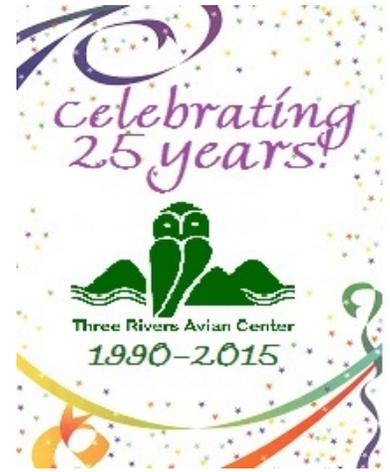




The Raptor Chapter

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The HP & Anne S Hunnicutt Foundation fund Ambassador Housing at TRAC

Thanks to a generous grant from the H. P. and Anne S. Hunnicutt Foundation, construction is underway on 2 beautiful new mews to house Hoolie our Great Horned Owl Ambassador and Gimli our American Kestrel Ambassador.

Hoolie's original mews were designed as a temporary abode 8 years ago, and the winter snows and ice have not been kind to the structure. Just this past winter, the cage was leveled by 3 feet of snow in late February (fortunately Hoolie was not in it at the time.) Six students from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC braved the mud and leftover snow from the storm in March to resurrect it, but it was clear that the mews needed full replacement (photos are on the Three Rivers Avian Center Facebook page).

Ground breaking for the two cages (called "mews" for permanent raptor residents)

began towards the end of June. Hoolie's mews is first (see it completed in the photo on the left). The mews are 10 feet wide by 20 feet long by 9 feet high, consisting of an open area 10 feet by 12 feet and an insulated room measuring 10 feet by 8 feet. Windows and multi-glass panel doors keep the interior well lit and pleasant. The substrate in the open cage area is many layered, beginning with a predator barrier of hardware cloth sandwiched between layers of landscaping fabric, then a 3 inch layer of stone for drainage, another layer of landscaping fabric and then natural (undyed) mulch as the top cover. That will turn into soil and support native plants.

The totally insulated room section is board and batten on the exterior, with a 2 foot overhang into the cage area so Hoolie (or Gimli in HIS mews) can sit outside but still be under shelter. A back porch section allows for a required safety double door entryway. The interior walls are painted with "trees & leaves". We have been documenting the entire mews building process on the Three Rivers Avian Center Facebook page.

Many thanks to our volunteers on this project: Sam Richmond, Mike Segars, Carl Reedy, Nancy Hoffman, Carol Jackson, Judy Polan and our Intern Justin Miller. **THANK YOU** to the H.P. and Anne S. Hunnicutt Foundation for making this project possible!



Hello readers; my name is Justin Miller and it was my great pleasure to have been chosen as the 2015 Summer Intern for Three Rivers

Avian Center, run by Ron and Wendy Perrone. The Internship application process was simple. I emailed them and expressed interest in the position & filled out an application, they did a personal interview with me and then I started in mid-May.

This Summer for me has been largely about learning and getting experience because I would like to have a career in animal care and educating the public about them. Toward this goal, this Internship has been a good help in better understanding bird behavior and body language as well as some of the things that a career in this field will involve, like unpredictable working hours.

The daily tasks I do at the Center are varied. I fill the songbird bird feeders with seed and suet, refresh the water bowls of all the birds, pick up leftover food in their mews, and when they need cleaned I take apart and clean the travel cages for the program birds. I clean the cages of the birds that are in the hospital, putting patient information into the computer records and feed the resident Educational Raptor Ambassadors. I sometimes have to pull weeds out of the outdoor mews and flight barn as needed.

We are currently working on the construction of two new indoor/outdoor cages ("mews") for two of the resident Raptor Ambassadors, Hoolie the Great Horned Owl and Gimli the American Kestrel. They are coming together quite well and when finished will last many years. The enclosures are tough for me because I am not what one would call a craftsman.

As an Intern I have participated in TRAC educational outreach programs which have been very enjoyable. The bird I am

responsible for discussing is Gimli, TRAC's American Kestrel. He is probably the happiest bird I have ever seen, always preening and letting out happy "breet" noises. In my section of the program I like to think I have improved over time, although one flub that stands out in my mind was when I slipped and said that Gimli weighs 4 pounds when he really only weighs 4 ounces.

Several times I have also had to drive and pick up an injured bird and bring it back to TRAC which to me is fun.

