



NWRI Hires Executive Director

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Lynne & Jack Baldwin and the Berneice Hopper Private Foundation, NWRI was able to hire its first-ever Executive Director this summer. Laura Stastny has been with NWRI for over 10 years, most recently serving as Operations Chair and Treasurer on our Board of Directors. Her new position is part-time, and includes many of her old duties as well as new ones. As Executive Director, Laura is in charge of all animal operations and volunteer management, working to ensure that

working to expand our educational outreach, including in area middle schools through the Collective for Youth initiative. When asked about her new position, Laura said, "I am thrilled to



Laura shows a young woodchuck to a group of Nebraska Master Naturalists at a session at Neale Woods this summer.

have the opportunity to help NWRI continue to grow to help more animals and reach more people. I am lucky to be part of such an amazing organization!" Laura's goals include financial sustainability for NWRI, building volunteer involvement, and strengthening NWRI's community partnerships. Long-term she would like to see NWRI acquire land

we can care for the thousands of wild animals in need in our area each year. She is also

and build its very own specialized Wildlife Hospital and Rehabilitation Center.

Awesome Opossums!

Five-year-old Bobby Walz proves that no wildlife lover is too young to make a difference.



Left: Bobby (left) and younger brother Henry (middle) make fundraising a family affair in front of their lemonade stand. **Right:** Original artwork by Bobby.



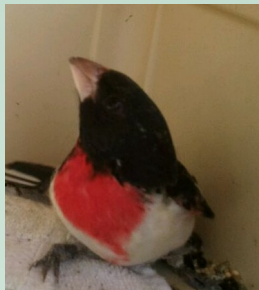
This summer, five-year-old Bobby Walz decided that he wanted to do something to help his favorite wild animal, the opossum, and decided to have a lemonade stand to raise money to donate to the opossums NWRI rehabilitates. In October Bobby, along with his parents Bob and Heidi, and his little brother Henry, hand-delivered the money he raised to the Wildlife Center, and got the opportunity to meet some of the young opossums still in rehab. We were thrilled to meet such an extraordinary young man and are excited to welcome the Walz Family to NWRI!



Left: Henry and Bobby get up close and personal with one of the orphaned opossums at the Wildlife Center. **Middle:** Bob Walz, left, looks on as sons Henry and Bobby meet the baby opossum. **Right:** Executive Director Laura Stastny holds a baby opossum as Henry and Bobby look on. *Photos courtesy of Heidi Walz.*

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A Message from our Board

It has been awhile since our last full newsletter, and we're excited to report that a lot has been happening at NWRI – so much in fact, that we couldn't possibly fit it all into this newsletter. Thanks to your support and generosity, we are wrapping up our second year in our Wildlife Center at Ash Grove and we finally feel like we've grown into the space. Our volunteers cared for over 2,000 animals this year (final counts to come in our next newsletter), many of which were suffering from drought-related issues. This was the opposite of 2011, when flooding caused many problems for wild animals in our area. This year, we also received funding to hire a part-time Executive Director, worked with 4 spectacular interns from UNL, and received a large grant from Collective for Youth to bring unique wildlife and environmental education to four OPS Middle School after-school programs. Although much has been done this year, there's a lot more coming up in

2013! We are hosting training sessions from the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (basic AND advanced) again in 2013, in addition to our own sessions and plan on working with new interns this summer. Our annual *Bats Over Omaha* bat release at the Joslyn will take place in the spring, and both our Open House and Family Day (June) and *Focus on Nature* Fundraiser (September) are returning for 2013. Our educators will continue to work in the Collective for Youth program through the summer, and are always looking for new and innovative ways to bring education to our community that will ensure our native wildlife is understood and protected in the years to come. As always, we are grateful for you and the support you provide – financially, in your volunteer hours, and by spreading the word about the important work we do in our community. Thank you, and we hope you enjoy this newsletter!

Thank You to Our Many Friends and Donors

NWRI is deeply grateful to the following individuals, businesses and foundations for their contributions to our work in providing medical management and compassionate care for the injured, sick and orphaned wildlife. Thank you!

