

May 29, 2019

#creatinganonprofitcommunity

HAPPY BABY SEASON!!!

On September 1, 2018, I was accepted as a veterinary fellow in the Partners for Wildlife Fellowship with the University of Minnesota Raptor Center. Our kickoff meeting was in October with the take-home message that wildlife rehabilitation is like the Wild West, with little standards between facilities and poor communication between the rehabilitators, veterinarians and agencies (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife). The Partners for Wildlife Kickoff Workshop focused on improving communication between these entities and improving animal welfare in wildlife rehabilitation.

Part of the Fellowship included a small project. My project was to develop a business plan for a medium-sized wildlife center. From there, the idea of a center in Grays Harbor grew. Dr. Corrie and I are both licensed wildlife rehabilitators with over 35 years of wildlife rehabilitation experience between the two of us. Twin Harbors Wildlife Center (THWC) began to develop because we both saw the need for a center in Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties and knew that this was our calling. It has truly been an organic entity which has seemed to have sprouted and grown with little coaxing from us.

Between October 2018 and April 4, 2019 Dr. Corrie and I visited numerous other wildlife facilities, forming bonds and friendships from rehabilitators all over the United States. We met with the director of PAWS Wildlife Center in Lynnwood to get important historical and financial information on Olympic Wildlife Center, the wildlife center in McCleary that was being managed by PAWS Wildlife Center and was closed 10 years ago. I attended the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference and Dr. Corrie attended the Oregon Wildlife Rehabilitation Association conference. During that time, Dr. Corrie began developing our Volunteer & Animal Care protocols and I worked on our Business Plan, Mission Statement and 5-Year Plan. We applied for a 501c3, filed for a nonprofit corporation designation, and we both created a budget.

On April 4, the THWC Facebook (FB) page was started. Within days we had nearly 500 followers and our posts were reaching 1.4 thousand people. The support of the community of FB followers has been nothing short of incredible. Within 3 days of requesting funding, a baby incubator was completely funded. The community has gifted us with hand-crocheted baby nests, baby food, blankets, towels, food prep tools, and basic business supplies such as nametags and clip boards. Along with this has been donations of money to fund the work that we strive to do.

Our seed money came from our 2 largest donors; Quinault Indian Nation (QIN) and a private citizen. With the private citizen's donation, we were able to pay for the business license, 501c3 application, and



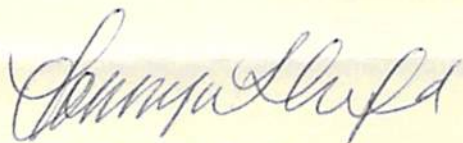
non-profit corporation filing. QIN gifted us with our basic supplies; enclosures, flooring, white boards, and more.

Dr. Corrie is developing THWC's volunteer program. After only two orientations, THWC has nearly 30 volunteers, some trained and caring for our current patients and others awaiting training and shift assignment. Volunteers form teams based on interest: Mammal care, avian care, raptor care, reptile care, transport, facilities, events, fundraising, and administrative support. Our volunteers will be manning an informational booth at the Montesano Farmers' Market this summer. Volunteers have handfed and cleaned numerous baby squirrels and opossum. Next summer they will learn how to care for baby birds, including handfeeding every 15-20 minutes all day. The volunteers are passionate and willing to do whatever they can and are the backbone and driving force of the center.

In the meantime, we are rehabilitating animals! This season we have already taken in 65 wild animals. We have had numerous baby squirrels and baby opossum, a baby beaver, goslings, turtles, river otter babies, 2 bald eagles, numerous owls, a hooded merganser, doves, ducklings, and more.

We applied for a grant to build a very large raptor pre-release flight and are eagerly waiting to hear if we will get the funding. We are also in the middle of applying for a grant to hire a ¼ time fundraiser. Our most pressing needs are the development of a logo (sounds silly, but name recognition is so important), and isolation facilities for rehabilitating raccoons, due to their specialized requirements.

Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties have the second largest watershed in Washington state which is one of four major staging areas for migratory birds. There are over 211 species of wild animals breeding and living in these 2 counties. Thank you for everything that you have done for the wildlife in our area. The support of the community is so vitally important to be able to create and sustain one of the foremost wildlife rehabilitation centers in Washington State. This has truly been an organic work of heart!



Sonnya Crawford, DVM

Licensed Rehabilitator, Director THWC



Corrie Hines, DVM

Licensed Rehabilitator, Director THWC