Once a month is Public Tour Day, when the Center is open to the public and visitors are taken on tour around the clinic and outdoor mews. During the tours we talk about each bird's story and answer questions. I enjoy having children or teenagers for an audience because they are generally more enthusiastic about learning, and children can be more unpredictable in what questions they ask. For example, during one tour a young girl asked me "why don't birds get married?" to which I answered "because they don't have fingers to put rings on", for the record that joke did work.

As for people who might be interested in the difficult bits of this experience I would say that the things that have been the most difficult actually haven't been bird related. The mews construction for example is more difficult for me than picking up leftover rodents, just because I am not very construction inclined.

Ron and Wendy are both very kind and knowledgeable people who are lucky enough to be doing what they love. From the very beginning they were very welcoming to me. I am grateful for that because this Internship is the first time I have done anything like this and was nervous at first. They made me feel comfortable early on.

I would encourage anyone who may be interested to apply to be an Intern for TRAC. As far as I am concerned it has been an experience I will not forget.

Justin Miller is from Poca, WV and is entering his Senior Year at WV State University in Institute, WV. He is majoring in Biology.

TRAC Admits Our 1st Sandhill Crane Patient



On May 24 we were called to Ragland Road in Beckley (Raleigh County) to rescue an adult Sandhill Crane.

It had been in the area for about a week, coming up to the doors of local businesses in the area, including a children's day care. It was very gentle but was gradually sitting down on the ground more and more, and it's normal food was not available naturally in the area. Concerned people were trying to offer all kinds of human food, but the Crane was not interested. We were finally able to gather it up and get it into care with the help of intrepid TRAC Advisory Board members Steve and Carla Rotsch.

Sandhill Cranes are a new species for TRAC, and required quite a bit of research as well as discussions within the Wildlife Rehabilitation community as to food and living habits, what was normal behavior and what was not, how much space a debilitated Crane needed and what sorts of perches, etc he might need.



Originally we had him set up in Room 3 of the Flight Barn, which is a 40' long x 20' wide open space, but within a few days of intake it was obvious that standing and moving around was difficult. Within a few days he was not able to stand at all. He was

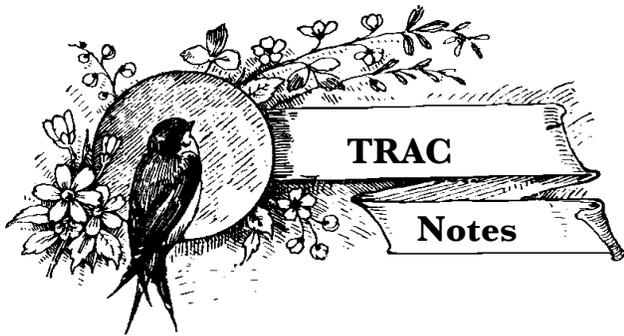
moved into intensive care and we began treatment for heavy metal toxicity. The treatments worked wonders, and he recovered fully within a few weeks. Then it

was back to Room 3 in the Flight Barn & In another week he was enjoying the full benefits of the Flight Barn's Continual Flyway.

West Virginia does not normally have a population of Sandhill Cranes, although they have been spotted in the New River Gorge National River area on migration for years. One of the issues we discovered is that Sandhills have to be released into a group or they do not fare so well long term. We began inquiries to find him a proper release site. It took about 6 weeks to finally find a group of Sandhill Cranes within a day's drive, but with the help of wildlife biologist Dave Brinker of the Maryland DNR a family was located in a long swamp in Garrett County, MD



August 21st was set as release day. We met Professor Kevin Dodge of Garrett College at his office in Maryland in the late afternoon and he led us to the release site. The Crane as glad to get out of the carrier! After watching him explore, we left him to get acquainted with his new surroundings. Many, many thanks to Professor Kevin Dodge, MD DNR's Dave Brinker, Dr Erica Miller and WV DNR Ornithologist Rich Bailey and for the emails and help from the International Crane Society and our fellow wild bird rehabilitators around the US. With their help & coordination, this interesting bird has another migration in his near future!



In honor of TRAC's 25th Anniversary, Gary Shaffer of Shaffer Pottery in Brooks WV has made a limited edition pottery bird feeder for us! The feeders are finished with a natural and cobalt

blue salt glaze and hold about 4 cups of bird seed. The inside of the lid has "Three Rivers Avian Center 25th Anniversary" on the inside and all feeders are signed by Gary Shaffer. The feeders are \$50.00 each, plus shipping and handling. Hurry! We only have a few left!