Lifetime Members:

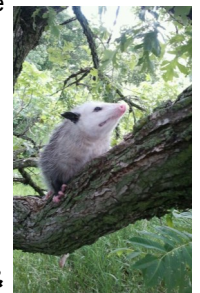
Lynne and Jack Baldwin
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David Connor
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Supporting Organizations & Businesses:

Ash Grove Cement Co.
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The Joslyn Art Museum
Oxbow Animal Health
Rhaminov Diamonds, Inc.
VCA Animal Medical Center
Dr. Keith Halsey and Staff
Veterinary Eye Specialists
Dr. Tanya McInay and Staff
Target, 180th and Center, Omaha
Walmart, 132nd and L, Omaha

And the numerous people who support us with general memberships and donations throughout the year! THANK YOU!

Volunteer Spotlight—In Her Own Words

Wildlife rehabilitator Amy Campagna shares her experience on how she became involved with NWRI.

I don't remember when I first heard the term Wildlife Rehabilitator; I just know I've wanted to be one for a very long time.

My first experience with Nebraska Wildlife Rehab. Inc. (NWRI), was in 2000 when I found an injured squirrel in my backyard. A call to NWRI directed me to a private home not too far from my own. There, I was greeted at the door by a young woman who led me with my squirrel to her dining room table. With a large bath towel and a box full of stuff, she triaged the injured squirrel right then and there. When she was finished, she took him to the "Squirrel Room"...a room in her house full of stacked enclosures with lots and lots of baby squirrels (and a few baby opossums). I was so surprised to learn that she cared for the animals in her home. I guess I was expecting some veterinary-like facility with a front desk, cold tile floor, and staff. Although not quite what I had envisioned, I left with renewed motivation to become a wildlife rehabilitator...when my kids were a little older and we had more room!

That time came in the fall of 2009. I attended a NWRI program on bats at the Nebraska Humane Society. There, I met Laura Stastny, the organization's Director. Her knowledge and passion were so impressive! I completed a volunteer application that night, and it wasn't long before I was a full-fledged wildlife rehabber, up to my elbows in animals!

Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc. has been a home-based, all-volunteer organization providing services to Nebraska and Western Iowa for over 30 years (under the current name for over a decade). We are a non-profit organization of professional wildlife rehabilitators working under permits from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and financially supported by donations alone. Each year



Amy Campagna looks after a beaver

volunteers rescue, rehabilitate, and release between 1,500 and 4,000 native wild animals and migratory birds, and provide dozens of programs to school and community groups. Recently, a generous donation by Ash Grove in Louisville has given us the use of a building as a "starter" center for our operations and a base from which to expand services. We are, however, still dreaming of that shiny new facility with a front desk, not-so-cold tile floors and staff!

It's been three years since I started working with the organization. It seems like ten, and I have long lost track of the number of animals I have had the great privilege to care for. That list includes beavers, bunnies, foxes, coyotes, raccoons, opossums, woodchucks, squirrels, mink, mice, voles, shrews, song birds, geese, ducks, turkeys, snakes, and turtles. Beavers are by far my favorite. The most fun? Definitely the mink. The most work? Raccoons! The most unusual? The 200+ tree frog tadpoles currently residing in a tub on my back porch. The hours are long (think 4am feedings) and it's hard and often dirty work. There are heartaches when animals die or have to be euthanized because, despite our best efforts, they don't recover well enough to be released. There are frustrations when there are more animals to feed than hands to feed them; more animals in need than resources to help them. But there are rewards. Big rewards! Working with dedicated, caring people who have such passion for helping and preserving our native wildlife, sharing animal stories and connecting the public with nature, and relieving the pain and suffering for animals who come into our care are definitely some of the rewards. But the biggest payoff, the one that makes it all worthwhile, is witnessing an animal's return to its wild home.

New Volunteer Coordinator for NWRI

NWRI is excited to announce that Brittney Novacek has come on board to be our (volunteer) Volunteer Coordinator! Brittney has been with NWRI for 2 years, and has become an invaluable member of our team. You can frequently find her at the Wildlife Center, caring for animals and helping the public, or at any of our events! Her new position will entail recruiting and coordinating volunteers for NWRI, planning events, and helping keep track of volunteer interests and training. She will serve as the go-to person for people interested in volunteering, as well as for long-term volunteers with questions and ideas.

Brittney works for Clarkson College and holds a B.S. in Business and a M.S. in Psychology.

