

Peregrine flies back to Richmond Hill from Colombia

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

Nate the Peregrine is a fledging distance traveller. In his first year, he flew from Richmond Hill to Colombia and back.

And his hackmate Rouge is out looking for love in Scarborough, Canadian Peregrine Foundation co-founder Mark Nash says.

Last June, the foundation released Nate, Rouge and two other endangered peregrine falcons from a hackbox on the roof of Richmond Hill's municipal headquarters.

The four young males each wore a light-weight backpack transmitter designed to fall off in about a year. Nash's motive was to track the fledglings after their release.

One bird, Sir Richmond, died in July. Rouge lost his transmitter early but hung around Richmond Hill, even during the winter.

The fourth hatchling, Echo, reached the Panama Canal before his transmitter failed. In March, birdwatchers in Burlington and Stoney Creek sighted a peregrine with an

antenna — possibly the same bird.

The foundation's Project Track'em followed Nate's movements to Colombia. His transmitter, placed in Ontario about a month ago and in the region two weeks later, Nash said.

Eleven times, the foundation has left quail in the Richmond Hill hackbox, hoping to retrieve the transmitter by trapping Nate if he drops in like a college kid coming home for a free meal. "When we return, the quail's gone," Nash reported Monday.

Rouge, meanwhile, is seeking attention from a resident female peregrine in Scarborough, which is great news, considering there are only 23 known nesting pairs of the birds in Ontario.

"I'm tickled pink," Nash said. "I've really got to give the birds the credit."

The foundation is raising money for new projects. You can learn more about the peregrines and their travels by calling (416) 481-1233 or visiting the foundation website at www.peregrine-foundation.ca

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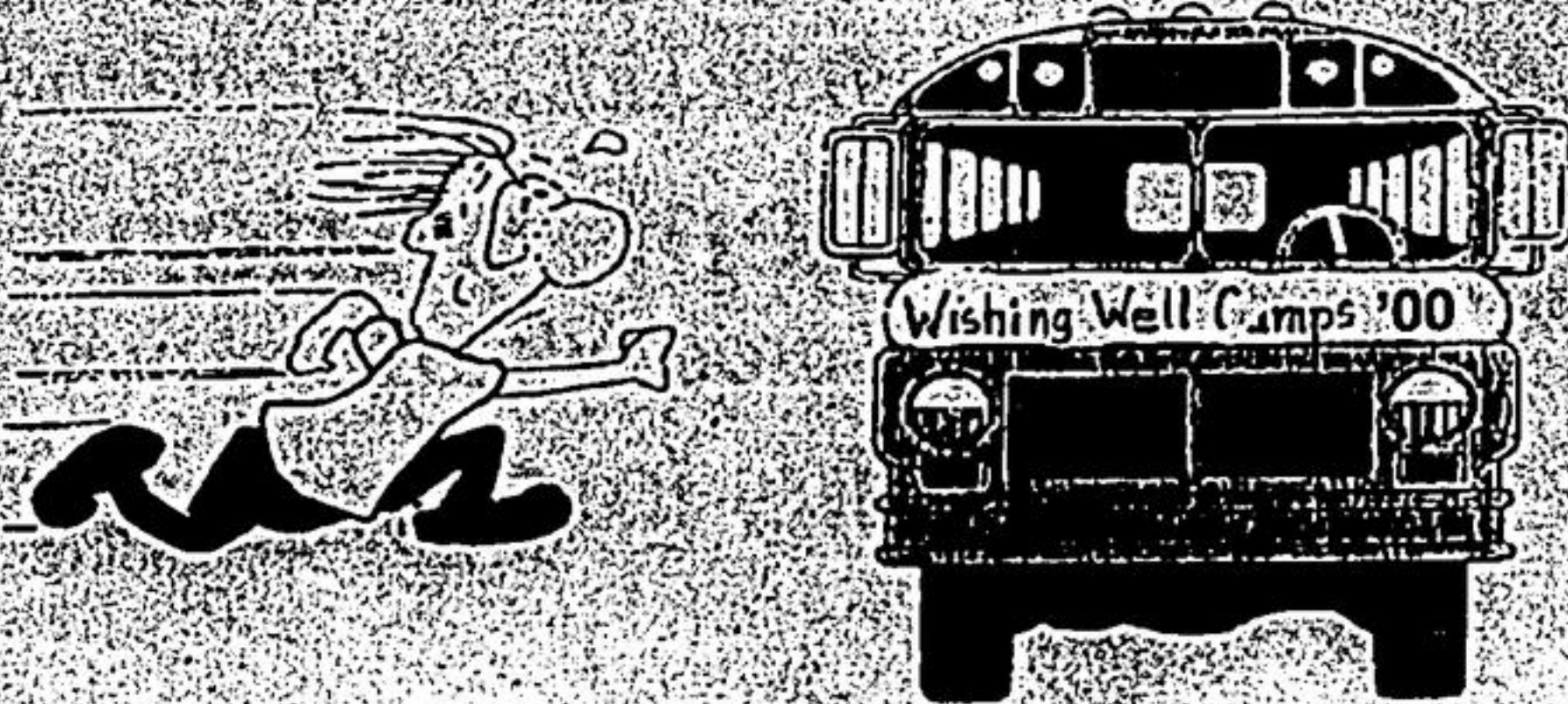
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