

# Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina

## Message from the President

Issue 54, Spring 2014



Although it may not seem like it, spring is just around the corner and believe it or not, babies are already arriving. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Symposium Committee on a great job with the symposium this past January. Even though we had to change venues, the symposium went off without too many glitches and everyone seemed to enjoy the experience.

I've sent a letter to the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine asking for a sponsor for our next symposium with the hope of making it possible to move back to the vet school. Our vet school liaisons are also personally inquiring about the possibility of a sponsor within NCSU, so keep your fingers crossed, and maybe we will be back there next year.

With the start of baby season comes the refurbishing of rehab equipment, supplies and caging. WRNC board members are here to assist rehabbers across North Carolina in any way that we can, so please don't hesitate to contact any of the board members with questions, concerns or new ideas.

There are many rehabbers out there, so for us seasoned rehabbers, please reach out to see if we can assist in any way. We were all new rehabbers at one time, and I'm sure that all of us can remember one or two people who were instrumental in helping us out when we first started,

WRNC was created as a network for all rehabbers in NC, so let's use this network and help as many rehabbers as possible. Remember to tell people about our cage building grants and our chimney swift tower grants. Let us know when there are going to be educational opportunities so that we can post it to our website, and if you know a group of people (12 or more) that want rehab training, let us know so we can send out our educational team.

Good luck to all with your rehab efforts this year!

Sincerely, Carla M. Johnson, WRNC President



### Board Members:

Carla Johnson-President

Toni O'Neil-V.P.

Ann Rogers-Secretary

Jean Chamberlain-Treasurer

Linda Bergman

Cathy Burns

Mathias Engelmann

Joni Gnypp, DVM

Sue Heritage

Elizabeth Hanrahan

Christina Hildreth

Kathy Lillard

Michelle Ray

Michelle Richards

Mary Weiss

### Vet Student Liaisons:

Kelsey Stover

Liz Hyde

Kelsey Blackburn

### Baby Season is Here!



Photo by Larry Sosebee

## 2014 WRNC Symposium Highlights

As you know, this year's WRNC Symposium was held at Nash Community College in Rocky Mount N.C. Attendance was very good, but if you missed it, here are some highlights.



Photo by John Althouse

The banquet was lively as usual, with guest speaker Brent Lubbock from Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Park. Sylvan Heights is a 501c3 organization in Scotland Neck, NC, that is opened to the public and gives sanctuary to over 2,000 ducks, geese, swans and other exotic birds from around the world. Mr. Lubbock brought along a special friend, Cabo the blue swede duck. Cabo was abandoned in 2006, and made his way to Carolina Waterfowl Rescue. Brett met him at a conference that was held by Jennifer Gordon and immediately fell in love. Since then, he has lived at Sylvan Heights.



Photo by Michelle Ray

WRNC would like to thank Mr. Lubbock and Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Park for participating in the WRNC 2014 symposium, and for his wonderfully touching presentation. To learn more about Sylvan Heights, visit [shwpark.com](http://shwpark.com). A visit to this facility is definitely worth the trip!

During the banquet, general elections were held. Toni welcomed our new board members and thanked the outgoing board members for their contributions. The new nominees were all accepted by unanimous vote onto the board.



Photo by Michelle Ray

Dinner was good and the networking was invaluable as usual! There are so many great things about attending the symposium each year; Learning opportunities, seeing old friends as well as making new ones, being able to put faces to the names of fellow rehabbers we talk with throughout the year, gaining new contacts who can help us and vice versa, and having our own little getaway with others that share our interests and passion

WRNC believes that wildlife rehabilitators have an ethical and legal obligation to represent wildlife rehab professionally and responsibly. Therefore, WRNC does not advocate the use of images that display wildlife in our care being handled or housed in any manner that would lead the public to presume that animal to be a pet, or that may be misconstrued as anything other than what is within the legal boundaries of our wildlife rehabilitation or educational permits.

