

March 2009



# WildLifeLine

The Volunteer Newsletter of the Wildlife In Need Center



## Volunteer Recognition Party

It was a new year and a new venue for the annual Volunteer Recognition Party held on February 7th, 2009. Thunder Bay Grill in Pewaukee welcomed the Wildlife in Need Center's volunteers, first offering tableside drink service, then several savory choices of hors'deuvres. The icing on the cake, was of course - the cake! A deliciously moist Bavarian chocolate masterpiece prepared by volunteer Rose Knapp. Having satisfied everyone's appetite, volunteer recognitions were in order. A special letter was shared with the volunteers (which you can read on page two), then Saturday afternoon volunteers Katie Pfaff and Nancy Meier were given the distinguished "Birdie" award, for all of their extra help, as seen on the "A Little Birdie Told Me..." recognition board. The next order of business was the Five Year Service Pin, received by a very dedicated volunteer, Becca Richards. Becca has been at WINC since 2003. She's an excellent trainer for new volunteers, in addition to providing quality animal care and team spirit to her shift on Sunday mornings. The next highlight of the evening was the Volunteer of the Year Award.



The Volunteer of the Year award is given to individuals who go above and beyond the duties of a typical volunteer. Our recipient started with WINC in 2005. In this past year, they never missed a volunteer shift, always arrived early, participated in multiple animal rescues and transports, many at the last minute, or a distance away. This individual is an excellent handler of wildlife, frequently attends classes on animal care and is a member of the Volunteer Advisory Committee. He's always willing to lend a hand (and sometimes an opinion), but we couldn't do it without him. PAUSE. At the start of the evening; envelopes had been given to several people in the room and at this time, everyone with an envelope was asked to remove it's contents and much to everyone's surprise, it

was a photo of Rick Mathieu's face on a stick! Rick is not partial to big crowds and no amount of begging was going to get him to attend the party to receive his award in person. A few days later, Rick was presented his award in person at a volunteer training class. We appreciate Rick's loyal service to WINC and hope he will continue to share his compassion for our wild patients for many more. As the evening wound to a close, guests left with a bag of wild bird seed, compliments of Debbi Triplett at Wild Birds Unlimited - Delafield and a choice of calendars from The Lang Co., both WINC supporters. We would like to thank Monday morning volunteer and Front of House Manager - Tim Brass and his staff at Thunder Bay Grill for their excellent service and accommodations. To all volunteers - Thank you for making a difference!



# Special Letter to the Volunteers

Dear Volunteers,

We're writing this letter to thank all of the volunteers at the Wildlife in Need Center. Your organization may be small, but your efforts are far reaching. And though it seems some days couldn't get any crazier, know that you have really made a difference. Because we appreciate the work you've done, we've compiled a list of thank you's to explain how we feel:

Thank you for making time in your schedule to volunteer. We know how busy you can be, really sometimes you'd think you were a squirrel hiding nuts for winter!

Thank you for driving all those miles, even when gas was over \$4.00 a gallon, you still hung in there! Now that's what we call dedication.

Thank you for tolerating working in a building that can sometimes be too hot, or too cold. We would suggest becoming cold blooded, so that temperature isn't such a factor, but then productivity in winter might be a problem.

Thank you for being creative and handy. We really didn't know how many uses there were for tarps, duct tape and zip ties!

Thank you for the potential indoor swimming pool in the basement. At first we thought it was going to be another waterfowl enclosure, and then we realized it was just due to spring flooding. Oh well, you really did a great job cleaning up the place!

Thank you for all the extra food and supplies you've brought from your homes. We loved the vegetables from your garden, the leftover fruits from your orchards and the berries from the grocery store. The shredded paper from your credit card bills made for great bedding and by the way, the volunteer with the card number ending in 0827 thanks for the new furniture!

Thank you for driving us around. We know that you don't have as keen of a sense of direction as we do, and goodness, some of you, with the lead foot and the quick brakes, your lucky we didn't get car sick, but in the end, you made the pick-up and delivered us to the Center.

Thank you for well prepared meals. The presentation is always so nice, and the diet well balanced. Martha Stewart would be jealous. Though you might want to watch the gram intake for your friend the Great Horned Owl, the extra weight is making his arches fall and he's been getting a bit of bumble foot.

We can't forget the Homecare volunteers. We just love the accommodations. Between the cuddling and the regular feedings, who would want to go back to the wild? And the marshmallows, yummy!

Thank you too for being so tolerant of the different sights and smells. We can't help how we look sometimes. We're only trying to cross the road, or fly away, or get something to eat and then all of a sudden, bam! We end up looking like a Picasso painting. As for the smells, why the raccoons and opossums feel the need to paint their cages with their own poo, we don't know. It must be some type of repressed childhood expression. And by the way, speaking of smells, you might want to lay off the perfume and aftershave.

Of course we want to thank you for the TLC. The special handling, the snugly towels, the dark boxes, the medicines to make it all better and reassurances that it's going to be ok, even when it isn't.

You know, we can never really thank you enough. You've done so much whether your there twice a month, or twice a week. You've even dropped everything to be there for us. So we guess the best way we can say thank you is this:

When we stand still just a little longer for that picture to be taken.

When we decide to make a small detour to your feeder on our migration.

When we soar just a little bit closer so that you can make that perfect identification.

And when you release us, we promise to turn around and take one last look, as we fly or run to our freedom. It's our way of saying thanking you for making a difference!