We had some problems with the TRAC website and e-mails at the end of July through most of August. The company that was hosting our website (tracwv.org) got hacked with a TON of spam, which got the company and all the websites it was hosting put on the international blacklist. (We have since found out that there are several "blacklists" and there is no master list of them!) Webmaster Ron worked hard for many weeks to fix the situation, and we are finally back up and running well. The website host has been changed, but that does not affect our web address or our e-mail addresses. We apologize for those who have tried & failed to contact us on the Internet during this frustrating time.

You can support TRAC when you make purchases at your local Kroger store! TRAC has signed up to



receive donations from Kroger's Community Rewards program. If you have a Kroger Plus card, it is very easy to register your card on-line and choose Three Rivers Avian Center as your non-profit organization of choice. Here's how: (Be sure to have your Kroger Plus card handy when you go on line to register.)

Go to the Website

www.krogercommunityrewards.com

Follow the prompts on the page. Be sure to scroll down to the bottom to make sure that you have entered all the required data.

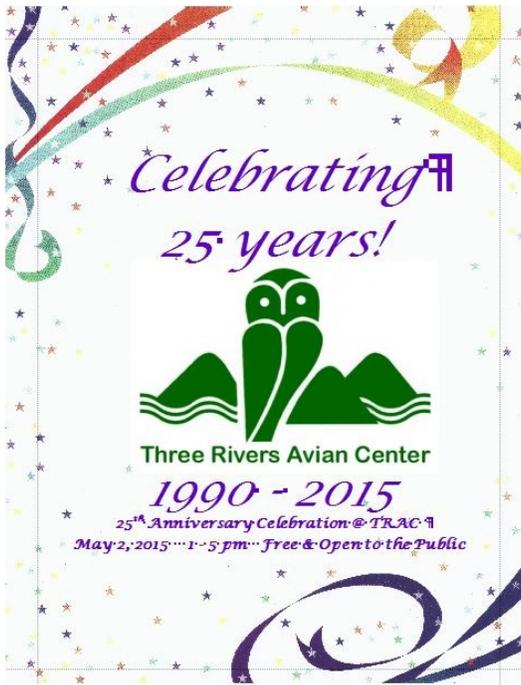
At the end of the form, there is a section that allows you to choose your non-profit. You can type in Three Rivers Avian Center Inc, or you can use our Kroger NPO number 91219.

That's it! Within 10 days of registering your card, groceries and most sundries you purchase at Kroger will be eligible to count towards the Kroger Community Rewards donation to TRAC. Purchases of alcohol, tobacco products, gift cards, fuel, bottle deposits, and postage stamps DO NOT count.

If you have misplaced your Kroger Rewards Card and are using your phone number at the store checkout, you can call Kroger to get the number associated with your account. (You have to have the card number itself to register to help TRAC, and you have to be on-line to do it.) The number to call is 1-800-576-4377, select option 4.

Don't have a Kroger Rewards Card at all? You can stop by any Kroger Customer Service Desk and get one. It's easy and free, and you get discounts on many items in the store.

TRAC will begin receiving quarterly donations from the Community Rewards Program at the end of December. Hurry and sign up! We need your help!



200 + folks came out to celebrate with us!!!



The Amazing Tasty Carrot Cake was made by Alisha Segars

All photos are courtesy of Bill Evans, & used with permission. Thanks SOOO much Bill!



TRAC Board of Directors Chair Jon Mahan cuts the celebratory cake. Other Board folks pictured here include Executive Director Wendy Perrone, Treasurer Sharyn Ogden, Vice-Chair Carol Jackson and Education Director Ron Perrone.



Tours of the TRAC Facility were a popular attraction. People were happy to meet our Educational Ambassadors, who were relaxing in their mews.



Each year of TRAC's history was depicted on a posterboard, a kind of hanging scrap book. The display reached 40 feet long! Other displays were set on tables below the posters.



The Nancy R. Smith Family Fund Gives TRAC Programs To Local Elementary Schools

On September 18th, the Nancy R. Smith Family Fund granted the money for TRAC to present our “Wings of Wonder: WV Birds of Prey” program in four Beckley area elementary schools. These schools will be receiving the program between now and the middle of November:

Clear Fork Elementary School (Sept. 6)

Cranberry-Prosperity Elem. School (Sept. 15)

Beckley Elementary School (Sept. 19)

Hollywood Elementary School (Nov. 16).

