle spread his wings out wide and immediately shot out over Ellis Bay where he circled and caught the wind in his feathers. He seemed to be celebrating his freedom as he soared around the bay. We all watched in awe and celebrated the success of the release. Not long after, the photographers that were watching him through their cameras shouted out. He had caught a fish and was

eating it on the sandbar on the other side of the bay! That was a first for all of us, to see an animal we had just released catch something to eat in front of us. The release couldn't have gone better. Many of us stayed around for a while afterwards, taking photographs, talking to the family, and having friendly



discussions. Eventually we said our thanks and goodbyes and parted ways. We couldn't have imagined that something so perfect could have come in the wake of such a tragedy. We at TreeHouse were happy to show support for our former intern, Elizabeth, and her family.



**INTERN CLASS OF 2016**

Roxane Aflalo  
Dartmouth College, NH  
Graduated



Rachel Disney  
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale  
Senior



Hannah Markezich  
Northern Illinois University  
Junior



Alyssa Buck  
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor,  
TX  
Graduated



## REHAB RAMBLINGS *continued*

In the spring I received a call from a lady in Jerseyville who had a nestling Great horned Owl on the ground under a pine tree. When I found out which neighborhood she lived in, I told her we had volunteers (Ray and Robin Riefler) who had just moved into that neighborhood and handed the phone to Ray. He and Robin went over and picked up the bird, tried putting it up on a branch, but it ended up on the ground again. The nest was in the pine, but Great horned Owls don't actually "build" a nest. They either use some else's nest or make do with what is there, like a fork in a tree, which is what this one did.

Later I went over to the Althoff's (Jan & Larry), bungee corded a wicker clothes basket as high up on the trunk as I could reach and placed the owlet in it. Looking down at me was the mom and another owlet. That night Jan watched from her window and saw mom land in the basket and feed the owlet. That was the start of a friendship between the Riefles and the Althoffs with many updates.



A week or so later, Ray called and asked if I had put another owlet in the basket. I said no and he said there's two in there now. The other owlet must have just fluttered down into it. Come to find out there was a third youngster. Eventually they left the nest and began flying around the neighborhood looking for food. Ray and Robin enjoyed watching one swoop down 20-30 times one night catching bugs.

A couple months later another neighbor found what appeared to be an injured juvenile down the road. It was probably one of the three. It did not have any obvious injury, just a little thin. After fattening it up and time in the flight cage, it was released back in the neighborhood.

**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



**Hawthorne**  
ANIMAL HOSPITAL LTD.

We take exceptional care of pets!

Thanks to  
Hawthorne Animal Hospital's  
doctors, vet techs and staff in  
Glen Carbon for all your help.  
We couldn't do it without you!

## 2016 TREEHOUSE GUARDIANS

**Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery : Emrys**

**Community Blood Center in honor of Emily Pinney : Emily the  
Screech Owl**

**Mary Rotz in honor of Sandy Konopelski : Sandy the Axolotl**

**Eric Bloemker in honor of his sister Karen : Karrion the Turkey  
Vulture**

**Robert and Sharon Barrows : Howie the Great Horned Owl**

**The Heil Family : Heady the Barred Owl**

**Quality GMC Cadillac Buick : Buddy the Screech Owl**

**Cheryl Gerber : Jack the Barred Owl**

**Col. Stephen Miller : Isaac Newton the Turkey Vulture**

**Julie Whitmire : Eda & Male Kestrel**

**Rhonda Dori : Slinky the Plains Garter Snake**

**Helen Foster, Joann & Jen Funk, Patricia Carroll : Hersey the  
Red-tailed Hawk**

**Paula Morgan : Red-eared Slider Turtles**

**Rita Bahan : Marti and Houdini the Eastern Box Turtles**

**Lee Ann Kaskutas : Stevie the Great Horned Owl**

**Alton Rotary Club : Ro the Screech Owl**

**Arlene Matthis, Patricia Carroll, Marvin Wirth, Edgar & Lois  
Grossheim, Eloise Senyan, H.E. & Shirley Mitchell, Dennis & Gail  
Mueller**

## B. DAVID DUNCAN PAYS TREEHOUSE A VISIT!

Artist and TreeHouse supporter B. David Duncan payed a visit to TreeHouse on November 11th. B. David made the trip to TreeHouse on his way to a woodcarver's show in Springfield, and to present us with his 2010 award winning full-size Bald Eagle carving known as "Eagle Eye" for display. A reception was held in his honor so visitors could get a preview of this magnificent piece of art.