## Thank You Outgoing Board Members

WRNC would like to thank to following members who served on the Board of Directors: Halley Buckanoff, Nicki Dardinger, Laurel Degernes, DVM, David Scott, DVM and Linda Woodruff.

Board members are responsible for a vast array of areas within the organization, ranging from working tirelessly to make arrangements for the annual symposium, maintaining the WRNC website, producing the quarterly newsletter and conducting basic rehabilitation classes, just to name a few. Board members are not paid for the time and effort they give to the organization and routinely make sacrifices in their personal lives in order to keep the organization and its numerous committees running smoothly.

Our sincerest gratitude goes out to the above individuals who served on the board, for all of the work they have done during their terms to benefit WRNC.

-The Editors

## Welcome New Board Members

WRNC would like to welcome the following individuals who were elected to the Board of Directors at the 2014 general meeting: Cathy Burns, Mathias Engelmann, Joni Gnyp, DVM, Elizabeth Hanrahan, Michelle Richards and Christina Hildreth. We are confident that these individuals will be invaluable to the organization and appreciate their willingness to make this enormous commitment to WRNC.

-The Editors

## I Never Thought of That

An injured robin was brought to Cathy Burns in a Munchkin Dunkin Donut box. What a perfect transport carrier for tiny babies! These boxes are small, lightweight and have carry handles. Keep them in your car for those spur of the moment pick ups. If you don't have a Dunkin Donuts in your area, other similar places have the same type of to go boxes. Recycling at its best!

-Cathy Burns



## Happy Anniversary!!!

Congratulations to Possumwood Acres Wildlife Sanctuary in Hubert NC, in celebrating their 10 year anniversary. P.A.W.S. will be hosting a celebratory event on Saturday, April 5th from 10 am until 5pm. There will be lots of activities for the children as well as a raffle, guided tours and professional pictures with P.A.W.S. wildlife ambassadors. Volunteers and donations are needed for the event. Please contact Possumwood Acres, at [possumwoodacres.org](http://possumwoodacres.org) for more information.



Photo by John Althouse

Wildlife Rescue Center in Sanford NC is also celebrating an anniversary this year. The Big 30! Wow! Wildlife Rescue Center is an organization of home-based rehabbers who rehab injured and orphaned wildlife, as well as traveling throughout central NC to educate the public about native wildlife. Visit them online at [wrcfansford.webs.com](http://wrcfansford.webs.com).

These milestones just prove that if you stick with it long enough, and don't go crazy during baby season, you can continue to rehab another day, and year, and decade. Thank you, to all of the organizations and individuals out there that make such an immeasurable difference to the wildlife in the state of North Carolina!

-Toni O'Neil

## 2014 Cage Grant Winners

Congratulations to the WRNC 2014 Cage Grant Winners, Deanna Epps and Margeaux Deatsch. Each year, WRNC awards two \$300.00 cage grants to WRNC members to help defray the cost of cage building.

If you are interested in applying for next year's cage grant, please go to the WRNC website for details and eligibility requirements.

The annual deadline for applications is January 5th. All WRNC members in good standing are encouraged to apply. Selections for the two grant winners are made by the Board of Directors at the January symposium.

-Cage Grant Committee



Photo submitted by Deanna Epps

## Spotlight On...

Congratulations to Peggy Hager and her Border Collie Buzz for winning top honors in their category at the Dock Dogs World Championship Finals. The competition was held November 13-14 in Dubuque, Iowa. Buzz took first place in the “big air” distance jumping competition with an impressive jump of 19 feet 1 inch!

Peggy’s dog Kaiser, a Belgian Malinois also placed in his category. Nicely done Peggy, Buzz and Kaiser!



Photo submitted by Peggy Hager



Photo submitted by Peggy Hager

Peggy is a certified dog trainer, and is no stranger to wildlife rehab. She and her mother were federally licensed bird rehabilitators for many years, and while she no longer does hands-on rehab, she still supports the effort by locating active rehabilitators for those who have found

wildlife in need.

