



# Sunny Gazette

## Official Newsletter

Animal Rescue League Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

## With Spring Comes Increased Accidents — And Hundreds of Wildlife Babies Needing Rehab Care

Spring is here and the Wildlife Center is doing what we do best – caring for Mother Nature's babies!

We are busy year round, but just as springtime gets more of us outside to play or work in the yard, our area's wildlife are exposed to more dangers.

Nests get disturbed and accidents with family pets, lawn equipment and toxins bring record numbers to our Center.

And did you know that, even throughout the spring — when our Center is full to the max — our return rate is twice the national average?

*This baby hummingbird was admitted to our Wildlife Clinic after being caught by the family dog.*



*A family of beavers were poisoned and these two babies were found crying on a riverbank.*

*Here's a baby bunny that was brought in after its nest was destroyed by a lawnmower.*



**Thanks to your support and our team of dedicated wildlife clinical professionals, university student interns and volunteers, we're able to get over 60% of injured, sick or abandoned wildlife and their babies back to the wild.**

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[Click Here for PawPrints Gala](#)

### OUR MISSION

To rehabilitate and release injured and orphaned wildlife and to provide educational programs to regional residents in order to help foster an appreciation for conservation and a harmonious existence between humans and wildlife.

**Animal Rescue League Wildlife Rehabilitation Center**

6000 Verona Road • Verona, PA 15147 • Phone: 412-793-6900 • Fax: 412-793-6283  
www.animalrescue.org (Click Wildlife Center)

# Showered with Love!

## 2009 Baby Shower Success

The 10th Annual Baby Shower for the Wild Animal Babies was held at the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center on Sunday, March 29th.

Despite an overcast sky in the morning, the sun – along with hundreds of loyal supporters – came out to shine brightly on our event.

There was great food, live music, face painting, henna tattoos, crafts, raffles and a lot of fun!

A tour was offered giving everyone a unique opportunity to observe our educational animals up close. Visitors were given a sneak peak into our nurseries by viewing the baby animals with our "owl and bunny cams."

And so many brought our wildlife presents listed on our **Wish List!**

On behalf of the hundreds of wild animals (and their babies!), **thank you** to everyone who attended and donated to make this event a huge success!



Parents and children enjoyed the natural wonder of our educational animals. Here, the quail family meets a curious dad and his two girls.



Our caring neighbors showed up in droves at our **Baby Shower** last month donating items and money to help care for the injured and abandoned babies of the wild.

### Weren't able to make it this year, but still want to help out?

Please consider our **Wish List** online or on page 3 in this newsletter. Or, you can make a securely donation online. Visit [www.animalrescue.org](http://www.animalrescue.org) click on "Donate" and choose Wildlife Center.

**Thank you!**



*You too can birdwatch in your own backyard. Leave food and water and watch them come!*

## Wild And Wonderful Spring Happenings – Right In Your Own Backyard!

Longer and warmer days bring about the spring migration for many bird species. Migrants from lands far away may show up right in your backyard – for a well-deserved rest.

What can you do to help our feathered friends to finish their journey?

Certain foods can make a difference for migrants and will also help other species that might be looking for a decent meal before beginning their nest building activities. The birds that visit your feeders sporadically in the spring may become common customers during the summer.

For birds, caloric intake is the key to success. While we normally avoid high calorie foods, birds require them to keep active and healthy.

Offering foods such as sunflower seeds, millet, niger, peanuts and cracked corn will guarantee you daily visits from native birds. Suet and fruit will only enhance your guest list. Water is a great way to attract birds of all types. Always provide fresh, clean water. Sometimes water is harder to come by during a dry summer. Moving water, such as a fountain is especially appealing.

Spring and summer can also offer many great birding opportunities. Offering food and water in your yard can lead to unforgettable sightings for everyone.

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# Years of Hard Work Recognized: Our Own Community Champion

Wildlife Center Volunteer Association President, Joanne Grimes is the Recipient of the Community Champions Award.

The Community Champions program is part of a national volunteer recognition program called the Jefferson Awards. In 1972 the American Institute for Public Service established the Jefferson Awards for Public Service, founded by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, U.S. Senator Robert Taft and Sam Beard. The awards were created to recognize and encourage outstanding public and community service and are considered the Nobel Prize for volunteer service. Based on nominations, the 50 Western Pennsylvania area Community Champions were selected by the Post-Gazette, Heinz Endowments and the Pittsburgh Foundation. Each Champion is honored with a quarter-page ad in the Post-Gazette featuring a picture and description of their volunteer service.

A reception and ceremony was held in February to recognize the 50 local champions. Out of the

50 local champions, five were selected to receive the national Jefferson Award and one was chosen to represent Pittsburgh at a national awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. Upon notification of her selection Joanne was photographed with Martha, the resident Great Horned Owl. The ad ran in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on December 23, 2008.



