

# Fellow Mortals™

Issue 17, Autumn 2001



Through science we may try to fix what people have botched through politics and economics. We may declare some species endangered and others healthy, drawing new borders between species or erasing them altogether. But...the divisions that matter the most are the ones between people, not between animals, and they cut deeper than any border on a map. Only by healing those rifts can we ever hope to save the [animals].” —Craig B. Stanford, *Gorilla Warfare*

## Wildlife Rehabilitation

## MANY VOICES

As you read this issue, you will hear many voices and they will speak to you, and of you—for it takes all of us to do the work of healing that is the mission of *Fellow Mortals*.

This is a time of thanksgiving—for the lives saved, for the friends made, for the joy to be found in the simple act of caring. We were fortunate in many things this summer, not the least of which was the wealth of time given by so many of you who made the long drive to bring a single life to a place where it could receive the special care we exist to provide. From Tinley Park, Illinois, to the shores of Lake Michigan to the northernmost part of Rock County and from all over Walworth, Kenosha and Racine counties—you brought us injured and orphaned wild creatures found broken and alone. You opened your hearts and made time in your own busy lives to make a difference for a being of an alien species—knowing that creature could never pay you back only to find that indeed you had received a gift of inestimable value when your spirit was enriched in a most unexpected way! There is no feeling to compare to giving what is needed when it is needed most.

Our interns were committed and compassionate and they were here thanks to people from southeastern Wisconsin as well as from Washington, D.C., where Marilyn Meyers supports our work even though she has never had the opportunity to witness it firsthand. We provided care in a state-of-the-art wildlife hospital thanks to people who donated funds to build that hospital. We had the necessary equipment and supplies to provide excellent care to our patients thanks to every one of you who donated funds or supplies this summer—and we caregivers were able to keep working seven days a week, 14-

16 hours a day thanks to the prayers of people who

felt their support inadequate, but who should feel so proud of what they have helped accomplish—for those prayers and your kindness were essential nourishment to those of us who minister in your stead.

Those of us who handle the degloved cottontail, the starving squirrel, the injured fawn, the hawk with the broken wing—we are few by necessity—but we are your hands, yours is our spirit, yours is the credit when the cottontail lopes into the hedgerow, the squirrel leaps onto the topmost branch of the hickory, the fawn bounds into the marsh and the hawk leaves our arms at last! You have given back so many lives to their rightful place in the wild and free places that still exist all around us, despite of us. You are these creatures' salvation, their second chance. You are the real heroes in the story of their rehabilitation and release. It takes much more to give through another than it takes to be the one who gives. It takes an understanding only attained by an enlightened heart and a kind and wise spirit.

Thank you for allowing us to do the work of your hearts. Thank you for allowing us to be your hands. Thank you for allowing us to be the instrument of your compassion.

Thank you for crossing the boundaries of space and species and enlarging your vision to understand all living beings' shared need for safe harbor, peaceful slumber and freedom from fear. Thank you for opening your heart to actually meet those needs when they became known to you.

—Yvonne Wallace Blane