We hope you will take a moment to welcome Brittney to her position at: volunteer@nebraskawildliferehab.org



A Squirrely Story



A knot of baby squirrels

This spring, NWRI received quite the surprise when 5 baby squirrels came to us with their tails tied in a knot! Upon further inspection, we found that the entire litter had become entwined when tree sap stuck their fluffy tails together, shortly before they were ready to leave the nest. Crawling around in the nest, their tails became even more entangled, eventually forming an intricate knot. When the babies were old enough to leave the nest, they came down in one big clump, unable to run in any direction. Luckily, they weren't injured in the fall, and a caring citizen found them. Rehabilitators Amy Campagna and Laura Stastny took them to Dr. Keith Halsey at VCA Animal Medical Center and together they clipped the fur off the tails and untied the squirrels from each other — the first time they were free in several weeks! Due to a prolonged period when their tails had no blood supply due to the tight knots, all of the squirrels later had a portion of their tails amputated so that they could live infection- and pain-free. Luckily, they were all able to recover and compensate for their shortened tails, and were successfully returned to the wild later in the summer!

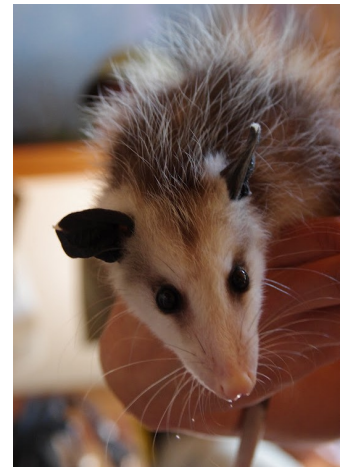


Amy and Dr. Keith Halsey carefully working to untie the squirrels



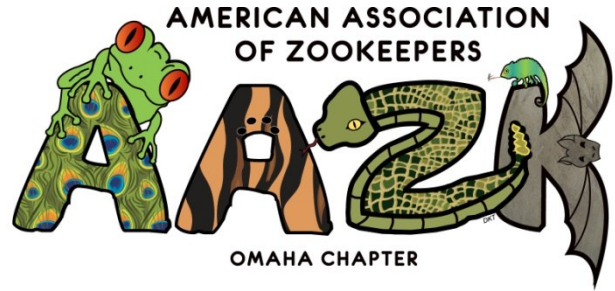
Some animals NWRI rehabilitated in 2012, clockwise from top left:

A baby eastern cottontail rabbit; An orphaned Canada gosling; the same Canada gosling and its new foster mom and siblings; A baby opossum; “Mrs. Nesbitt”, the snapping turtle that spent the winter with NWRI, on release day; A six-week old baby raccoon; A 10-day old baby raccoon



Omaha Chapter of the AAZK Raises more than \$3,000 for NWRI's Bat Team

On April 27th, the Omaha chapter of the American Association of Zookeepers (AAZK) hosted their annual *Race Against Extinction* at the Hitchcock Nature Center to raise funds for conservation. This year, NWRI was fortunate to be the beneficiary of their extraordinary efforts, and despite a stormy evening for the event, received over \$3,000 for our bat rehabilitation efforts. Thank you to the Omaha chapter of the AAZK for supporting our work!



IWRC Professional Training Coming to Omaha (Again!)

In February and March, NWRI will once again host professional wildlife rehabilitation training from the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC). This training is conducted by wildlife professionals and veterinarians from throughout the United States and is offered in partnership with qualified wildlife rehabilitation organizations such as NWRI. We encourage new rehabilitators to take the 2-day Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation Class which includes a lab and covers many essential skills, such as feeding, nutrition, housing, fluid therapy, behavior, and wound care. For the first time in Omaha, we are also offering two advanced classes – Feeding & Nutrition and Pain & Wound Management. These classes are for rehabilitators who have already taken the 2-day basic course (or who will take it in February), and are designed to build on a rehabilitator's knowledge and assist in providing more holistic, compassionate care for our wild neighbors. A 10% discount is offered for any student who takes 2 or more of the Omaha classes. To learn more and to register, please visit: <http://theiwrc.org/continuing-education/physical-classes>



Details:

February 23-24, 2013 Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation

Metro Community College, Ft. Omaha Campus

Cost \$125 for IWRC members, \$159 for non-members

March 2, 2013 Feeding & Nutrition

Metro Community College, Ft. Omaha Campus

Cost \$105 for IWRC members, \$125 for non-members

March 3, 2013 Pain & Wound Management

Metro Community College, Ft. Omaha Campus

Cost \$105 for IWRC members, \$125 for non-members

Save These Dates!