*Photo of Joanne Grimes, recipient Champions Award, with Martha, our resident Great Horned Owl as it appeared in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette.*

***Congratulations, Joanne! Thank you for your years of dedication and hard work. You truly are a Champion!***

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## Spring Babies WISH LIST

Won't you please take a peek in your pantry to see if you have doubles of any of the following and bring it over to our wildlife pantry? The babies will be so grateful!

Your gift will help us care for the hundreds of hurt and hungry(!) babies arriving this spring. Your contribution helps us get more of them back to their homes in the wild.

Liquid Laundry Detergent	Canned Peas
Unscented Dawn Liquid Dish Soap	Canned Mixed Fruit
Paper Towels	Dry Kitten Food
Toilet Paper	Latex Gloves
Bleach	Kitty Litter
Baby Food Mixed Veggies	Esbilac Primate Diet
Baby Food Garden Veggies	Garbage Bags (30 and 55 gallon)
Canned Cream Corn	Exact
Freeze Dried Mealworms	Pedialyte
Knox Blox	Wild Bird Seed
Canned Carrots	Rabbit Food
Canned Peaches	Rolled Oats
Canned Green Beans	Poultry Feed
Canned Pears	

Gift Cards are also appreciated, especially those from Home Depot, Lowes, Jo-Ann Fabrics, Michael's Crafts, WalMart and Giant Eagle.

*Thanks so much!*

## Cubs Corner

### How To Make A Pinecone Bird Feeder

#### What You Need:

Wax paper, pinecone, string, peanut butter, butter knife, birdseed, and scissors.

#### What to Do:

1. Spread the peanut butter inside the openings all around the center and bottom of the pinecone and fill up the spaces.
2. Spread birdseed of your choice on the wax paper.
3. Take the pinecone and roll it in the birdseed so that the seeds stick to the peanut butter all around the outside. You may also want to sprinkle seeds inside any openings.
4. Measure your string to hang down from a branch of a tree or bush so that it is far enough from the branch to keep any squirrels from eating your feeder.
5. Tie your string to the top of the pinecone and then to the tree branch. Watch and record who comes to visit your pinecone feeder this spring.



*Birds love this easy-to-make birdfeeder!*

From <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eek/index.htm>

# We Can All Make A Difference – By Being More Responsible – And Mindful

By Tammy Frech, Education Director, ARL Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

Someone recently asked me, “Do you think wildlife rehabilitators make a difference?” I have a personal philosophy when it comes to this answer. I share it sometimes with audiences at education programs throughout the area.

I believe in this. That as long as people do things – on purpose or inadvertently – to harm our native animals, then people have a responsibility to take care of those animals.

Look, most times our wild creatures get injured or killed because of accidents. When was the last time you saw a squirrel, rabbit or a flock of wild geese look both ways before crossing the street? What is a street to any of these animals? What’s a car, and how are they to know it is dangerous?

These instances can hardly be avoided.

But there are measures to prevent injuries and death among our beautiful wild ones:

- Think.** Before we cut down a tree – especially during nesting season.
- Think.** Before we mow our lawns – look closely to see if there are bunnies or snakes along your path.
- Think.** Before you let domestic pets, like your dog or cat roam loose – they can seriously injure or even kill a songbird and her babies.

I remember just one case in my eight years of rehabilitation when we admitted animals that were maliciously harmed. It was Mother’s Day several years ago. An opossum had the bad luck to walk into an angry man’s yard. Rather than just chase

it out or wait for it to move along, the man smashed her head in with pipe. Another person who witnessed the atrocity noticed that there was movement in the opossum’s pouch. Thankfully, he brought us the dead animal and we were able to rescue most of the babies still residing within mom.



*This little baby raccoon was brought to the Wildlife Center after being hit by a car.*

And so, my friends, **yes**, rehabilitation does make a difference. It teaches people to think twice before chopping down a tree in late spring and to watch the road more carefully when driving. By showing care and respect for nature’s creatures, we spread those values to others.

We are so grateful to Tammy and to the hundreds of dedicated Wildlife Rehabilitation Center volunteers who spend countless hours caring for the animals and who travel throughout the area helping to educate the public at large. They remind us of just how precious our wildlife creatures are and how they too can make a real difference.

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## Help Wildlife by becoming an ARL Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Volunteer!

**Join us on Saturday, May 2, 2009 at our Volunteer Orientation**

You will learn how to assist with animal care, cleaning, feeding and many other aspects of wildlife rehabilitation. You can also help with our public awareness programs by making appearances at fundraisers and other Wildlife Center events.

Please call Maria Pyrdek, Volunteer Coordinator to register for our Volunteer Orientation, at 412-793-6900 or email [mpyrdek@animalrescue.org](mailto:mpyrdek@animalrescue.org)

**For more details about volunteer requirements, visit our online Volunteer Center**

# “Are You My Mother?”

## Wildlife Center Lifetime Residents Foster Wild Babies While They Heal

*Spring and summer are the busiest times at the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, not only for the human caretakers, but also for several of our lifetime, or resident animals.*

### Why?

Just as orphaned children are cared for by foster parents until they can be adopted, often our baby wildlife are fostered by our adult, resident animals until they can be released back into the wild and fend for themselves.

