



EVELYN ALEXANDER

Wildlife Rescue Center

Eastern Long Island's **ONLY** Wildlife Hospital

# WILDLIFE LINES

WINTER 2024

## Lessons from **FRANKENSTEIN**

By Jessica Chiarello

Oftentimes, the stories that make headlines are about the strength and resiliency of our apex predators. Because of this, it is important that I tell the story of a tiny but mighty force of nature that I met in October of 2023.

The world of Wildlife Rehabilitation is expansive and so it only makes sense that there are individuals who specialize in niche areas of interest. As a hospital offering generalized care to many species, it is quite common that we outsource animals. Traditionally, we would transfer neonatal or infant mice that need to be raised by humans because doing so is viewed as intimidating, time consuming and oftentimes unsuccessful. But, what happens when your resources have run dry and there is nobody to take on these fragile beings?

I successfully raised three infant mice to release age with the help of intentional mentorship from an experienced foster mom, anxiety and many sleepless nights. The most critical and debilitated of the group came in alone and weighed only two grams on intake. I named him Frankenstein because it was fitting for the upcoming holiday season but, also, because I found myself to be so fearful of one of the tiniest beings on Earth. The margin of error and the fear of making a mistake weighed heavily on me for weeks but, lucky for me, mice grow at an exponential rate. They reach sexual maturity as early as four weeks and are known to be great problem solvers with a complex form of communication.

This small being shared with me some pretty large lessons. My mentor described the act of raising mice as “intuitive” and “sensitive,” explaining that there wasn’t a ton of literature to appropriately guide somebody along this journey. I had to, in some ways, put what I knew about raising baby mammals to the side

and really learn what it means to listen to an animal’s individual needs. I was taught to not listen to the five percent body weight rule and only to feed these babies what they wanted to eat. I fed them based on their activity level in the nest and not by what time it read on the clock. This is because, with mice, it is all too easy to tip the scale too heavily to the wrong side.

I have taken what I learned through my time with Frankenstein and have translated it to the way I rehabilitate every species. It is important to have guidelines and parameters in any practice but I have found that it is important to understand that all animals have individual needs that exist outside of what we know about their species. Wildlife Rehabilitation is constantly evolving and it requires the ability to shapeshift when necessary. It is an endless craft where there is always something new to indulge in. Thank you to Frankenstein for allowing me to trust my intuition and to remember that some of life’s greatest lessons are found in the smallest of moments.







## From the Desk of **ALLEN McBUTTERPANTS**



My name is Allen McButterpants (for those who have yet to meet me) and I am the official groundhog ambassador for the Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center.

Unlike groundhogs in the wild, I do not hibernate in the winter so I have the unique opportunity to spend these winter months musing and reflecting upon the previous year. 2023 had me expanding my responsibilities at the center. I predicted the arrival of spring on that special day named after me in February and in August I attended my first ever yoga session during which I honed my already advanced relaxation skills. I also was an important team member when it came to fundraising, and my popularity was integral to the success of our washing machine fundraiser which raised enough money to purchase a brand new commercial washer for all of my fluffy blankets!

I really appreciate all of my supporters and fans! Without you and your generous donations we would not be able to continue helping and advocating for wildlife here at the center. Whether you donated towards our washing machine fundraiser, attended our Get Wild benefit, purchased plants at our plant sale, or donated items off our wish list, you are all important and appreciated by all of us at the center. Personally, I'm especially appreciative of the volunteers that pick up and deliver produce from Wild by Nature every week! My favorite activity when I'm not sleeping or digging holes is to eat as many vegetables as I can. My personal favorites are green beans, carrots, dandelion and kale. I especially love broccoli, but have been told that I can't have it anymore because it makes me too gassy. Sadness...

So here's hoping for a great 2024. I hope to see many of you at our events where I promise I will charm the pants off of you!

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The Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center Hospital is located at Munn's Pond County Park through a cooperative agreement with Suffolk County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation and the EAWRC, a private, non-profit environmental group.



A financial report is on file with the NYS Attorney General, 120 Broadway NY, NY and on the web at: [www.charitiesnys.com](http://www.charitiesnys.com)

## **AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT**

**Millenium our Incredible Peregrine Falcon**

*By Tamara Flanell, Education Coordinator*



**Millennium came to our rescue center** just over seven years ago after being shot in Montauk. He has permanent damage to his left wing that left him unable to fly. I suspect he was an older bird because he had a very difficult time adjusting to captivity.

When I became a staff member, Millennium's well-being became a major focus for me. I reached out to reputable raptor centers and well known avian trainers for advice. We had to entirely change the set up in his enclosure. As a peregrine, he needed more flat surfaces than perches, he needed a rock, some ramps, and fun things he could jump & run on. He loves the water, so we incorporated "playing in the sprinkler" with him. He also plays in his pool. A new bird slowly started emerging.

