



# giving wildlife a **Second Chance**

## What's Inside

- GHO saved!
- Rare success story
- PWC gets "greener"
- Wildlife releases
- Handyman heroes
- New members

Fall 2009



*PWC's mission is to rehabilitate and return to their natural habitat, orphaned or injured wildlife, and to educate our community to value and respect wildlife and the environment we share with them.*

## 10 ways YOU can help PWC & support our County's wildlife

- 1. Monthly Subscription Membership**  
Best! = monthly cash flow for our operating Center
- 2. Annual Membership**  
Our MAIN means of being able to care for animals
- 3. Sponsor Donation**  
Sponsor a specific animal & receive a Sponsor Packet
- 4. Tax Deductible Donation**  
Any donation amount is tax deductible - PWC is 501(c)3
- 5. Gift Membership**  
Perfect for upcoming holidays or any special occasion
- 6. In Memory of**  
Honor a loved one or beloved pet by giving in their name
- 7. Estate Planning**  
Talk to your estate planner
- 8. Gifts of Stock**  
Avoid capital gains & receive a tax deduction
- 9. Our Wish List**  
View at [pacificwildlifecare.org](http://pacificwildlifecare.org)
- 10. VOLUNTEER** - For various positions available

## From the President's Perch

A little over two years ago I popped my head in the door at the Pacific Wildlife Care Rehabilitation Center in Morro Bay to ask, "Is there anything I can do to help?" From that moment, my life changed. At the time, I knew very little about PWC and the good works they do. My motives were purely selfish. I love wildlife, and I was looking for an opportunity to be close to the animals on a personal level.

Soon I realized how very special PWC is. I met a phenomenal group of dedicated volunteers and professionals who run this organization – telephone hot-line volunteers, animal transporters, animal rehabilitators, veterinarians, animal educators, grant-writers, Board Members, business professionals, fundraisers, government oversight agencies, and the many volunteers who work at the Center. We all join together to accomplish the PWC mission: to rehabilitate and return to their natural habitat orphaned or injured wildlife, and educate our community to value and respect wildlife and the environment we share with them.

As I got involved with the PWC Board, I realized it takes more than good-hearted and dedicated people to run this organization. Very simply – it takes money. It's no secret that our poor economy has dealt a blow to non-profits and money for charities is extremely scarce. Unfortunately, there is no scarcity of injured and orphaned wildlife in our County. The number of animals brought to the Center continues to increase, while donations have decreased by 50%.

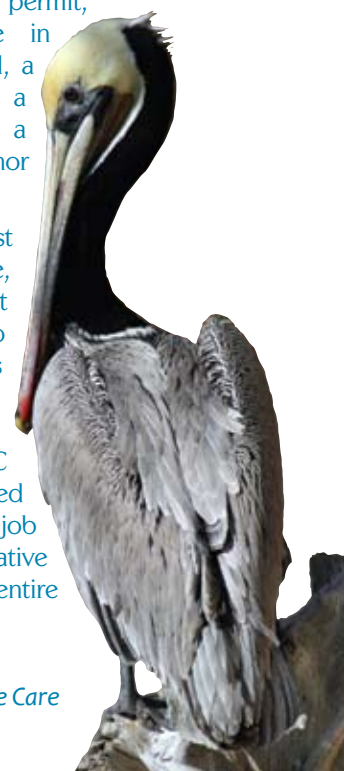
PWC was awarded an \$11,000 grant from PG&E to combine with a \$7,000 grant from the Woods Family Foundation, to install a radiant heating system in the Center's Seabird Recovery Room. Although

generous, and appreciated, these and other grant funds were awarded with the stipulation that they be used for a specific purpose and not for daily operational expenses. It is your dues and donations that pay for life-saving medications, veterinary services, food and supplies.

At this time I reach out to you with an urgent request for your financial support. To those of you who continue to support PWC with your membership and donations, I applaud you on behalf of the many animals that receive life-saving care. And, to any of you on the fence, I ask that you renew your support even in these difficult times. If your finances permit, consider an increase in your membership level, a monthly subscription, a year-end donation, or a Gift Membership to honor a loved one.

Members are our best ambassadors; so please, send information about our organization to your family, friends and neighbors, and talk with them about the important role PWC plays. A few concerned citizens can not do the job alone to support our native wildlife – it takes the entire community.

