

## A Tribute to Ms Moose



As many of you know, Ms Moose was our public education bald eagle that has spent 20 years of her life being an awesome ambassador for her species here at OWL. She got her name because when she set on the glove she was a whopping 16 lbs and felt as “heavy as a moose”. It wasn’t the most glamorous name but she responded to it!

She originally came to OWL from Montana. She had ingested poisoned gophers in Yellowstone Natl Park and as the poison took hold of her toppled to the forest floor below. Luckily, there was a rehabber from Minnesota on vacation and she saw Moose fall. The fall broke her left wing in eight places. She was taken to a wildlife rehabilitation center in Montana and they treated her with the antidote for the poison and surgically repaired her left wing. We had petitioned for a bald eagle to use in education at that time and luckily for us, Ms Moose came up the same time as our request in June 1995. Bald Eagles were still on the endangered species list at that time.

Her training began by me sitting in the stall with her while I read (mostly veterinary books) ~ looking back she was probably really bored :-). One evening I was sitting on my camp stool and she made her way down from the perch to me. I didn't look at her as she put her face to mine and went “grrr, grrr”. It scared me because I didn't know what it meant so I went in the house and called my friend, Maurie Weigel. He was my "eagle" mentor. When his laughter finally subsided he told me that she was courting me and that evidently she decided she needed a friend.

From that moment on her training took gigantic leaps and bounds. She learned to step, perch and kennel on command. She learned the term "wings" (which meant quit slapping me in the face with your wings and put them down). She never did learn the word "no" even though it got used a lot on her

in the beginning. As the years went by she learned the hand signal for "turn around" which garnished many laughs from thousands of people over the years. She was a regal gal and we built eagle day programs around her teaching hundreds of thousands of people about our national bird, the bald eagle. While others had eagles in cages or hooded to keep them calm. Ms Moose was trained to sit on her perch and allow people to come within 10-15 feet from her. Quite a feat for a mature wild bald eagle. She was a star and was featured in magazines such as Kansas, Veterinary Technician, Kansas Wildlife & Parks, Ingrams, Falcon for Kids. She appeared on every television and radio station in Kansas City and Lawrence over the years. Each time with the grace and dignity that was only hers. In her lifetime with us, over 1,000,000 people viewed Ms. Moose as she taught them about bald eagles and their place in this world.

I have so many memories of her and she touched so many people. One of my most emotional and proud memories is of the Freedom Fest in Skidmore MO. One particular year the Moving Vietnam Wall was there and thousands of people came out. I haven't served in the military and I'm sad to say I did not understand all the sacrifices that were made for our freedom. It was an eye opening event and it made me realize just what our national symbol, the bald eagle, meant to these men and women. I was asked to walk the line of the veterans that were there to pay tribute to our national symbol and those that died in the Vietnam War. Veterans in wheelchairs were helped to stand by others as "Ms Moose" passed by them. She was saluted and treated with the most respect I've ever encountered. At that moment I realized that she was the symbol for which these men and women had fought for, lost their limbs and eyesight for and some their lives. She symbolized the embodiment of Duty Honor & Country for them. Many had tears running down their cheeks as I walked the line with Ms Moose that day. She knew ~ she "cawed" at them and never once bated (try to jump) from the glove. It still brings me to tears remembering that day and made me understand more about sacrifice than I ever had before.

I retired Ms Moose from public education a couple of years ago & was letting her enjoy her golden years being catered to. She had been having some issues with osteoarthritis in her legs and we were treating her with whirlpool baths, foot massages and anti-inflammatories. She was still full of it and had a voracious appetite consuming a couple of rats daily. On December 1, I spent extra time with her in the morning. She wasn't right and I felt she was telling me it was time ~ it was the first day she refused food. I went out again that afternoon and talked to her and the conversation went something like this ~ "it's been a long road and it's been fun with its ups and downs but I think we're about at the end of our journey together. I've loved every moment of it even when you bit me and I'm sorry I called you that bad name when you did. I told her if she had to leave it was okay and that I'd miss her." She gave me a soft "caw, caw". I placed her in a towel ring so that the weight would be taken off her legs. My plan was to come back later that evening and euthanize her when it was quiet and volunteers had gone home.

I hadn't been gone more than 30 minutes when OWL volunteer Jasmine called me while I was attending to my horses to say Ms Moose was very still. A few minutes later I came into the facility. Ms Moose was gone ~ the last gift she could give me was to spare me from having to put her to sleep. She died on her own terms, quietly without struggle or fear ~ in the towel ring exactly as I had placed her.

Now ~ I envision her flying free without the encumbrance of her damaged wing. She was an incredibly rare and awesome bird so thank you Ms Moose for all the teaching you provided to so many people over the years. For touching so many people with your regal demeanor and patient attitude towards the educational work at hand. But more than that, thank you for allowing me to have the privilege of knowing you, allowing me to work with you and teaching me patience with your grace. The memories are vast and I feel this huge hollow emptiness in my stomach every time I think of you. For 20+ years I

was met with that same “caw-caw” every morning and now it’s gone. It took me over a week to be able to walk past her enclosure because I knew she wasn’t there.

We have a new bald eagle, an immature male that’s been named Frankie. They spent time next to each other ~ perhaps she passed on her knowledge to him about a human world so different from their own. He talks to me in the mornings too. Until we meet again ~ I’ll see you later Ms Moose. Diane

To honor Ms Moose we have teamed with Scentsy to bring you a very special memento. A special Scentsy warmer with an image of Ms Moose will be produced using a special printer that prints directly onto the frosted glass plate. The warmer comes in either black or white and you choose a current Scentsy bar of your choice for \$30. You must contact Courtney Saunders for this portion of the fundraiser. All orders will be processed through her and mailed to our main facility where they can be picked up at the facility or receiving center.

OWL will receive 20% of the purchase price, and of anything else that you order from the catalogs. The fundraiser runs August and September. August will include the Scentsy Spring/Summer catalog and September will have the new Fall/Winter catalog available. The Spring/Summer (August) orders have to be processed by the end of August and the Fall/Winter orders processed at the end of September. You must order from our fundraiser link or contact Courtney Saunders to place the order for you (the best way). Contact Courtney directly to see if your order would qualify for free shipping with this method before you place an order online.

Contact Information for Courtney Saunders.

E-mail [courtneysaunders2015@gmail.com](mailto:courtneysaunders2015@gmail.com) OR

Courtneysaunders.scentsy.us website OR

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/courtneysaunders2015/?fref=ts>

Phone 660-541-0066

Name: Operation WildLife Fundraiser

Provided by: Courtney Saunders an Independent Scentsy Consultant

Start Date: 8/15/2016

End Date: 9/30/2016

Location: Sales will be online.

Donation: 20% of all sales

How to order: Customers can visit <https://courtneysaunders.Scentsy.us?partyId=314536979>

to view the entire catalog. There is a box on the home page on the right hand side that says My Open Parties. Customers will need to make sure they have clicked that and have selected the Operation WildLife Fundraiser party for sales to qualify for the donation. You can also click the direct link in this post that will automatically place you in the right party. Customers can also contact Courtney directly for help in entering an order.

Shipping Options: All orders can be direct shipped to your home. Shipping charges will be 10% of your total for orders over \$80 or \$8 for orders less than \$80 to all US destinations except for AK and HI. AK, HI, PR, GU and APO/FPO destinations will be 20% for orders over \$50 or \$10 for orders less than \$50.