Next we started a training program with Millennium. He chose a starting spot on his rock and on the command "come" followed by pointing to where he should go, he started learning quickly. He began taking food directly from our hands. Every time I enter his enclosure I try to have a positive training experience that allows him to build trust with us.

That is the whole new movement in bird training and it is wonderful! It's called "building a trust bank." You have several positive experiences to balance out a negative one. A negative experience could include things like trimming his beak and talons, or a medical checkup.





## How Can You Help The EVELYN ALEXANDER WILDLIFE CENTER?

**BECOME A MEMBER or RENEW your MEMBERSHIP at [www.WildlifeRescueCenter.org](http://www.WildlifeRescueCenter.org)**

### **BECOME A VOLUNTEER**

No experience necessary. We will train you. Rescue, Transport, Hospital, Office & Fundraising Volunteers needed.

Download application at: [wildliferescuecenter.org/GetInvolved](http://wildliferescuecenter.org/GetInvolved)

### **SYMBOLICALLY ADOPT AN EDUCATION AMBASSADOR:**

Help us provide the care, housing, and enrichment for our resident education animals. To learn more, visit our website! Or text "RAPTORS" to 202-858-1233 to donate. [www.WildlifeRescueCenter.org](http://www.WildlifeRescueCenter.org)

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Gifts of appreciated securities can be a tax-wise way to support Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center

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### **MEMORIAL OR HONORING GIFTS:**

Donate in the memory or in honor of a loved one or pet

### **CREATE A FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER**

Ask friends to support Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center

### **PLANNED GIVING:**

List Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center as a BENEFICIARY:

On life insurance policies, retirement accounts, IRA accounts, etc.

Our Federal Tax ID number is: 11-3409551

### **DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!**

Check if your employer matches your donation to nonprofit organizations.

### **DONATE:**

Donate through Paypal, or with credit cards on our website or [venmo@wildliferescuecenter](mailto:venmo@wildliferescuecenter)



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## + ONLINE EVENT +

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Please Join Us for a very special virtual evening of animal communication with The Animal Communication Collective!

**THURS. FEB. 22 • 7-8:30 EST**

**Only 100 tickets will be sold for this very special event!**

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*Tickets can be bought at the following site:*

[weblink.donorperfect.com/animalcommunication2024](http://weblink.donorperfect.com/animalcommunication2024)



## IN LOVING MEMORY:

Barbara Posener

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Sony Schotland

Kevin Conway

Cotton, Bianca, Chico and Little Boy

Lynn Drysdale

Chickie

Marianne

Joseph Branigan, Jr.

Harvey Horowitz

Andrew Reister, Danielle Reister

and Popee Reister

James Stephens

Andre Morin

MaryAnne Meade Goldberg

Now Millennium is a bird who craves a game or some kind of interaction where he gets praise. He seems eager to learn and even jumps up on the scale if I put it on his shelf.

The transformation amazes me. I always loved this little guy and really wanted to soothe him and help calm him down. Peregrines can be difficult birds to handle as they are very high strung.

He has started voluntarily stepping up on our gloves so we can take him out. That is a game changer! The old way of "taking" a bird out by grabbing the jesses first and making them get on your glove is now looked down upon. When they trust you, and know you are a person who feeds them, they eventually respond and will step up on your glove because they want to, not because they feel they have to.

There is a saying that I hold very close to my heart: "You always do the best you can. But once you know better, you must do better." Millennium needed more from us. It was obvious. So we gained more knowledge and changed our behavior.

Currently we are working on training more of our birds. Positive reinforcement is always the way, whatever kind of animal you are working with.

**Build that trust bank!**







EVELYN ALEXANDER

*Wildlife Rescue Center*

*Eastern Long Island's ONLY Wildlife Hospital*

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*Eastern Long Island's ONLY Wildlife Hospital*



**Meet some of the special  
patients we're treating  
in 2024...**

## WHAT WE DO

The Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center is Eastern Long Island's ONLY Wildlife Hospital, a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to the rescue, medical rehabilitation and release of native wildlife on the East End of Long Island. The Center opened its doors in 2000. The Wildlife Rescue Center receives over 10,000 calls each year for information or assistance with wild animal encounters. Each animal that crosses our doorstep receives comfort and compassion. We are open 365 days a year and are available on call 24 hours a day. We also provide educational programs to local elementary and secondary schools. Students from local colleges participate in cooperative education programs and internships. The Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center annual operating budget exceeds \$750,000, all of which comes from the generosity of people like you. We do not receive state or government funding.

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