New Volunteer Orientations (New Volunteers Must Attend One Session)

Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at 6:00 PM

Sunday, January 20, 2013 at 2:00 PM

Wildlife Center Volunteer Training (Choose One)

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 1/28-1/30/2013

5-9 PM Each Night

Saturday & Sunday 2/9-2/10/2013

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM Each Day

For all of the above please RSVP to:
volunteer@nebraskawildliferehab.org

IWRC Training Sessions February and March, 2013

Bats Over Omaha bat release at the Joslyn Art Museum

Date TBD depending on weather, likely April

Open House & Family Day at the Wildlife Center

Sunday, June 9, 2013

Focus on Nature—A Fundraiser For NWRI

September 20, 2013 Opening Night Reception

September 21-22, 2013 Art Sale

More information on all of these events will be posted on our Web site!



Meet NWRI's 2012 Interns!

This summer, NWRI began our new summer internship program in partnership with UNL's Department of Natural Resources – Fisheries & Wildlife Program. Through this program, we hired 4 students for a 12-week internship which stretched from May through August. We had a large number of applicants and were privileged to hire 4 outstanding students – Alyssa, Carly, Hannah, and Miranda. These students underwent a two-day orientation and training in May before starting their 18-24 hour weeks at the Wildlife Center, where they did everything from answering calls from the public, to triaging and caring for wildlife, to cleaning and paperwork. Because of their dedication, we were able to keep the Wildlife Center open to the public 12-hours a day, 7 days a week. When we had an air conditioner malfunction that shut down the Wildlife Center for a time, they didn't miss a beat! They took animals home with them to ensure that they received around-the-clock care and continued to answer calls from the public from home. They even took turns caring for raccoons in wilding cages on a nightly basis! Read on to learn more about each one of this summer's interns, and what they thought of their internship with NWRI. We look forward to hosting new interns and are looking to expand our program next year!

ALYSSA CARSON is a recent graduate from UNL with a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife. She was excited to work with Nebraska Wildlife Rehab because she loves to help injured or orphaned animals recover and be returned to their natural habitats. In her free time, Alyssa enjoys any outdoor activity, especially camping and hiking. She also participated in the UNL marching band for five years and is a board game fanatic. ***"I loved working with wildlife every day. It was an amazing experience to help an orphaned or hurt animal heal and be released back into the wild. It feels so good to know that we were making a difference in that animal's life."*** - Alyssa



Alyssa and a great-horned owl enjoy a winter day.



HANNAH HUMMEL is a senior at UNL studying Fisheries and Wildlife. She was excited to be a part of Wildlife Rehab, Inc., this summer. She has always loved animals and is looking forward putting her knowledge into practice. Hannah continues to work with NWRI in the schools as part of her university service-learning classroom work. ***"I loved working for Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc. this summer. It gave me the opportunity to get hands on with wildlife, but also gave me the opportunity to talk to people about animals, which is what I loved best."*** - Hannah

Hannah proudly wears her NWRI t-shirt!

CARLY JOHNS grew up on a small farm in Union, NE. She is currently a senior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, majoring in Fisheries and Wildlife: Zoo Animal Care, with a minor in Animal Science. ***"I have had a passion for animals since before I can remember, and was so happy to have the opportunity to intern at NWRI this summer. It was the chance of a lifetime, and I learned more in those few months at the center than I would have in any classroom!"*** - Carly



Carly releasing a bunny she rehabilitated this summer



Miranda holds a special fluffy friend.

