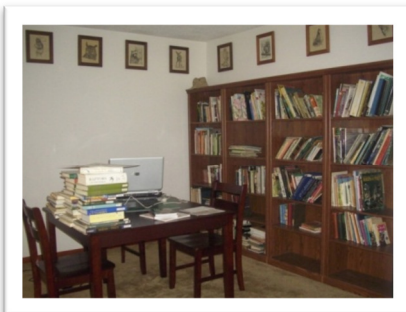




Illinois Raptor Center

Serving the wildlife and people of Illinois with wildlife rehabilitation and conservation education since 1991.

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We have met thousands of wild animals throughout our years at the Illinois Raptor Center. All these animals – whether endangered species or common backyard critters – respond to warmth, food, security and a caring touch when injured or orphaned.

We have also met thousands of people through hundreds of education programs. There is a bulging folder in the office containing hundreds of kind letters that we have received over the years. Many letters include phrases such as “you encourage and enlighten us to appreciate all that nature offers us” and “you folks put on a spectacular program with the birds of prey” and “your enthusiasm and knowledge is inspiring.” WOW! These letters definitely inspire us to continue onward.

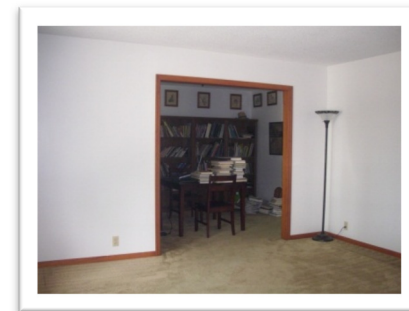
All this work – helping thousands of animals, educating thousands of people, and participating in hundreds of conservation programs – has been generated out of a 24’ x 34’ three room building for nearly 20 years!

Because we operated from such small quarters, we were not easily accessible to the public. We were not able to do onsite programs except during the summer months when we could use our education pavilion. Eighty to ninety percent of our programs each year had to be held at other locations. Open houses and other such events were becoming a logistical impossibility. Because of our location’s limitations, many people in the community don’t yet know the Illinois Raptor Center even exists!

Our current building not only limited our interaction with the public, it also limited the number of volunteers that were able to work in the building at one time. The actual wildlife hospital room is about 10’ x 24’ and you cannot imagine how many animals we can pack into that room during baby season!

In January we were presented with an opportunity that would soon be gone if not acted upon immediately, and it would likely never present itself again. We had to act quickly and surely or forever be sorry. With help from a compassionate environmentalist and philanthropist who was willing to put up his own money as collateral for our loan, we closed the deal to purchase the house and 10 acre property right next door to the IRC on the east side! The keys to the door of opportunity are now in the Illinois Raptor Center’s hands!

Our new building is a 4 bedroom/3 bathroom home which was built in 1982. The 1708 square foot main floor seems predestined to become our library, conference room, class room, offices, and copy room. Downstairs is a full and finished walk-out basement that has a large recreation room with a sink and cabinets which are arranged perfectly for giving indoor programs. There is also a large laundry room, two spare rooms, a huge storage area in the basement, and a 528 square foot attached



garage to work in. As a bonus, there are lots of large windows both upstairs and downstairs for birding!

This new building will open up many more opportunities for volunteering and in different capacities. We are so happy that we now have a place to hold indoor public programs. Our outdoor programs will now have 25 ½ acres of outdoor classrooms, wildlife habitat and refuge, too!

If that isn't the most wonderful dream we could ever imagine - it gets even better! By moving the offices and all of our education tools from our present building to the new building, the wildlife hospital will triple in size! Our old offices will become the intensive care unit and nursery. The exam room will be separated from the animal caging and incubators. This will allow us to house more animals, more comfortably. It will also allow us to have more volunteers on hand to serve the injured and care for the orphans.

I cannot wait to have our first Raptor Camp or Beginning Birders program in the new building. I cannot wait to host our new Youth Wildlife Rescue Workshop to teach children when and when not to rescue wildlife! There are so many things we have always wanted to do and now, with this new building and more acreage, we can do them all! And...as a private non-profit we don't have to move a bureaucracy to get things done or create new programs. With the support of our contributors, we just see what needs to be done and we do it!

One of our priorities right now is to get the funds to make the new building handicapped accessible. It won't take much but it will take money. A growing organization will have growing needs and we have understood that from the beginning. We just know that it will all be worth it and we're sure our contributors will agree.

Years ago we asked for our contributor's help to purchase the 5 acre site we call Daffodil Valley. The outpouring of contributions was amazing and we saved the overused and abused property, restored it to its former beauty, and gave it back to the area's wildlife. Today we are asking for your help once again. Please help us in our next step of growth. This is truly a big step for the Illinois Raptor Center and for the future of wildlife rehabilitation and conservation education in Central Illinois.

Please support us in some way. Like the saying goes, "*If you don't think little things make a difference, you've never been in bed with a mosquito!*" Every dollar will make a dent. Every donation, large or small, will make a difference for an animal in need of help. Every donor's contribution will help us educate a child on how to treat the outdoor world. The Illinois Raptor Center belongs to the wildlife of Illinois and to the people who care deeply about them. I am hoping with all my heart that we can count on your support in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Seitz".

Jane Seitz
Executive Director