The grant represents a distribution from a Beckley Area Foundation fund established by Nancy R. Smith. The donor designated that the purpose of the Nancy R. Smith Family Fund is to provide grants for programs that are committed to environmental preservation and protection, including the protection and preservation of wildlife; the education of individuals, government and private industry on the importance of environmental preservation; and support of those charitable organizations who advance such work.

The Beckley Area Foundation has distributed more than \$10 million in grants and scholarships over its 30-year history. The Foundation connects philanthropists to important issues and causes in order to build a stronger community for the future.

Students will get to meet Regis the Bald Eagle, Hoolie the Great Horned Owl, Gimli the American Kestrel and their raptor friends in a fun and interactive presentation. They will learn about the habitats the various raptors live in, what they eat, the work TRAC does to care for West Virginia’s native wild birds, and they will also learn some tips and techniques to help wild birds in their own neighborhood.

Thank you, Nancy R. Smith Family Fund! Thanks also to the Beckley Area Foundation for helping make these programs possible!



The Migration Celebration 2015 was a great success! Over 1000 people of all ages came to enjoy our annual daylong festival held at Little Beaver State Park on May 10th.

Jim Phillips led nature walks, Bev Delidow took groups out birding, Granny Sue held kid’s rapt attention with her stories and crafts. The WV DNR Wildlife Diversity Program had animal shapes for kids to paint and interactive displays. The WV DEP brought some live salamanders, turtles and frogs, and WV DEP’s Kim Smith took folks out for “Amphibian Fun”, looking for amphibians around Little Beaver’s lake. Piney Creek Watershed Association educated people about the Watershed and their current projects. Steve Rotsch led his popular Photography Workshop, with more people in attendance than ever. **Mark your calendars: the next Migration Celebration is May 14, 2016.**

A note about our Summer Intern position:

Internships at TRAC cover various aspects of wild bird rehabilitation, environmental education, participation in various ongoing research projects, facility planning and maintenance, and other related topics. Interns enrolled in a College or University have received full college credits for their time at TRAC, and we are happy to work with any Institution to ensure that tradition continues. The Internship position is unpaid.

Applications for the Internship position need to be filed with TRAC by March 1st. Face-to-face, onsite interviews with applicants are conducted between March 1 - 31, the position is awarded by April 15. If you are interested in applying or would like to share the Internship information with a College or University, send an e-mail requesting information to trac@tracwv.org. We will be happy to send it to you.



Become a new member or renew your membership and you'll help TRAC continue to care for West Virginia's wild birds. Feathered Friend Sponsors are members who also receive a certificate of sponsorship with a photograph of their chosen raptor from our educational raptor stables. Members at the \$150 or higher level have the option of being listed on the back of the newsletter. All donations and memberships are tax-deductible under IRS code 501(c)3. Memberships and Feathered Friend Sponsorships can also be purchased directly from the TRAC website if you would prefer to pay using a credit card or Paypal account. Thanks for your support!

Memberships

Feathered Friend Sponsorships

Eagle	\$1,000+
Falcon	\$500+
Owl	\$250+
Sponsor	\$150+
Patron	\$100+
Benefactor	\$75+
Supporting	\$50+
Family	\$25+
Individual	\$10+
Feathered Friend	See other box

Regis	Bald Eagle	\$60
Perry	Peregrine Falcon	\$30
Robbie	Barred Owl	\$30
Rudy	Eastern Screech Owl -red	\$30
Thomas	Eastern Screech Owl - gray	\$30
Hoolie	Great Horned Owl	\$30
Nick	Red Tailed Hawk	\$30
Harlan	Red Tailed Hawk -dark morph	\$30
Kendra	Red Shouldered Hawk	\$30
Gimli	American Kestrel (male)	\$30

Remember to check your newsletter mailing label for your current membership level and expiration!

Your name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

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Many Thanks to our Sponsors!

*Your name, a loved one's name or your group or company's name can be listed here for an annual donation of \$150 or more.
Your donation is fully tax-deductible & will help advance the work of Three Rivers Avian Center.*

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A Very Special Thank You to:

The Acker Foundation The Beckley Area Foundation
The H. P. & Anne S. Hunnicutt Foundation The Nancy R. Smith Family Fund
The National Eagle Scout Association
In loving memory of Robert L. & Ann V. Morris



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