**Jeanette Stone**  
President, Pacific Wildlife Care





## The Swiss Army saves a Great Horned Owl

by Brian Dunn, Transporter

People forget that the Nipomo Mesa is one massive, ancient sand dune. When “The Woodlands” developer removed hundreds of acres of eucalyptus trees and undergrowth, hawks, vultures and owls lost their habitat. And mice, voles and other small animals lost their burrows and food. All that remained was sand, which was bulldozed into building pads and, to prevent erosion, the pads were surrounded by 6-inch diameter ropes of straw wrapped first with twine and then with fine, one-inch bird netting.

Over the years, mice found the ropes a place of shelter and a modest food source. Fast-forward to September, 2009. When a Great Horned Owl dove at a mouse and missed, it’s talons plunged deep into the rope, clutching only straw. But as it pulled away, it became entangled in the netting. With every struggle, the netting wrapped more tightly around it’s leg, turning the predator into prey.

When some thoughtful people named John and Sue happened by, they noticed the two large, bright yellow eyes peering out from behind the rope. They phoned PWC and I was notified immediately to go rescue (and transport if necessary).

As I approached the owl, it tried to fly; we could see how it was trapped and would be able to fly once freed from the netting. Clicking its warning, it stood up to its full height and struggled to be free.

Then it fell to its side, clearly exposing the entangled foot.

Once its head was covered with a towel, he became still. Feeling around the foot I was able to determine that only the center toe was still caught.

Well, I’ve been carrying around a Swiss Army knife since I was a kid and that little pair of scissors has come in handy more times than you’d think. Small and thin enough to slide in under the netting, they also could cut away from the toe. In a flash, the foot was free, the leg retracted but without struggle.

Cautious of the damage the talons could do, I looked under the towel and saw that a wing was slightly folded back. The owl regained its footing as I shifted the wing into its body.

As I pulled the towel from its head. It looked at me once more with those amazing eyes and soared into the sky with smooth, strong strokes in one of the few remaining trees a hundred feet away.

In time people will build here and the mice will find new homes. New trees will be planted and birds will return to hunt the mice. But this day was a good day for the Swiss Army – and for the Great Horned Owl!

## Lead Poisoning and a Rare Success by Claudia Duckworth

They are probably not most people’s choice for a favorite bird. As a supervisor at the PWC Rehabilitation Center, I have been hissed and growled at, thrown up on (a reaction to the stress of being handled), bitten and clawed by these patients but, like many of my fellow rehabbers, I have developed a fondness and admiration for these large, intelligent, curious and dignified birds. I’m referring to Turkey Vultures.

Turkey Vultures, named for their redheaded resemblance to turkeys and the Latin word *Vellere* meaning, “to tear,” arrive at PWC for various reasons, but by far the most common is lead poisoning. Like their larger relative, the California Condor, these carrion-eating birds are poisoned from eating dead animals shot with lead bullets. Once the lead enters the bird’s gut, it is broken down by acid strong enough to kill most noxious bacteria and break down bones and fur.

However, as the lead enters the vulture’s blood stream it begins to damage every organ in the body. In addition to anemia, joint and muscle pain, weakness and severe cramping, the digestive tract

shuts down. There is often leg paralysis, depression and impaired brain function. Lead poisoning is a medical emergency because time is a factor in the reversibility of the damage. High levels of lead result in blindness and death for the bird.

Because of the number of lead-poisoned birds PWC has received – including golden eagles – we recently invested in a lead testing machine. We now can immediately determine if a bird is poisoned and begin therapy within hours. Treatment is by chelation using a drug called CAEDTA, which binds to the lead in the blood and removes it through excretion. The treatment is stressful for the bird, requiring frequent handling and painful injections.

We recently received a juvenile Turkey Vulture that was unable to fly. Juveniles, unlike the red-headed adults, have fuzzy black heads and soft blue-brown eyes. This youngster

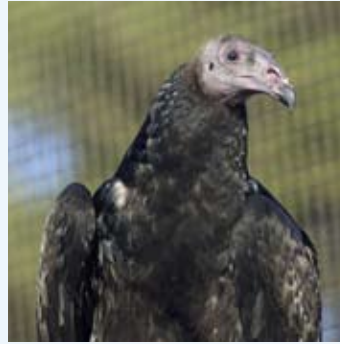
was immediately tested for lead and although he was suffering from poisoning, the low levels made him a good candidate for successful treatment.

We started chelation and sent him to VCA Animal Hospital in Arroyo Grande. It was determined that he had a small amount of lead in his gut. We continued treating and hoped the lead would pass in the normal way. And it did – the blood lead levels came down. After two weeks in a flight pen, having reached a normal weight, the youngster was returned to his large extended family, properly called a “venue” in vulture speak.