Signed respectively,

Frostbitten opie, infant songbird, injured wing hawk, mangy fox, broken shell turtle, hibernating bat, snarly raccoon, orphaned cottontail, eye trauma waterfowl and car collision squirrel.

PS – Could you do something about that Muscovy duck!

## ALL ABOUT GRIT

DKK!

(I didn't know that!)



Why do birds need grit in their food? Well the truth is that not every bird does. Fruit and insect eating birds like cedar waxwings and swallows do not need grit. Their diet is soft enough to easily move through the digestive system, while seed eating birds like cardinals and finches need grit to help grind up their food. Now there's some food for thought the next time you're preparing a bird's diet!

## WHOOO'S New at WINC?

Please welcome the following new  
Animal Care volunteers:

Sherry Christian  
Megan Esgar  
Kelsey Esgar  
Joel Reinders



## SHADOWING STAFF

We encourage anyone at or approaching Mentor level to participate in shadowing staff. Many volunteers have expressed an interest in learning new skills (like gavage), or gaining experience in handling high-risk species. To gain the experience, you can come in for an EXTRA shift, and assist the staff with patients in the ICU. Keep in mind, you will still need you to perform your regular duties on your weekly shift. In addition, please be flexible, as there may be times when there aren't any cases requiring medicines, gavage or handling of high-risk species. You can shadow once a week, once a month, or just once, it's all about how much you want to learn (and as staff time allows). If you're interested, let us know and we'll figure out a schedule that works for everyone!



# MEET YOUR FELLOW VOLUNTEERS!

By Volunteer Reporter: Katie Pfaff



**VOLUNTEER'S NAME:** Barb Hotchkiss

**SHIFT:** Tuesday morning

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN VOLUNTEERING AT WINC?**

15 years; "I started with (WINC's founder) Nancy Frank...I may be the oldest volunteer - *that's in experience, not age!*"

**OCCUPATION:**

Teacher (retired). Teaching farms guide with MPS for the past seventeen years.

**FAVORITE HOBBY or SPARE TIME ACTIVITY:**

Not necessarily in this order: Traveling, spending time with family and the grandkids. Maintaining a three acre wild prairie and anywhere from eighteen to twenty-six bird feeders and feeding stations. "I ordered 60,000 mealworms last year for my birds!!! And finally, caring for her domestic pets.

**REASON WHY YOU VOLUNTEER AT WINC:**

"Because it's addictive...! Once you start, you can't stop. Mostly, because it's very rewarding work. We share our special interest in wildlife with each other as volunteers. We are unique, because not many people want to do what we do."

**FAVORITE ANIMAL AND WHY:**

All birds...but, "Especially Orioles, they come to feed and visit with their babies. They're wonderful, and easy to identify...and I know they're 'my birds'. I know I've had a positive impact on them in this area and that's a special feeling."

**MOST UNUSUAL ANIMAL YOU'VE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO "MEET" AT WINC :**

The bear cub that stayed in the corn crib for about two months, until a home was found for him up north. "That's not something you ... see down here, and we had the opportunity to observe him up close."

**MOST MEMORABLE or FAVORITE MOMENT AT WINC:**

Two are significant: "I got to share the release of a bluebird with my granddaughter. We set (the bird) down in a bush near an area we had been told was populated by other bluebirds. We were able to see him join a large group of his kind and fly off with them to migrate. I told my granddaughter, You've just seen something very special that few other people will ever see!" Also, "I made an appointment with my chiropractor's office for a woodpecker I was rehabilitating.. I called ahead and they agreed to see him. I took him in for a meeting with the acupuncturist. I held him while the little needles were being put in." The woodpecker did eventually recover from his injuries and was successfully released.

**WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF 10 YEARS FROM NOW:**

"If I 'm lucky enough not to be riddled with dementia(!), I'll be doing the same things I'm doing right now!"

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER TO A NEW WINC VOLUNTEER:**

"Take advantage of immersing yourself in EVERYTHING! There's value in the small things, the details and the whole process. Don't try and do only the 'special things' the things you deem personally important. You will learn so much, even in the routine cleanings and meal preparations. Knowledge will give you the peace of mind and comfort that you are providing our wild friends with the best care you can give them.

# Calendar of Events

## April

### **Annual Banquet and Auction "Take Time to Care"**

Friday April 24th, 5 - 11 p.m.  
Western Lakes Golf Club

For more information call or stop in our office or  
visit [www.helpingwildlife.org/newsevents/  
calendar.htm](http://www.helpingwildlife.org/newsevents/calendar.htm)

### **Advanced Animal Handling**

Wednesday, April 22nd  
6-8PM at Wildlife In Need

### **We're having a Blooming good fundraiser this Spring**

Bulbs and perennials are some of the greatest ways  
to attract birds and other wildlife to your yard and  
garden. You can order some of the finest available  
through our newest fundraiser, Flower Power, and  
help the wildlife patients here at the Center while  
you help the  
wildlife in your own backyard!



Orders will be due to the Center by April 20th with  
pick-up in early May, just in time for Mother's Day  
and planting!

## May

### **Baby Bird Feeding Orientation**

Friday, May 8th, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Brandybrook Community Center



### **Baby Bird Feeding Orientation**

Saturday, May 9th, 1 - 3 p.m.  
UW - Field Station



### **Baby Bird Feeding Orientation**

Saturday, May 16th,  
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
Wild Birds Unlimited—Delafield