B. David's decoys are sold in Bass Pro, Cabella and Sportsman Warehouse stores as well as smaller outlets around the country. B. David is also a sculptor and 2D artist with an emphasis on painting and drawing portraits and wildlife.

Check out this beautiful piece of art for yourself in our Educational Center.

For more information on B. David Duncan check out his website at: <http://www.bdavidduncanartist.com>

**B. David Duncan and  
Libby McGinley,  
TreeHouse Office Mgr.**

B. David and Libby attended high school together. Libby introduced B. David to the work we do at TreeHouse.

**Owl Wood Carving**  
B. David donated to the  
Owlfest 2016 Raffle





The weekend of October 22nd and 23rd could not have been more perfect for TreeHouse Wildlife Center's second annual OwlFest, the center's largest open house fundraiser of the year. A color pallet of changing leaves and a warm Autumn sun created the perfect atmosphere for visitors to bask in as they discovered the behind-the-scene work of the center and perused around the grounds to enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells of the fest. 2016's OwlFest boosted around thirty artisan craft vendors, delicious food from local

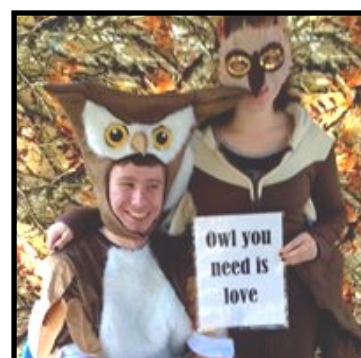
businesses, numerous games and crafts for kids, an assortment of raffle prizes, and a wide range of activities for the young and young-at-heart alike. The open house introduced a few new surprises for festival-goers, including guest presentations on wildlife and nature topics appropriate for the Halloween season, interactive displays from local environmental organizations, and live demonstrations from a few of the festival's vendors. With close to 1,600 visitors to the center between the two days, TreeHouse staff and volunteers were humbled by the support received by attendees. All proceeds collected directly benefit the patients and residents in the care of TreeHouse Wildlife Center.



## OWLFEST



Owl Photo Booth  
(above)



Kestrel Photo Booth  
(left)



**A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS  
WHO MADE OWLFEST POSSIBLE**

**QUALITY AUTO NETWORK  
SCHMIDDY'S ELECTRICAL SERVICE (Chris Schmidt)**

Dwayne Blackwell  
Dora's Spinning Wheel  
Marietta Massalone  
Nick's Pancake House  
Olive Branch  
Jimmy Johns  
Tony's  
Rolling Hills Golf Course  
Rock Springs Golf Course  
Hawthorne Animal Hospital  
Casino Queen

Kohls  
Walmart  
Golden Corral  
Green Tree Inn  
Nature Kist  
Fazoli's  
Great Godfrey Corn Maze  
Wolf Crossing Golf Club  
Tri-County Bowl  
Jennifer Davis, DVM  
Bowl Haven

**THANKS TO THOSE WHO DONATED RAFFLE PRIZES**

B. David Duncan, Owl Woodcarving won by Nancy Jussyp, Collinsville  
Go Pro Camera & Accessories won by Denny VanHook, Fairview Heights  
Raccoon Print, Adele Moore won by Eric Hadley, St. Charles, MO  
Metal Songbird Photos, John Tomlinson, won by The Keefs, Bethalto  
Telescope, Tom Foster and Ann Robinson, won by The Keefs, Bethalto  
Metal Owl & Waterfowl Photos, John Tomlinson, won by Zack Fossland  
Hand Painted Purse by

