

Wildlife Tracks



Connecting People and Wildlife through Rehabilitation, Education, and Research since 1994

2023 Issue II

Wildlife In Need Center
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WINC's MISSION: ANIMAL CARE

An Opossum's Resilience for Life

This Virginia Opossum was found on the side of the road, struggling to breathe, covered in blood, and hanging on for dear life after being struck by a vehicle. The caring finders rushed her to our center for emergency help. Staff worked quickly to stabilize her. Upon examination, we found that she had multiple fractures of her jaw and skull, including a split palate (roof of mouth). This poor girl not only had severe injuries to her head, but she also had a fractured leg of the tibia bone.

She was put on "cage rest" to minimize use of her fractured leg and allow time for healing. Staff carefully managed her comfort by providing pain medication, anti-inflammatories, and assisted with hand feeding until she was reliably able to lap up some soft foods on her own.

She was slowly graduated onto more solid foods as her mouth and head injuries continued to heal. Over a few weeks, we saw much improvement in her appetite, and her fractures were becoming more stable.



After about a month in our care, she was finally able to be housed in a larger space to allow more use of her injured leg. Staff exercised her every few days to evaluate her progress. Healing from a fractured leg can take a while, and she isn't quite ready to leave before the cold winter is here. She will be overwintered to allow her injuries to fully heal. In the meantime, she will have a warm, safe place to stay. We are hopeful by early spring she will be feeling much more herself and ready to return to her life in the wild.

Story By Sara Imperl

Mission Statement

To provide wildlife rehabilitation to Wisconsin wildlife with the intent to release back to the native habitat, conduct research designed to further the positive impact of rehabilitation, and provide quality community education programs and service.

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WINC's MISSION: EDUCATION

Turtle Changes

Last July a Midland Painted Turtle arrived at our clinic with an eye injury. During her time in care, our staff noticed her unusual interest in her caretakers. She would swim toward people and try to take food directly from them, rather than the normal wild behavior of human avoidance. This not only endeared her to all of our animal care volunteers, but alerted our animal care team that it was extremely likely she was kept as a pet at some point in her life. Due to her friendly disposition and permanent vision issues, she was deemed non-releasable.

It is often difficult to find a new home for turtles. Most freshwater turtles can live up to 50 years, so spots at nature centers and other facilities that need education animals open up very infrequently. She stayed in our care for over a year while we searched for a new home for her. In the late spring of this year, we lost our beloved Western Painted Turtle Antoinette. While no one could replace our sweet girl, this created an opening at our center where we knew Twiggy would fit in perfectly.



Left Photo: WINC's beloved Western Painted Turtle Antoinette



Right Photo: WINC's new ambassador, Midland Painted Turtle Twiggy!

It took some time for us to acquire a larger aquarium to suit Twiggy's needs- as Antoinette had three missing feet and could only utilize a small swimming area. It took more time for us to apply for Twiggy to be moved from our rehabilitation license to our education license.

After so much waiting and preparation, we announced our newest ambassador on August 22nd and Twiggy has been enjoying her much more spacious tank ever since! She still gets visits from animal care volunteers and has quickly won over the hearts of our education volunteers. She is still learning the ropes of being an education ambassador, but we are confident that she will soon be teaching people all about the wonderful wildlife that can be found all across Wisconsin.

Story by Ellen Munshower

WINC's MISSION: ANIMAL CARE

Hook Removal From a Ring-Billed Gull



This Ring-Billed Gull was admitted after he was found with a fishing lure in his mouth and right wing. The lure had two treble hooks (fishing hooks with three points), one of the hooks was in his right shoulder and the other was inside his mouth. The three points on the hook in his mouth were preventing him from opening his beak, which would have been a death sentence if he hadn't been caught. Since many fishing lures are made to look like fish they can easily be mistaken as a tasty meal by wild animals. Once ingested they can cause injury to animals' face, mouths, and GI systems. Animals can also become tangled in the monofilament line, left attached to many of these hooks, leaving them trapped and causing numerous injuries, as the animal struggles to get free.