-Toni O’Neil

## Spotlight On...



Photo by John Althouse

If you attended the WRNC symposiums, you probably noticed the guy with the really big camera acting as official photographer for the symposium. This talented individual is Linda Bergman Althouse’s husband, John Althouse. John is Chief photographer for the Jacksonville Daily News in Jacksonville, NC. He was recently honored at the NC Press Association’s annual Winter Institute, for winning first place in feature photography for his photo “Eye got it”, a photo of a

Carolina Wren taking a sunflower that was being used as an eye for a snowman. Congratulations to John on this great achievement, and thank you for being our photographer at the symposium! To see John’s pictures from the symposium, visit our photo bucket on the WRNC website.

-Michelle Ray



Photo submitted by Linda Bergman

We believe it’s important to spotlight members within the organization for their achievements within the wildlife arena, as well as other areas of their lives. If you would like to see a certain member acknowledged, please e mail Michelle or Sue with the information.

## Tales From the Field (Oops!)

I was a first year rehabilitator and had done only a handful of baby squirrels. That spring, I found a naked, eyes closed bird outside of my kindergarten classroom. I called my mentor who was federally licensed. Due to personal reasons she was unable to take the bird. As it turns out, it was a starling, which is not a protected species. She gave me a crash course on birds, and “Einstein” and I started our adventure together.

I am quite positive I provided the proper diet and caging but I didn’t understand that pesky little thing called imprinting! I mean, how cute is it when you try to feed a fledgling and it flies up on your head or your shoulder? Einstein was much friendlier than my pet cockatiel and apparently he loved me.

It was finally time for Einstein’s release. He was fat, had flight practice and was ready to go. I vividly remember his release. He flew onto a telephone wire and majestically looked down upon the mere mortals. Unfortunately, he flew back onto my head within a hour.

The next day, we repeated the scenario. Same results. We tried day after day but when he lit upon the shoulder of an elderly woman walking in the neighborhood and she swatted at him, I realized that we had a problem.

I had made plans to release him yet again in another area but before I could take action he disappeared. I had hoped that he had met up with some starling friends, but more than likely he met his demise.

We all make mistakes and hopefully we learn from them. I know I did. It is important that we be candid with our fellow rehabbers, admit our mistakes, learn from them and support each other.

–Sue Heritage

## Pre-Vet Students Want to Volunteer

Pre-vet students are eager to get experience working with animals. Students would like to volunteer to help wildlife rehabilitators during their summer vacations. Are you interested in offering a pre-vet student the opportunity to help? Let us know by completing this form: [https://docs.google.com/forms/](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1djwtnVCLrQqLsF7WcpFEI6dAbmChKW4kZoSjfLDJ1BU)

[d/1djwtnVCLrQqLsF7WcpFEI6dAbmChKW4kZoSjfLDJ1BU](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1djwtnVCLrQqLsF7WcpFEI6dAbmChKW4kZoSjfLDJ1BU)

–Jean Chamberlain

## Loss of a Colleague: Kathy Riggin-Grooms

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Kathy Riggin-Grooms who passed away in December 2013. Kathy was one of our own; a dedicated wildlife rehabilitator who lived in Whittier, NC. She opened her wildlife rehabilitation center, Second Chance Wildlife, in 1994 with husband Mike Grooms, and even though she lived in a rural community, she was bombarded with wildlife within the first month of operation. Her center stayed that way until forced to close in 2000 due to financial challenges and health issues.

Kathy was a veterinary technician at Silva Animal Hospital and was able to take wildlife there and “work them up;” take radiographs, do fecal exams, assist with surgeries and other things that the home-based rehabilitator is usually unable to do. Kathy was one of the most genuine people I have ever known. She had integrity, drive and was fearless in that whatever challenge she was presented, she would take it on without hesitation, whether it was handling a dangerous animal or raising funds to build her eagle enclosure (with her own sweat and two hands).

