

On the Horizon

Horizon Wings Newsletter – Summer/Fall 2016
www.horizonwings.org



Welcome to Horizon Wings' quarterly newsletter – *On the Horizon*. We would like to keep you informed of happenings, events, and news going on at Horizon Wings.

Our mission at Horizon Wings is to rehabilitate birds of prey for release into the wild, in order to maintain their population and to educate the community to enhance awareness of the environment. It is our hope by doing this that we reach people of all ages and create the desire in them to help preserve our natural world.



Love is in the Air at Horizon Wings

Seldom are we so privileged as to witness love in its purest form, but it is alive and well here at Horizon Wings. Two star-crossed eagles are reunited thanks to the compassion and commitment to their welfare on the part of their caretakers.

Our resident Golden Eagle, Chrysos, came to us in 2014 from Wind Over Wings in Dresden, Maine, where for over eight years she had lived with Skywalker, a male Golden Eagle. But Skywalker joined us in September at Horizon Wings and we were privileged to witness their poignant reunion after two years of separation.

Chrysos was hit by a car in Utah in 2002 when she was only two years old, but she fought her way back from multiple injuries. Sky was intentionally shot in Nebraska and he also fought his way back, despite the loss of a wing. Both became phenomenal educational ambassadors under the care and training of Hope Douglas at Wind Over Wings. But after eight years together, Chrysos and Sky became very protective of each other and became aggressive when it was time for one or the other of them to be taken out to do a program. For the safety and welfare of the birds and the handlers, the difficult decision was made for Chrysos to be transferred to Horizon Wings.

Today Chrysos and Sky are reunited in Chrysos' aviary, where they are a daily inspiration to all of us. They are very attentive to each other and can always be seen close together, preening each other, and singing their songs. We recognize the possibility that there may be a time in the future (likely in the Spring when hormones are high) when they may temporarily require separate aviaries. We are working towards making the aviary adjoining Chrysos' available should the need arise. To this end, we will be directing our fundraising efforts to the construction of several smaller aviaries. As always, we are extremely grateful to our contributors, past, present and future, as well as our hard-working volunteers, as we work to accomplish our goals.

Written by Pat Morris

Horizon Wings Welcomes Our Newest Ambassadors

Welcome to Nomad (a.k.a. Nomi), Skywalker, and Finn

Nomad is a young female Peregrine falcon. She was found in Bristol Connecticut with a wing injury that has left her unable to fly. Peregrine falcons were once extirpated from the East coast due largely to our use of the pesticide DDT. They remained on the Federal endangered list until 1999 and are still listed as threatened in Connecticut. In 2016 there were 15 known territories in Connecticut with 12 nests being successful. A total of 22 chicks were fledged. Their prey is primarily other birds, usually caught mid-air. They have been known to reach speeds of 200mph or greater in their dive or stoop while pursuing their prey. They are quite often found nesting in cities as skyscrapers easily mimic their natural nesting sites of cliffs. Their scientific name is *Falco Peregrinus*, meaning to wander or travel. They are found on every continent except Antarctica and will migrate thousands of miles yearly.



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Finn is a hatch year American kestrel. He was found by Tom Sayer of Northeast Connecticut Kestrel Project as he was checking the kestrel boxes in Ellington. Finn was on the ground, cold and unresponsive due to a severe head injury. Tom brought him to Horizon Wings where he was given care by Dr. Ann Bourke. Over time Finn responded to his care but due to his young age (approximately 2-3 weeks of age) at the time of his injury he became imprinted on his human handlers making him unfit for release. Imprinting is a learning that occurs during a brief receptive period, typically soon after birth or hatching, and establishes a long-lasting behavioral response to a specific individual or object. Imprinting

cannot be reversed. Kestrels are the smallest falcon in North America and were once listed as threatened in Connecticut due to insecticide use and loss of habitat. They are cavity dwellers and like large grassy areas where they can find prey items such as small rodents and bugs. Due to conservation efforts such as the Northeast Connecticut Kestrel Box Project their numbers are increasing and they are now listed as Special concern. The project banded 184 young kestrels this year! You can learn more about the project at <http://www.nectkestrels.com/>

Skywalker is a 24 year young male Golden eagle. He originally came from Nebraska where at the age of 2 he was shot from the sky. This resulted in the amputation of his injured wing. This was a difficult decision made in order to save his life as one winged birds lose the ability to retain body heat, as well as balance. Golden eagles are birds commonly found in wide open areas such as the plains and tundra regions of North America. They are the largest raptors in North America able to take mammals as large as sheep, but usually taking small to medium mammals as their prey base. They are a booted eagle with their feathers reaching to the top of their feet, and are named for the golden feathers on the back of their head and neck. We wish to thank Hope Douglas of Wind Over Wings, Dresden Maine for trusting us to be Sky's new forever home.

Written by Mary-Beth Kaeser



Horizon Wings would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the following benefactors:

Veterinary services

Tufts University Wildlife Clinic
Northeast Bird Clinic, Dr. Anne Bourke
North Veterinary Hospital
Bolton Veterinary Hospital

Donations

Vaughn and Sheila Numrych
Jackson Laboratories-mice
Charles River- mice and rats

Grants

The Vincent J Coates Foundation

Many thanks also to all who have donated in so many different ways to the success of our mission. And to our many wonderful volunteers, thank you for your caring and dedication throughout the year!

Horizon Wings Sixth Annual Owl Prowl



Our Sixth Annual Owl Prowl was held at Horizon Wings on the evening of October 22nd. Despite intermittent rain and wind, a good time was had by visitors and volunteers alike.

The grounds were festively decorated with pumpkins, gourds, colorful mums, spider webs, and owl eyes peering from the trees. Visitors were able to meet and learn about four species of owls: Oscar, the Great Horned Owl; Emrys and Forrest, the Barred Owls; Herkimer and Jade, the Eastern Screech Owls; and Sprite, the Northern Saw-Whet Owl.

There were wonderful owl-themed items available at the raffle table. The education station provided children with the opportunity to dissect owl pellets, learn about what owls eat, examine owl feathers and learn why they are able to fly silently. At the craft table, they also had the opportunity to make a trick or treat bag which they could take home.

To warm up from the night's chill, visitors could stop by the refreshment table for a cup of hot apple cider, tea or coffee and sample the various baked goods and snacks.

A new feature was added to this year's event. Mary-Beth led a group of visitors on an owl prowling behind the Horizon Wings property. They were fortunate enough to hear several owls calling while on the walk.

We would like to thank all those who attended this year's Owl Prowl. This is one of our major fundraisers and helps us provide food, medical care and housing for all the educational birds, as well as the injured raptors which are cared for by Horizon Wings each year. Your generosity makes our mission possible. We look forward to seeing all of you at next year's Owl Prowl.

Written by Lori Young



Wish List

- Lumber (Plywood, 2x4s, 2x6s)
- Office supplies(Postage stamps, paper, envelopes, card stock)
- Roofing material
- Gift cards for building supplies
- Hardware (deck screws, rafter hangers, hinges, hasps)
- Hardware cloth
- Pea stone for aviary flooring
- Disposable vinyl cleaning gloves
- Zip-Loc freezer bags
- Cleaning supplies(paper towels, bleach, Simple Green)

Please support your local merchants whenever possible!

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Fill out and mail this form to be added to our mailing list, for information, and our end-of-the-year letter, featuring a photo of a raptor. You can also help Horizon Wings by including a donation.

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Mail to:

Horizon Wings Raptor Rehabilitation and Education P.O. Box 238
Ashford, CT 06278

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