He was sedated and we carefully removed the hooks, to avoid causing further damage, and cleaned his wounds. The hook in his mouth punctured through his right cheek, upper and lower beak. The one in his right shoulder left multiple puncture wounds and the area was extremely swollen and bruised.

Due to his injuries, he is not self-feeding and needs to be tube fed a specialized diet multiple times a day. He was recently moved to a larger space and is now being housed with another Ring-Billed Gull who is recovering from a fractured wing. For social species, housing them together can actually help their recovery and oftentimes improves their appetite.

Please dispose of any fishing line or trash properly. If you see some in the environment, please pick it up, even if it's not yours. These small acts make a giant impact for animals like him and save lives. Cases like this are entirely human-caused and can be easily prevented.

Story By Cherish Streit

Looking for more ways to help the Wildlife In Need Center? Check out our Amazon wish list to help support WINC's mission.

Scan the QR Code below to be taken to WINC's Amazon Wishlist.



SCAN ME



This adult Great Horned Owl injuries have healed from a vehicle collision but will overwinter with us because of feather damage. He will not be ready for release until he grows new feathers in the spring. This winter, he will be well fed and handled once every few weeks for weight and wellness checks.

WINC's MISSION: EDUCATION

An Eventful Year



We have a variety of annual events, but four of them are headed by our education department. These meet and greet events emphasize our ambassadors, giving community members a chance to see them in person without having to schedule a private program. Our first meet and greet of the year is always in February, and this year's "Whoooo Loves Wildlife" ended up as sweet as our bake sale! This was Lenny and Leucius' first event, and they ended up stealing the show. We had approximately 175 people stop by this Valentines-themed event was packed!

Not to be outdone, however, our "Summer Meet and Greet" event in July was our largest education event of the year. This is always a popular one- not only do you get to see our wonderful animals, but there is also a sundae bar and behind the scenes tours! This year we were also lucky enough to have a brand-new artistic volunteer do face painting at this event. This summer event was hot!

Moving into cooler weather, September brought with it "Wildlife in the Park". This is our only off-site meet & greet and fundraising event, which we hold at Cory Municipal Park in Dousman. At this event we have hot dogs and sloppy joes, chips, and drinks to enjoy while meeting the ambassadors and checking out our gift shop (which our volunteers and office staff moved from our center and set up at the park).

As fun as Wildlife in the Park is, our October event is a SCREAM! HalloWINC isn't always our busiest event, but it is our most decorated! With spooky scenes inside and out, this event usually involves a haunted trail walk behind the building. Unfortunately, this year the weather put a damper on our plans and this event was held entirely inside. We didn't let the rain dampen our SPIRITS, however. A spooky food display highlighting some of our creepier snacks we serve at our center (such as worms for turtles and rats for hawks), a scavenger hunt with prizes, and pumpkins for \$1, this event was still SPOOK-tacular.

On December 2nd our festive Holiday Meet and Greet and guests of all ages get to meet most ambassadors and our newest ambassador, Twiggy the Midland Painted Turtle.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

A Time to Be Thankful!



Co-Chairs of the Fine Wine & Dine Kim Banach, Abby Lorenz, & Sandy Harsh
(Not pictured: Gayle Oleszczuk, Kathy Ward, & Robin Moore)

This holiday time of year is an ideal time to reflect and recognize those who have had a significant impact on the Wildlife In Need Center's success. There are so many of you for whom we are thankful. The wildlife that needs our help, are brought to the Center by caring people and many will donate to help cover the cost of their care. Our Wildlife Animal Champions are members who donate on a re-occurring basis whether weekly or monthly. Our faithful members donate a minimum of \$35 a year and much more, with many members who have supported WINC for 29 years.

Those of you who attend or donate, donate auction items, and sponsor our major events, the Banquet and Fine Wine & Dine events, as a collective you raised an impressive \$76,000 this year! Our Fine Wine & Dine event held annually in October raised a record \$46,000. Thanks to Presenting Sponsor von Briesen & Roper s.c., Sponsors Associated Bank, Aquatica and Waukesha State Bank, table sponsors Mike and Sandy Harsh, Abby and Kent Lorenz, and Brook-Falls Veterinary Hospital & Exotic Care Inc.