Rose Tomlinson

**A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO ALL  
TREEHOUSE VOLUNTEERS,  
SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS  
WHO WORKED TO MAKE  
OWLFEST 2016 A BIG SUCCESS!**

Checking out the raffle prizes





## MORE PHOTS FROM OWLFEST 2016



Children's Game  
Area



Ed & Penelope

Edible Insect Cafe  
compliments of  
The Nature Institute

## Environmental Speakers

One of Kohl's  
"Associates in Action"  
Volunteers



Murray the Groundhog



Rachael showing visitors  
a Flying Squirrel



## ***JOIN THE TREEHOUSE “OWL SOCIETY”***

*Early last Fall we were thrilled to learn that TreeHouse would be receiving a large donation from the will of Robert Canham. This donation was quite a surprise and also a true blessing to TreeHouse, as it came at a much needed time. We are greatly appreciative of those individuals who choose to think of TreeHouse when planning their wills, estate or trusts. However, often times we only learn of their thoughtfulness to TreeHouse, after they have passed. When really, we would like to have the opportunity to say thank you and honor those individuals while they are alive.*

*With this in mind, we are starting a new planned giving donor recognition program called, “The Owl Society”. The Owl is often thought to be a spiritual bird in some Native American cultures and we thought it appropriate to recognize this special group of donors in this way.*



*To become a part of the TreeHouse Owl Society, you simply need to notify us at, 618-466-2990 or [treehouse.kelly@gmail.com](mailto:treehouse.kelly@gmail.com). Let us know that you have put TreeHouse in your planning for your will, 401K beneficiary, estate, or trust. We will then send you a special Owl Society Pin and will recognize Owl Society members in our annual newsletters. You can let us know if you would like to be part of the Owl Society, but not publicly recognized and we would be happy to respect your privacy.*

*If you have any questions or are considering putting TreeHouse in your will, we would be happy to speak with you and answer any questions that we can related to charitable planned giving. TreeHouse wants to ensure that all donors are given proper recognition and thanks. We think the “Owl Society” will help us recognize and thank those who remember TreeHouse in their financial planning.*

***Charter members of The Owl Society are Melvin & Shirley McCann***



### Wish List

Paper towels  
Liquid Laundry Detergent  
Dryer Sheets  
33 gal. trash bags  
Plastic animal kennels (all sizes)  
Sponges  
Welding gloves  
Fishing nets with handles (all sizes)  
Garden hoses  
Sweatshirts & sweatpants  
Cash donations  
Tractor with scoop or  
(Mechanical) Bobcat  
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

<https://smile.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/WO7XQLGTC48E>  
For TreeHouse's wish list on Amazon

**IN CELEBRATION OF  
BIRTHDAYS**

Ruth Nichol's 96th Birthday!  
Dr. Paul and Donna Myer  
Donna Gersman

**IN MEMORY OF**

Joseph Kennedy  
William Carriel  
Joseph Hawkins  
Dexter  
Ray Nekola  
Robert Rouek  
Ileen Compton  
Darrell Funk  
George Helden  
Rodney Alford

Blake Snyder  
(Intern Elizabeth  
Snyder's husband)

Gloria Doyle  
(Volunteer Cheryl  
Pride's mother)

Nicholas Oswald  
(Volunteers Ray &  
Robin Riefle's  
grandson)

**THANK YOU**

SIU-E Alpha Phi  
Jerseyville Girl Scout Troop 348  
Brighton Farm Hands 4-H  
Godfrey First UMC  
Community Christian Church  
Emmanuel Free Methodist Church  
Cornerstone Christian Church  
Lifehouse Church

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

**Carved Welcome Bench  
Donated to TreeHouse  
In Memory of**

Martha Grimont  
Grandmother of  
Rachael Heaton





## **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 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**



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**