Too often lead poisonings do not end well, hence we feel so grateful for this outcome. It has been determined that a single #4 lead pellet will kill a large bird over a period of 2 to 4 weeks if not removed.

As I watch a kettle of Turkey Vultures, (*cathartes aura*, the cleansers) effortlessly rising on thermals against a clear blue sky, rocking and swaying without a wasted wing movement, the pleasure of their company is often accompanied by a silent wish for them to “be careful out there.”

*Editor’s note: The fact that Claudia admires Turkey Vultures is not surprising: she spent two years in Burkina Faso in West Africa; their national bird is the Vulture.*



### Release Story... 10/09 From Debbie Buckheim

*I just released a Burrowing Owl yesterday morning. She had flown into a glass door at the fire station at SLO airport, was on the ground and being attacked by crows when the firefighters and Neli (office worker there) scooped her up and brought her to the center (Neli drove her).*

*She seemed fine, but I took her home to my aviary that night to make sure she could fly.*

*Kurt & I drove her out to SLO airport the next morning and she quickly jumped out of the crate and flew straight up into the sky over the fire station, was met by another owl in the air (maybe her mate?), they chattered to each other, then both took off flying east.*

*The firefighters were happy to hear that she had a great release.*

## Calendar Dates

### October 23-25

PWC Staff and volunteers attended the Oiled Wildlife Care Network’s (OWCN) “Oilapalooza” Annual Conference in San Diego, CA

### November 14

New Volunteer Orientation — 10:00 -11:30AM  
RSVP [jstone\\_tierney@charter.net](mailto:jstone_tierney@charter.net)

### November 20-22

PWC hosts the California Council of Wildlife Rehabilitators (CCWR) in Pismo Beach

### December 3

Annual General Membership Meeting at PWC Rehabilitation Center 6:15 PM - You are invited (Talks, educational animals & refreshments)

### January 15-18

Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival  
PWC booth & presentations

### January 23

New Volunteer Orientation — 10:00 -11:30AM  
RSVP [jstone\\_tierney@charter.net](mailto:jstone_tierney@charter.net)

## YOU ARE INVITED!

### PWC’s Annual General Meeting

Thursday, December 3  
6:15 PM  
at PWC Rehabilitation Center

All PWC Members are invited to attend and bring a prospective member

- 6:15 Welcome
- 6:30 Board Member Reports
- 6:45 Dr. Duane Stephens, Coast Veterinary Clinic
- 7:00 “Trapping & sampling Golden Eagles for lead & other contaminants in Central CA” talk by Paul Andreano
- 7:30 Refreshments
- 8:00 Meet our educational animals!

Make searching & shopping for that perfect gift this holiday season even more perfect: Use iGive, Goodsearch or [escrip](http://escrip.com) (NEW for PWC) where with every transaction, a portion goes to benefit PWC see our website for information [www.pacificwildlifecare.org](http://www.pacificwildlifecare.org) (support tab) for further information.

## PWC Thanks Our BUILDERS!

Photo by Kathy Duncan



Wildlife and PWC educational animals require safe, well-built enclosures or flights and we are so fortunate to have several skilled builders helping us.

Thank you to our two resident-builders, Bill Nicholson and Harvey Cohon, for their work on a new songbird aviary at the Rehabilitation Center. We’ll get it photographed when it’s completed (in the next issue of Second Chance).

We’d like to thank Sheldon Rowley and Erik Jahnz shown above for building a new enclosure for PWC’s new educational Great Horned Owl, Maxwell.

## We’re Becoming Greener!

Pacific Wildlife Care received an \$11,000 grant from PG&E Foundation to be used to purchase and install a high efficiency modulating combination water heater. The new 80-gallon water heater will be part of an energy efficient system utilizing solar heated water from a 120 gallon collection tank, as well as cold water from the city water system, and disburse hot water where needed at the Rehabilitation Center. Jeanette Stone, Board President, commented, “We are thrilled to receive this generous grant from PG&E and are proud to be working together to create an energy efficient system to aid

in wildlife rehabilitation. PG&E’s generosity provides the needed funds to complete acquisition and installation of an energy efficient system that will pay for itself in just a few years, saving electric and gas propane costs.”

Kory Raftery, Pacific Gas and Electric spokesperson stated, “Pacific Wildlife Care is a great asset to the native environment in San Luis Obispo County. We are pleased to present this grant to the Rehabilitation Center and hope our gift inspires others in our community to want to become more energy efficient.”

