

# Owl takes flight after 8-month recovery

By **LISA TALLYN**  
Staff Writer

With a flap of its wings the screech owl was airborne, soaring off towards the woods.

Dan Frankian couldn't have been happier to see the owl he dubbed "Little Boo Boo" fly out of his hands Monday, because it meant he had been successful in rehabilitating another bird.

The owl didn't get too far during the first release minutes earlier, flying into a nearby bush, but on the second try, it was gone.

"It's a lot of fun, when I get to this point, literally, I'm bouncing up and down," said Frankian, owner of Hawkeye Bird and Animal Control Inc. ([www.hawkeye.ca](http://www.hawkeye.ca)) who took the injured bird into his care in December after area resident Fiona Reid found the owl by the side of 15 Sideroad while driving into Georgetown.

"He was hunched down. I could see his little ear tufts, so I went back to investigate," said Reid. "I picked him up, he was very, very passive, his eyes were closed the whole time."

Thinking warming the owl up would help, Reid snuggled the bird inside her coat and

kept him there as she did her errands.

She took the bird home, tried to give it some water, but wasn't having any luck.

"I thought it had probably been hit. It seemed very tired, lethargic, rather than about to die. It was still holding on."

Reid called around to see if anyone knew how to care for the bird, and was told about Frankian, who lives nearby on Regional Road 25.

She took the bird to Frankian, a falconer, who immediately took it into his care.

Frankian's company rehabilitates injured birds of prey and removes pests such as pigeons, geese, raccoons and skunks. He uses birds of prey to chase birds out of airports, landfills, corporate and industrial areas, and wineries. He has worked as far away as Thailand and Ecuador.

He said when he took the owl in, it (he's not sure if it's male or female) was "totally dehydrated," had eaten very little, if any, food in a while, had a sprained wing and an infection.

He put a tube down the bird's throat to give it some water, made a splint for its wing, and

put the owl in a 6x8x8 ft. solid-walled cage with a skylight.

When the owl first arrived Frankian said he had to force-feed it. It was fed every couple of hours around the clock, but eventually it got healthier and stronger.

Soon he began a sort of bird physiotherapy with it. He would put the bird's food—quail—on the ground initially. Then as the bird got stronger, the food would be placed on progressively higher perches, forcing the bird to fly to get it, making it stronger.

"Going straight up for a bird is like doing chin-ups for us," said Frankian.

Frankian estimates he's rescued 252 birds over the years.

"If I do better than 50 per cent (survival rate), I'm happy."

Frankian isn't concerned the owl will not know how to survive in the wild, because it was doing just that before it was injured.

"It knows what to do. It's got four months to get its game in gear."

He said the bird left with a full stomach, as they had been stuffing it with food for the past three days.



## Tea time fun

Sarah Pell, manager of Crawford's Country Gardens, conducts a perennial demonstration during the recent United Way Tea at the Manor fundraising event held at a private home in Limehouse. The event featured a home tour, strawberry social, music, art displays and more.

Photo by Jon Borgstrom

## Paget enters Ward 2 race

The race is on in Ward 2. Former Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce president Norm Paget has filed nomination papers yesterday (Wednesday) to run against Ward 2 incumbents Bryan Lewis and Joan Robson.

There are election races

now in Ward 2, Ward 4, and for Halton Hills public school trustee in the Oct. 25 municipal election.

The deadline to file as a candidate is Sept. 10. For more details go to [www.haltonhills.ca](http://www.haltonhills.ca) and click on Election 2010.

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