As a wildlife center, an important part of our mission is to raise nature's babies and return them back into the wild with the full set of skills they need to survive and compete with their born-wild counterparts. Although we do a great job, an orphaned baby of the wild is always better off with its natural parents or an adult of their own species fostering and caring for them while they nurture and grow at the Center.

It is very important for a young animal to learn as much from their foster parents as possible. Young birds look to their parents to form a sense of self. This is called imprinting. They watch their parents or foster parents' every move to learn how to act.

We limit the amount of contact each animal has with humans, using sheets, caging, mirrors and occasionally puppets to feed and care for young ones to help them imprint on objects resembling their own species. Whenever possible, we allow our educational animals to “foster” wild babies and raise them until they are ready to go.

Just last month, a baby Great Horned Owl was brought to us by the PA Game Commission when the building his nest was in was demolished.

We introduced him to our resident educational Great Horned Owl, Martha. Martha stays with us permanently due to a wing injury that has rendered her flightless. She spends most of her time visiting classrooms and making public appearances.

As soon as the baby saw Martha, he immediately began chirping and flapping his stubby wings. It took Martha a few minutes to understand that this new baby was hers to care for but soon she jumped into the cage with him and took him under her wing.



*Martha, our resident educational Great Horned Owl volunteers*

*her good parenting skills and serves as this baby Great Horned Owl's foster mom.*

Now Martha stays with the baby all day long. She is showing him what owls do. As he gets older, Martha will supervise him as he learns to fly and hunt. The baby owl will stay with us for several more weeks.



He still has a lot to learn from Martha. But when he's ready, we are confident that he will be well prepared to take wing on his own!

*"It's like looking in a mirror!" this young gosling thinks she may have a twin. The mirror actually plays an important role to help imprint babies on objects resembling their own species while healing at the Center.*

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## REGISTER NOW! Camp Muddy Boots July and August

**Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12 Noon**

Parents — hurry and register your children for a fun-filled experience with nature's most precious wildlife they'll always remember.

Children aged 6-10 years: July 13-17 and August 3-7

Children 10-14: August 10-14

**Cost: \$150. Space is limited. Registration forms will soon be available online or by contacting Tammy Frech: educate@animalrescue.org or 412-793-6900.**

# Brownies & Girl Scouts

## Earn Your Wildlife Badge at the ARL Wildlife Center!

Just one afternoon and you can earn your Wildlife Badge!

**Dates for Juniors, Cadets & Seniors:**  
5/2/09, 9/12/09,  
11/7/09

### Sections of the Wildlife Badge:

- It's all in the details
- Touch me Not
- Creature Feature
- Staying Alive
- We are Family
- Animal Watcher



### Dates for Brownies:

4/11/09, 5/9/09, 9/19/09, 11/14/09

### Sections of the Watching Wildlife Badge covered:

- Animal Architects
- Earthworm observations
- Animal Talk
- Outdoor shopping
- Plus Bird Song

Badge days will be held from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. in our Habitat building at 6000 Verona Rd. in Penn Hills. Tour the Menagerie, home of our education animals. (Badge not included.)

**NOTE:** A minimum of ten scouts per session is needed to run the program. Pre-registration is required at least ten days prior to the class. The price per scout will depend on the total number of girls who attend:

10 – 14 Scouts: \$15 each

15 – 19 Scouts: \$10 each

20 – 25 Scouts: \$ 8 each

**A troop can schedule its own day for \$150.**

## Classes for

# Home Schooled Students

## Available at the Wildlife Center

### Upcoming classes:

April 21st: **Who eats bugs?**

All home school programs are held from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the ARL Wildlife Rehabilitation Center.

Lessons are approximately one hour and in most cases, are followed by a tour of our menagerie, home to our education animals. Spring classes also include a nursery tour.

A minimum of ten students per session is needed to run the program. Pre-registration is required ten days before the class.

### Students and Parent Pricing

The price per student is \$15. Parents who opt to stay with their children for the program and tour will be charged \$5.00 each.

### Groups

Home school groups of up to 30 people may schedule their own program for \$150. Programs including a live animal can also be hosted at your location.

The Live Animal Art class has a limit of 15 students.

The fee is \$20 and does not include a tour.



**For more information or to register for all our classes, view our education brochure online at [www.animalrescue.org](http://www.animalrescue.org) or contact Tammy Frech, Education Director: [educate@animalrescue.org](mailto:educate@animalrescue.org) or 412-793-6900.**

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Wildlife  
Center

Animal Rescue League  
of Western Pennsylvania

Where Love Begins.

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