Her home and center were located on the hillside of a beautiful valley with a creek running through it. Kathy and Mike creatively designed a trail system throughout the property to the different outdoor display cages and pre-release caging that they built themselves. Kathy was an active member of WRNC and NWRA and submitted articles from time to time for both organizations. She was the recipient of the James J. Wolf CARE for Wildlife Education Scholarship through NWRA and other grants to support her great work. After closing her center she became a tractor-trailer driver and loved driving throughout the USA. Every once and a while I would get a post card from Oregon, North Dakota or New York. There were times when I would get the occasional phone call from Kathy saying, “Hello Nina, guess where I am?” Then, I’d go through the states to try to guess where she was. I am proud to say that I was a friend of Kathy Riggin-Grooms and will miss her very much, along with others who knew and admired her. -Nina Fischesser

We would like to ask members to please check your personal information on the WRNC website for accuracy. Changes can be made by logging onto the website into the members area and following the prompts to make updates. Having individuals keep this information updated themselves helps to ensure that the posted information is accurate at all times and that changes are reflected in a timely fashion.

The WRNC board of directors would like to invite everyone in the general membership to become involved in all aspects of the WRNC. While we know that everyone can become overwhelmed within the baby season, as well as attempting to balance wildlife, work and having a life in general, it is important for us to extend an open invitation to become involved by sharing ideas and knowledge, as well as to receive feedback from the membership on how you feel we are representing you and the organization.

## Newsletter Articles and Ideas Needed:

The newsletter committee is looking to the general membership to submit articles as well as ideas about what you would like to see in upcoming newsletters. We would love to hear about your experiences in wildlife rehab, specific cases that you have had, members you would like for us to spotlight and any other topics that you feel would be educational or interesting to our fellow rehabbers.

Please e mail your ideas, articles and feedback to Michelle Ray at [mrinbfe@att.net](mailto:mrinbfe@att.net), or Sue Heritage at [heritage\\_sue@yahoo.com](mailto:heritage_sue@yahoo.com). (Please reference "Newsletter" in the subject area of your email).

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

## Symposium Feedback & Volunteers Wanted

The symposium committee and board of directors would like to hear from the general membership regarding ideas for our annual symposium. As usual, we appreciate the feedback left by attendees at the end of the event but we are also interested in hearing from those of you who did not attend. We would like feedback letting us know what factors played a role in your decision not to attend. We would like your comments and concerns regarding location, class topics and content, symposium costs and any other areas of concern, as well as ideas on how we can make the next symposium better suit the needs and expectations of the entire membership.

The symposium committee works very hard throughout the year to prepare for the next event. It is very important for them to know what the membership expects and wants in regard to the next symposium. Your ideas and feedback are key in aiding the committee so that we can meet and exceed your needs and expectations for each symposium.

Please email your ideas and feed back to Jean Chamberlain at [jchamberlain1@windstream.net](mailto:jchamberlain1@windstream.net) or Carla Johnson at [wildlfeed2@aol.com](mailto:wildlfeed2@aol.com)

-Symposium Committee

# Thank You Donors for Making our Raffle a Success!



Photo by Michelle Ray

WRNC would like to thank everyone who donated to the 2014 symposium raffle. As usual, your generous donations made the raffle a huge success in raising monies for WRNC and making its attendees very happy!

Zoo Med Laboratories, Inc.

Chippychipmunk

Wildbirds Unlimited

Rodent Pro

Carla Johnson

Carolina Waterfowl Rescue

Linda Bergman-Althouse

Maria Luques

Rachel Taylor

Humane Society, US

Diane Deal

Carolina Hurricanes Hockey

Harrison's Pet Products

Zoological Education Network

Bonnie Graham

Michelle Ray

Grandfather Mountain

Shannon Ray

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Linda & Gary Woodruff

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Possumwood Acres

Linda Ostrand

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Grubco, Inc.

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Backwoods Farm, Inc.

Jurassi Pet

Healex

Oxbow

NWRA

Jim Craig



Photo by John Althouse



Photo by John Althouse