Dear Members,

As time moves on and we continue to celebrate and think back on WRR’s 40 years, I too will continue to tell the story of what has become a truly life-saving organization. It is rewarding to revisit those years when WRR was not much more than a name, a name backed by hard work but no real resources or support. And yet, even in those extremely lean years there were animals being rescued, cared for, and sent back to the wild.

I vividly recall a litter of seven opossums. Their mother had been killed by a car. Someone stopped to move her body and there they were, barely alive and dangerously chilled. Though today we use all manner of more advanced methods of feeding tubes to get life-saving formula to opossum babies, in those days I was equipped with only glass eye-droppers. Opossums do not suck as they are marsupials and, when they are still embryos in their mother’s pouch, they connect to her nipples where they remain on a kind of animal drip system and never need to purse their lips and drink. This works beautifully for marsupials generally, but when those marsupials are deprived of their mother...well, you can imagine the challenge.

When they first arrived I knew it was not going to be easy to keep them alive. In those days between the early morning paper route, answering the phones, and constantly going out on rescues, my car was always near full with boxes containing babies who had to be fed as I went about these other tasks. For those little ones, a small nipple on a small bottle full of formula and a willing and hungry orphan and the job was done. Oh, and there was the added difficulty of heating that formula. I carried a hot plate, stopped in public restrooms or the home of where I was picking up an animal, plugged in the device, heated the formula and kept moving on to the next stop. A cooler filled with ice kept the formula fresh.

So there I was and there were the seven opossum babies, all hungry and each unwilling to take nourishment from the end of a dropper. It required several attempts per opossum and much patience and gentle coaxing to help them learn to lap from the dropper—it was utterly against their nature to eat in this fashion. But if I had my way with them, and I intended to do just that, they would learn to lap.

The first infant was the most reticent; she jerked her head in every direction but the one that provided the food. She would hiss, in her own adorable way, and struggle to free herself of my grasp. The other six were not thrilled but were at least a bit less feisty toward food. The eight of us spent many hours parked under trees or in my living room, bedroom, or kitchen, and just about anywhere I was carrying out other WRR tasks while trying to get these little ones to eat. There were times when one or two would drop a modicum of weight, move towards deadly dehydration or have diarrhea; all

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
WHERE THERE’S A WILL, THERE’S A WAY.
DIANA REYES, CFRE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE & DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Wildlife Rescue (WRR) is profoundly grateful for planned gifts and bequests, as they can have an enduring impact on the lives of thousands of animals for many years to come. Have you considered a planned commitment to Wildlife Rescue? Have you considered what you want your legacy to be?

Over the years, WRR has been blessed to be the recipients of donor bequests. In the last year these meaningful gifts allowed us to build an Endowment Fund that will ensure WRR is always here, always accepting animals in need, and always doing everything we can to return them to health and back into the wild. Our aim is to see this fund grow so that the future of WRR and the animals we rescue will be secure.

Donor bequests have also provided an immediate impact by giving us the ability to make significant improvements at the Kendalia Sanctuary. These improvements include upgrades to the Rehabilitation Hospital and the construction, expansion and renovation of several animal enclosures. All of these capital projects are greatly enhancing the care we provide to our animals in rehabilitation and in sanctuary.

As you can see, your WILL can make a difference today and in the future alike.

How can you leave your legacy? Follow these simple steps:

• Inform your attorney and/or financial advisor you are considering a gift to Wildlife Rescue. They can assist you in determining what type of gift best suits your wishes and circumstances.

• Contact Wildlife Rescue at 830-336-2725, ext. 315 and we can answer your questions and help ensure your needs are met.

• Inform your family and friends about your legacy gift while addressing family needs.

One of the tenets of Wildlife Rescue is to create profound and meaningful change in the lives of those we rescue. We know making a charitable gift to Wildlife Rescue is an important and very personal decision and we strive to honor our members’ wishes with the same fervor we have in our mission. Please give careful consideration in joining our efforts in building a strong and stable future for Wildlife Rescue through a planned gift or bequest. Your investment and trust will save lives.
of these events were more than a little worrisome as I knew their fragile lives could slip away at any moment.

I firmly believe that we cannot know the heart and mind of another being but in those early, difficult days, I witnessed many goings-on that gave me a sense that the animals I was doing my level best to keep alive decided, on some level, to lend me a hand. Those seven magnificent tiny opossums decided very late one night that they would stop fighting and enter into a collaboration with me. I was convinced today, as much as I was then, that it was really they who saved their own lives by making that decision. One by one, instead of sealing their lips against the dropper, twitching restlessly in my hands and thwarting my every attempt to feed them, they began to lick and lap and welcome the warm formula I was offering.