There are people who also treat WINC as a member of their family by remembering the Center in their wills. These donors, members of our Dakota Society, are so committed to WINC's mission that they want to be sure that the passionate work WINC does will continue after they are gone. We are excited to have added four new members this year. If you have already remembered WINC in this special way please contact me and if you have any questions about this type of gifting, please email me at kbanach@helpingwildlife.org or call 262-965-3090.

As we approach 2024, we will be celebrating our 30th anniversary all year long. For those of you who have helped wildlife and our mission, you are the reason we are celebrating this milestone. With our deepest gratitude, we thank all of you for your continued partnership as we embark on the next 30 years.

Story by Kim Banach, Executive Director



Dakota
SOCIETY

A quote from one beautiful
Dakota Society member:

"Over the years, we have brought animals to the Wildlife In Need Center for help, and we know first-hand the care they give as well as the great work they do, not only for the animals but for the surrounding community. Seeing an injured Red-tailed Hawk released and take flight was heartwarming."

Wildlife In Need Center



2024 marks our
30th Anniversary!

Stay tuned for lots of wonderful
events throughout the year.

We want you to come
and celebrate with us!



This Western Painted Turtle is just one of the 31 turtles we admitted this year after they were hit by a car and will overwinter with us while his injuries heal.

What's the BUZZ? Remembering Special People

This year there has been a substantial outpouring of gifts from donors to WINC in honor or memory of special people in their lives.

Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone camera to be directed to our "Remembering Special People" web page.



Leuciscus Opossum, Lenny Opossum, and I were talking the other night about the upcoming holidays. Wildlife In Need Center staff always make sure we get appropriate decorations, meals, treats, and toys so we can join in the celebrations.



They have items listed on our Amazon wish list to benefit the patients and ambassadors all year. But during the holidays, they will be making sure to put special things on the wish list for us ambassadors. I especially like any sort of food puzzle or game because I can win that game every time. It makes mealtimes more interesting and fun. We ambassadors work hard at educating all year long, so it's exciting to have extra surprises at the end of the year.

CHASE'S CORNER

These wish list items can be purchased from local stores too. Staff will also post items for our patients. I feel so bad for those sick and injured animals who are in the clinic over the holidays. WINC is not their home like it is for Leu, Lenny, and I. But with your help and the staff's hard work, hopefully they will go back to the wild soon. Please watch local stores for sales on unsalted pecans, walnuts, and almond nutmeats for holiday baking. And after the holidays, stores put pecans, walnuts, and almonds in-the-shell on sale to clear them out. It's a great time to stock WINC up for all the rodents staff care for every year. Willow Woodchuck likes them too. I hope you and yours have a wonderful holiday season. The other ambassadors and I will see you at an education event next year!



How Can You Help?

- **Don't forget your local wildlife during the winter. Sometimes water is hard to find. Consider putting out a heated birdbath or a shallow pan of water in the sun during the day. You will enjoy watching your visitors!**
- **Bring us your grocery receipts from Albrecht's Sentry in Delafield, and Piggly Wiggly in Hartland and Oconomowoc. We turn them in for a portion of the totals.**
- **If possible, avoid taking trees down between March and September during squirrel breeding season.**
- **Get a Kwik Trip Rewards Card and have your and have your rebate go to WINC. Kwik Trip donates an additional 1% too.**
- **Bring your Christmas Trees to WINC! Take off all the tinsel and decorations first. We can use them for enrichment activities for our patients that will be with us over the winter.**
- **Check with your employer to see if they match charitable donations.**
- **Become a member or Join our Wildlife Animal Champion monthly donor members!**
- **All adult wildlife patients are released back home (the area where they were rescued) but the babies do not have established homes yet. If you or someone you know would like to be a property release site, we have release site forms on our website. <http://www.helpingwildlife.org/rehabilitaten/wildlife-release-program>**
- **Good Harvest Market in Pewaukee gives an EcoToken to shoppers who bring a reusable bag. Shoppers donate those tokens to local nonprofits at the store. WINC receives 10 cents per token.**

VOLUNTEERS

Community Blessings



We have many different volunteer positions at WINC: Animal Care, Education, Office, Special Events, Landscaping, Maintenance. Our volunteers do amazing work that is crucial, noticed and very appreciated by all.

