



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

MARY LOVE

Mary Love, a WildCare supporter for more than a decade, has provided a very generous match of \$1M in support of the \$24M Elevate WildCare capital campaign, which is making it possible to build a new, world-class facility for WildCare. Mary and her husband, David, moved to Marin County in 2006, each with a love of wildlife and the incredible habitat we share. David, the renowned vintage racecar driver, passed away in 2013 and, on behalf of them both, Mary has continued to be an active champion for wildlife through her generous support of WildCare's work. She maintains close ties to the organization and has a keen understanding of its potential and the impact that a new facility will make possible.

The David and Mary Love Foundation generously provided the Elevate WildCare capital campaign's lead gift to kick off the fundraising drive for our new facility. Now, with just under \$8M to go, the additional \$1M match Mary Love and the Foundation have provided will support new momentum of the organization's fundraising. This new match will inspire gifts to help achieve the goal to fund the construction of the new facility, and secure WildCare's future.

WILDCARE IN TRANSITION

When WildCare first made the decision to rebuild a new state-of-the-art wildlife hospital and nature education center at our current location on Albert Park Lane, we recognized that this would require us to move to a transition location for a period of time while the construction of the new facility was completed.

Finding a site for Transition (as we're calling it) was the first hurdle, and WildCare is very grateful to the San Rafael City School District for leasing us a parcel of land at 251 North San Pedro Road, just ten minutes up the highway from WildCare's current location.

The challenge was to construct a temporary but fully-functional wildlife hospital and nature education center, able to treat and care for 3,500+ ill, injured, and orphaned animals from over 200 different species, and provide appropriate housing for educational Wildlife Ambassador animals as diverse as our pelicans, opossum, and vulture.

How do you create all of that on a flat, empty piece of land? In typical WildCare style, of course... with much creative thinking, a dash of daring, a lot of heavy lifting, and the help of some wonderful community friends.

Our Wildlife Hospital team, headed



by Director of Animal Care, Melanie Piazza and Assistant Director of Animal Care, Brittany Morse, needed to design caging that could work at Transition, but would also integrate into WildCare's new state-of-the-art Wildlife Hospital.

After much research, we found a company, Corners Limited, that could create and build the very specific designs we needed. It took many hours of design collaboration and logistical planning, but our staff came up with caging designs that would meet our needs and that Corners Limited could construct first at Transition and then return to disassemble and reconstruct at the new Wildlife Hospital when the time came. This saves WildCare thousands of dollars and gives the team the opportunity to use the caging for the 24 months of construction and make any changes or alterations before everything is brought back and installed at the new hospital.

The caging has to safely accommodate and provide adequate space for an astonishing array of animal species from raccoons and coyotes to squirrels, and from hawks and owls to tiny songbirds. It also has to be lightweight and well-constructed to last through many years.

The design process was arduous, but when Corners Limited finally arrived to build the cages our team had designed, they were as thrilled as we were! Melanie, Brittany, and the team implemented some quite revolutionary aspects to the cages to make them as multi-species functional as possible. In particular, the massive sliding doors that will allow the team to create bigger or smaller enclosures at will were something Corners Limited had never attempted before at that scale. The installers said they weren't even sure they would work, but they did!

Another innovation was a series of hinged panels that, when open, will allow a large bird like a hawk to fly unimpeded in a complete circuit around the bank of cages. This is valuable exercise for a recovering raptor and our team's design will



make it possible!

Building the enclosures for WildCare's Wildlife Ambassadors brought its own set of challenges. Because our Wildlife Ambassador animals are educational, we wanted to have them on display, allowing the public to visit and learn about

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them while we are at the Transition location. Our two large pelicans and gull also require a pool for swimming.

Thank goodness for the boundless generosity of Dan Hendrickson and Robyn Newkirk from Hendrickson Pools of Sausalito! Hendrickson Pools designed and built the current pool our pool birds have enjoyed for many years, along with the impressive pump system it requires. They've provided free maintenance for that system too, and even replaced the electronic pump last year when it acted up.

For Transition, they've done even more! They purchased, stored, and installed the 10' stock tank that is the pool in our pool birds' Transition enclosure. They also made the adjustments to turn the stock tank into a pool, installed and connected the water lines from the pool to the filter, and donated both the pool filter and pump. They will help us



get the pool up and running when the time comes, and they are so helpful and generous with answering questions and training our staff on pool care. To top it all off, Hendrickson Pools will be donating the Wildlife Ambassador pool and pumps at the new WildCare facility, which will be kidney-shaped and will feature a beach entrance. Very fancy!

WildCare will begin construction on our new facility at Albert Park Lane later this year, and we anticipate moving our entire operation to Transition in September 2024. Watch for alerts that we have relocated temporarily to Transition so you know where to bring the injured or orphaned animals you rescue, and keep your eyes peeled for updates on the construction of the gorgeous new WildCare!



BIG THANK YOU TO



HENDRICKSON POOLS, INC.

**FOR THEIR DONATION OF TIME,
EQUIPMENT AND EXPERTISE.**



Photos ©Eileen Jones, Melanie Piazza and Elyn Weisel