Those were the times when WRR was defined primarily by struggle and more than its share of strife and these out of the blue victories made the difference between feelings of futility and a renewed belief that, somehow, all would be well. Because every action, just as it does today, had a meaningful effect on an animal. When those animals turned those critical corners resulting in life-affirming consequences, my dedication deepened. It was as if there were signs being sent my way that confirmed what I already knew…

The experience of being utterly certain is a very liberating sensation. I knew that Wildlife Rescue had to thrive so that every animal who needed a meaningful effect on an animal. When those animals turned those critical corners resulting in life-affirming consequences, my dedication deepened. It was as if there were signs being sent my way that confirmed what I already knew…

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There is no one, least of all me, who would say this work has been easy. What it has been is everything except easy and so much more than that. I remember well a long ago summer night, miles from the city, when the full moon illuminated a path that led to a small creek, giant oaks and dense underbrush, a picture-perfect opossum habitat. It was here that I would say goodbye to the seven, now adolescent opossums. They had been devouring a natural diet for weeks and I was no longer necessary in their lives. It was time for them to go off on their own. I opened the large carrier, stood back and peered into the delicately lit night as one by one the siblings came out, sniffed the fragrant grass, ears and tails erect savoring the scent of Nature. I was thrilled when I saw them band together as they seemed to tiptoe to the underbrush that skirted the oaks and in perfect opossum fashion they did not waste a moment but wear straight up the tree to explore, to eat…to live.

They did not know me; they did not care who I was, and they had, as was necessary, remained wild. But I knew them; I knew the curve of every whisker, the color of their paper thin ears, I remembered who had been the first to lap the formula and who had been the most shy of the litter. To this very day I have a fixed image of those little ones and it will remain in my mind forever.

Wildlife Rescue has been and continues to be my life. But what really matters is that it has translated into life for countless others, others who are precious, vulnerable, intelligent and utterly wonderful in every way. Can there be any more meaningful work than that of saving them…certainly not for me.

Lynn Curvin

In these times when wildlife and Nature are under constant assault, it is not enough to say WRR rescues and cares for all wildlife, including native and nonnative species. And while it is true that we believe that all animals—are deserving of our care, attention, and respect, it is critical that our every action reflects this belief.

Animals are intelligent, sentient individuals. We refer to them as “he/she” or “thems/heys,” as by species. The words “it” or “thing” are never used to refer to an animal, and “who” is used rather than “that.” If you do not know the gender, choose one: “he” or “she.” Even if your gender choice is wrong, it is more respectful than “it.” This is an important way of demonstrating the respect we ask others to afford all animals.

The Wildlife Rescue Sanctuary was fashioned after what wildlife have in their natural habitats—large open areas with trees, boulders and native grasses. The wild animals are never named, tamed or placed on exhibit. It is our moral responsibility to mitigate the damage done to them and to return to them a life that is close to the one they would choose. WRR is not open to the public and does not use animals in education programs. We do not keep wild animals in captivity for the purpose of subjecting them to the stress of public display even when that display is in the classroom. The use of animals in this manner sends a message to the public that animals can or should be tamed, or kept as “pets” or that they are objects for human diversion, recreation or educational tools.

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ANIMAL ENCLOSURE EXPANSIONS

We have had some very busy recent months as we improve and enlarge several animal enclosures. Over the past year, Wildlife Rescue has been the fortunate recipient of four bequests and various grants that have helped us to do this. These have enabled us to make meaningful improvements for the animals who reside here at the sanctuary.

Projects recently completed:

**Bear Enclosure:** In November 2016, WRR received two black bears who had been exploited for exhibit in a roadside zoo in Pennsylvania. They are over 15 years of age and before coming to WRR never knew life outside a tiny, barren pit. This male and female bear joined the male black bear we rescued a few years ago from Ohio. Though their existing enclosure was nearly one acre it was not large enough to give them what they truly needed. The addition is spacious and grassy and has another above ground pool and den. No wild animal belongs in captivity but we do our best to make such a life more interesting, which is the least we can do for every animal in our care. This project was funded by a bequest from Chandler Smith, a long-time WRR supporter.

**Raptor Flight Aviary:** For years we have had to rely on one large flight aviary and one small aviary. We have completed renovation of the smaller one, and now our raptors have a lower tolerance for surrounding activity. Consequently, we have enlarged and sound-proofed these most to make their stay less stressful and accelerate healing. This project was funded by a bequest from Guisella Gall, a long-time WRR supporter.