## Releases July-September

Total 228

American Crow	4	Brant Goose	1	Golden-crowned Sparrow	1	Mallard	23	Scrub Jay	2
American Kestrel	1	Brandt’s Cormorant	1	Mew Gull	1	Northern Mockingbird	8	Swanson Thrush	1
Anna’s Hummingbird	2	Brown Pelican	20	Great-horned Owl	2	Mourning Dove	8	Titmouse	2
Band-tailed Pigeon	5	Burrowing Owl	1	Great White Egret	1	Opossum	24	Townsend’s Warbler	1
Barn Owl	4	California Quail	4	Heermann’s Gull	1	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	1	Tree Swallow	2
Barn Swallow	1	Cliff Swallow	4	House Finch	18	Red-shouldered Hawk	2	Turkey Vulture	2
Black-headed Grosbeak	1	Common Murre	1	House Sparrow	10	Red-tailed Hawk	5	Western Bluebird	5
Black-tailed Deer	1	Cooper’s Hawk	1	American Kestrel	1	Rock Dove	5	Western Grebe	3
Black-crowned Night Heron	3	Cottontail Rabbit	1	Lesser Goldfinch	3			Western Gull	19
		Dark-eyed Junco	1	Northern Magpie	1			White Dove	1
		Eurasian Collared-Dove	9					White-throated Swift	1



Pacific Wildlife Care  
PO Box 1134  
Morro Bay, CA 93443

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93403  
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**PWC is supported  
by memberships &  
donations. We need your  
2009 Gift to continue to  
save local wildlife.**

## SAVE THE DATE!

### 2nd Annual Windows into Wildlife Fundraiser

### Sunday, March 28, 2010

Edna Valley Winery — Enjoy music, wine, food, friends, auction and get up close with the PWC educational animals

#### Thank you to our New Members July, August, September

Amanda & Alexandra Alamar	Terry Finigan	Evelyn LaBrecque	Heather & Kaia Pudewa	Mila Vujovich-LaBarre
Sophia Beitnes	Kathleen & Ralph George	Dee LaBarre	Andrew Reichert	Anne Wall
Jodee Bennett	Yvon Gresser	Miguel Lepe	Myra Reitz	Hilary & Donald Young
Tom Bolton	Shirley Hamblin	Bonnie Lewis	Renee Rubin	Irene Zupko
Jennifer Campbell	Peggy Harlan	Alison Luis	Betty Smay	
Kelly & John Cherry	Jennifer Hilty	Steve Mann	Solana Graphics	
Elizabeth Cramer	Ronda Hon	Wendi & Michael Mathews	Stephanie Sproul	
Kathryn Egan	Catherine Joyce	Kelley Nelson	Philip Strahl	

## End of Year Giving and Membership/Donations

#### Board Officers

**Acting President:** Jeanette Stone  
**Vice President:** Vacant  
**Secretary:** Ken Highfill  
**Treasurer:** Dave Klinzman

#### Board Members

Membership Chair: *Marcelle Bakula*  
Public Relations Chair: *Kelly Vandeneuvel*  
Center Operations Chair: *Dani Nicholson*  
Educational Chair: *Kathy Duncan*  
Website Chair: *Meg Crockett*  
Telephone Hotline Chair: *Maureen Lannan*  
Member at Large: *Marlys McPherson*  
Member at Large: *Tamar Carmona*

#### Newsletter

**Editor:** John FitzRandolph  
**Design:** Penny Fitzgerald  
**Photos:** Jeanette Stone

Thank you Penny, John, Jeanette and our writers for donating your talents, printing and services.

Printed on recycled paper

[www.pacificwildlifecare.org](http://www.pacificwildlifecare.org)

“Yes, I would like to give wildlife a second chance!”

- |                                      |        |   |       |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor  | \$2500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter                | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron      | \$1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate                 | \$50  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor     | \$500  | <input type="checkbox"/> Student/Senior/Volunteer | \$25  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor | \$250  |   |       |

My End of Year Donation/Gift \_\_\_\_\_

Visit us online at [www.pacificwildlifecare.org](http://www.pacificwildlifecare.org) to set up a monthly subscription or pay by credit card

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check:  New  Membership Renewal  Year-End Donation  I would like volunteer

Please mail completed form with check to: Pacific Wildlife Care, P.O. Box 1134, Morro Bay, CA 93443