MIRANDA WELDON is a junior at UNL, majoring in Fisheries and Wildlife with a minor in Animal Science. Her favorite part about this internship was working with the baby animals and watching them grow and heal until we were able to release them. In the future, she hopes to work at a sanctuary for large cats such as tigers, lions, and cheetahs; however, her favorite animal is an octopus. Miranda's hobbies include sports, drawing, making movies, scuba diving, and reading. ***"What I loved most about the internship was rehabbing the raccoon babies. They each had such distinct personalities and were so much fun to take care of; they really taught me a lot about myself and what I wanted to do for my career. I also really enjoyed the medical aspect of the internship and learning what kind of medicine or care to give an animal when it came into the center. Overall, it was a great experience and definitely made this summer one to remember!"*** - Miranda

Middle School Students Get A *Wild* Education

This summer, NWRI received an \$18,000 grant to provide environmental education in the after-school programs of four Omaha Middle Schools through the Collective for Youth project. Educators Amy Campagna, Matt Cronin, Liam Chleborad, Jen Stastny, and Laura Stastny designed three sessions for students, each six-weeks in length, to be offered throughout the year. These sessions, "City Critters," "Creatures of the Night," and "Winter Wildlife," all seek to engage students in fun experiments and projects while teaching serious lessons about the environment, the wild



animals of Nebraska, and living in harmony with nature. Working in the after-school programs at Marrs Magnet Middle School, Lewis & Clark Middle School, Monroe Middle School, and King Science Center, NWRI's educators work to form

Educators Amy Campagna and Matt Cronin with students on a "Creatures of the Night" Field Trip at the Zoo.

relationships with the students and provide positive role models, while encouraging them to pursue their interests in the sciences. They seek to focus on skills that will help the students in their later science education, including critical thinking and proper scientific method while still making science fun! Up-close and personal encounters with some of our wild friends help to bring environmental messages home to the students. This year, NWRI will reach over 400 students through this program and the educators hope to continue into next year with new sessions and additional schools. "It is always exciting to see students learn and really connect with a new scientific concept and apply their knowledge to new projects," Chleborad said. "Keeping the students active and engaged really helps them relate to the natural environment and learn compassion for the animals around them." NWRI is grateful for the opportunity to work with Omaha students through the Collective For Youth program and we're looking forward to the adventures the rest of the school year will bring!



Educator Matt Cronin sings "The Raccoon Song" to students at King Science Center in Omaha



Wildlife Wishlist

If you have items to donate, please let us know. We are always in need of the following items:

Incubators

- (human or veterinary)
- Stackable pull-out plastic storage drawers
- Rubbermaid containers of various sizes
- Hay & straw (square bales)
- Hot water bottles
- Electronic gram scales
- Plastic storage boxes
- Fencing
- Small animal cages
- Gauze
- Heating pads
- Receiving blankets
- Sweatshirts

- Towels
- Flannel material
- Aquariums/reptile cages
- Disposable gloves
- Reptile lights
- Pet bedding
- Dry kitten/puppy food
- Canned dog/cat food
- Bird seed
- Hamster/gerbil/rabbit food
- Dry rice baby cereal
- Pedialyte (all flavors)
- Baby food (banana, applesauce, lamb, and veal)
- T-shirts



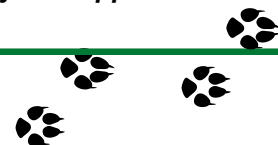
Do you like to shop?

The animals of NWRI have their very own wish-list on Amazon! Just search for our wish list under Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, or go to this link:

<http://amzn.com/w/1HU9H HCG8IDSR>

Your tax-deductible donation helps meet the financial costs of veterinary care, medication, diet and housing for our wildlife rehabilitation patients. Planned giving can be arranged to meet your individual needs. Please return the enclosed envelope with your donation or visit our Web site at: www.nebraskawildliferehab.org

Just click on the Donate Now button to give today! **Thank you for your support!**



With so many noteworthy projects, like the Wildlife Center, education programs, and yet another baby season just around the corner, NWRI needs your support now more than ever! Whether it's volunteering your time, donating items from our wish list, giving a monetary gift, or even setting up a recurring monthly donation, there are more ways to support the wildlife of Nebraska than ever before. We couldn't do what we do without YOUR support! **Thank you!**

NEBRASKA WILDLIFE REHAB, INC.



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www.nebraskawildliferehab.org



Our mission is to rehabilitate native Nebraska wildlife and migratory birds for return to the wild, to preserve and restore native habitats, and to educate youth and adults about the importance of wildlife and ecosystems by engaging them in projects and activities that contribute to the well-being of our natural environment and inspire them to take action to protect it.

Left: Some raccoons NWRI rehabilitated in 2012 enjoy their dinner!

Right: One raccoon takes advantage of cage-repair time to climb a ladder!