Did you know that we also have different community groups that help us on occasion?

Oconomowoc High School Beyond 18 Program: Two student interns are coming in to help us 4 mornings each week. They help with laundry, dishes, sweeping and more. The students are building up their life skills knowledge, experience, and also their resumes.

We also were fortunate enough to participate in the **Oconomowoc High School's Freshmen Day of Service** on October 17. Eleven students and 2 chaperones came to our center and helped us reorganize and clean up outdoor storage areas. It is amazing how much work these students did. We are thrilled with the results! Everything outside is so much better organized!

We occasionally connect with scouts who make items that our patients need, such as perches and nest boxes. We currently have an Eagle Scout Candidate who is working on fixing up part of the pathways between some cages. He's planning, fundraising, and getting ready to install stairs with a hand railing and will improve the pathways in one area to make it safer for all. It's a lot of work. We are so excited about this project to be completed before the end of this year!

Generac hosts a Season of Giving campaign in November and December. Volunteers from Community Programs at Generac will be coming soon to help deep clean and organize our bulk food storage room. This is the perfect time for helping with indoor work that is so needed.

VJS Construction Services has offered us some volunteer time. We are carefully thinking about all that needs to be done and which project would be best suited to their areas of expertise.

Bonus community help makes a great difference for us to have a strong organization with safer grounds, better equipment, and the ability to provide high quality services to our patients and our community. Our regular volunteers are very busy with their volunteer positions. We always have a list of projects that need to be done such as building & fixing cages and equipment, creating/improving new pathways, bettering landscaping.

We greatly appreciate all the work that community groups offer us! It is true, it takes a village. We are a stronger organization with our community support! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

If you're ever interested in volunteering, please contact us at: volunteer@helpingwildlife.org

What's the Hoot?



Be sure to watch your inbox for our monthly issue of **What's the Hoot!** newsletter where you will see interesting wildlife patient stories, learn about upcoming events and important news!

If you are not receiving the *What's the Hoot!* newsletter, contact Development@helpingwildlife.org to be added to the mailing list.



We want to thank Lynn Wilde, Wildlife In Need Center's Board Director and owner of Friends Of Nature in Menomonee Falls and Slinger, as well as Landmark Feed and Seed Supply in Cedarburg. Lynn donates \$1,000's of food for our wildlife patients and other necessary supplies every year.



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Calendar 2024



February 2024

Saturday, February 10th, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
WHOOO Loves Wildlife
Wildlife In Need Center

Keep watching our Facebook page and the monthly “What’s The Hoot” Newsletter for additional Meet-And-Greets, the Fine Wine & Dine Dinner, Wildlife in the Park, the Annual Spaghetti Dinner and our very special 30th Anniversary Celebration!

Exciting News and Events at WINC Can Be Found on Our Website
Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone camera to be taken to our website



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

March 2024

Sunday, March 10th, 8:00 am – 1:00 pm
Pancake Breakfast
Dousman Lions Club, Dousman, WI

April 2024

Friday, April 19th, 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm
30th Annual Spring Banquet
The Legend of Brandybrook, Wales, WI

Follow Us on All of Our Social Media Pages

Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone camera to follow us on all of our socials



July 2024

Friday, July 27th
Stay tuned for more details!
30th Anniversary Summer Meet and Greet
Behind-the-Scenes Tours and much more!
Wildlife In Need Center

How You Want to Receive Winc’s Tracks Newsletter in the Future?

Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone camera to tell us if you would like to receive it in the mail or via e-mail