**Projects in progress:**

**Elderly Capuchin Enclosure Expansion:** For many years we have been rescuing capuchin monkeys from f ossos and the “pet” trade. Like all of us, these monkeys have aged and their needs have changed accordingly. With this in mind we have expanded and improved their area by adding an open-topped section that includes small oak trees and new plants that appealed to elderly monkeys (ramps, steps, etc.). These primates have become less agile and these structures will make it easier for them to access all areas of the enclosure enabling them to continue to climb about and remain active. This project was funded by a bequest from Guisella Gall.

**New Kinkajou/Owl Monkey Complex:** This new enclosure is fully topped over and surrounds 30’ high oak and hickory trees. The enclosure will allow the kinkajous and owl monkeys, both arboreal species, to live in the tree tops while housed in separate but adjoining areas.

**Macaque Enclosure Expansion:** WRR is home to a long-time resident, a 22+ years old male Sulawesi macaque. Over the past four years his two female macaque companions have passed on, leaving him alone. In March 2017 we received two rhesus macaque females from Yale University. They were used in research for many years and are now permanent residents of WRR. This new macaque enclosure will be shared by the Sulawesi male who will once again have two companions. The enclosure is an open-topped half-acre with mature trees for the threesome to enjoy. This project was funded by a bequest from Chandler Smith.

**New Aviary and Reptile Housing:** This new complex will include four topped-over outdoor enclosures with adjoining warm houses. These indoor-outdoor areas will allow the non-native reptiles in our care to live all seasons of the year in these large, heated abodes. No longer will the snakes and lizards have to spend their winters in our hospital.

**Animal Hospital Improvements:** The second floor of the WRR Hospital houses both orphans and injured adults who have a lower tolerance for surrounding activity. Consequently, we have enlarged and sound-proofed these most to make their stay less stressful and accelerate healing. This project was funded by a bequest from The Perry and Ruby Stevens Charitable Foundation.

I am writing in early January 2017 and have just seen our statistical report on the number of animals received at Wildlife Rescue in 2016. It was almost 8,000, a record-breaker that none of us welcomed since it indicated that more wild animals than ever face threats to their existence. But it reminded us how fortunate WRR is. We are its beneficiaries, not its creators. Nor should we pretend that it is. Just as a human being comes in many varieties, all of whom merit moral consideration, so too does Nature. And our appropriate reciprocity for that gift is respect and care, for we are part of a community that extends back nearly four billion years. We are its benefactors, not its creators. Nor should we be its destroyers.

On rare occasions predators arouse fear for our own survival, as a backcountry hiker in bear country always reminds me. More often it is the possibility of predator threats to the survival of animals on whom we depend for income, food, or companionship that concerns us. Other times it simply makes us uncomfortable to be reminded that vulnerability and death are parts of Nature from the moment of birth and to the end of life. We do not have a comprehensive and consistent moral perspective on what is proper in our treatment of vulnerable co-inhabitants of Earth. And when it comes to predators the confusion only deepens.

Why? During the 200,000 years, more or less, that modern Homo sapiens have existed and evolved, we traveled from a past time when we ourselves were as much prey to predator to a present when we are almost exclusively predator, even if mostly in the disguised manner in which industrial meat production operates. We have so much control over most animals that it may feel abhorrent when we are forced to recognize that many predators continue to be busy among us and at times seem to threaten our assumption of safety, which many of us consider our natural right and condition. But grayly bears in the greater Yellowstone region, wolves in northern Minnesota, and mountain lions cruising new housing developments and farms in Florida are a signal, for which we should be deeply grateful, that not all of Nature has been completely subdueds.
Wildlife Rescue Donation Form

You may use the enclosed envelope by itself if only making a donation; if requesting more information, please fill in, clip and send this card.

NAME ____________________________

ADDRESS ____________________________

CITY ___________________ STATE _______ ZIP __________

PHONE ____________________________

Email______________________________

Card # ___________________________

Expiration Date ____________________ *CW Code __________

Signature __________________________

Payment Enclosed: □ Check □ Cash □ Charge (Check card type below)

□ Visa □ Mastercard □ American Express

CARD SUSTAINERS (minimum of $10/month)

□ I want to be a WRR Sustainer and make a monthly gift of: $ ______________

Your card will be charged this amount on approximately the 5th of each month.

JUNE/JULY 2017