

Operation Brown Pelican – An Update

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Since Charlene Beane's excellent initial article ("Brown Pelicans Maimed...", Vol. IX, No. 6, *The A.F.A. Watchbird*) on the mutilation of California Brown Pelicans, a lot has happened and a lot *hasn't* happened.

Sixteen pelicans (all juvenile birds) currently reside at Crown Valley Animal Hospital in Laguna Niguel, California. Four have been successfully "fitted" with beak prostheses. Of the twelve remaining birds, we hope to surgically apply prostheses to all of them, although several may not be able to benefit from such surgery because so little of their upper beaks remain. Three other mutilated juvenile Brown Pelicans have been humanely euthanized at different times because of the severity of their wounds when presented to veterinarians for examination and one lost its struggle to live shortly after Fish and Game wardens presented it to Crown Valley Animal Hospital because of excessive hemorrhage.

The most dramatic development with Operation Brown Pelican has been the development of a new surgical method

of attachment of the upper beak prosthesis. We are confident that this new surgical procedure will offer the birds their best chance to be returned to the wild and maximize their survival potential.

Shortly after the first surgery ("Pinocchio" on 10-24-82), Dr. Greg Crose, an aero space engineer with PDA Engineering of Santa Ana, Ca., contacted head surgeon Dr. Robert Rooks to offer his assistance in exploring a different method of attachment of the prosthesis which he hoped would be bio-mechanically superior to the first procedure. His unselfish efforts with Dr. Rooks and those of Dr. Crose's co-workers were fruitful. Successful surgeries employing this new procedure with his personal guidance were performed on "Rusty", "Kathy Lee", and "Jamie" (11-16-82), although still in captivity. The next surgery is scheduled for 1-9-83.

Sadly, no progress has been reported by officials of California Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the identification and apprehension of the perpetrator(s) of this horrible crime. The only thing for which we can all be grateful is that this individual or these individuals have ceased their sadistic activity.

A number of people who have contributed significant time, energy, and talent towards Operation Brown Pelican and who were not cited in the first article need to be mentioned at this time:

James G. Crose, Ph.D., PDA Engineering, Santa Ana, CA. Structural engineer and developer of prosthesis attachment procedure used on pelicans after "Pinocchio."

J.C. Schutzler, M.S. PDA Engineering, Santa Ana, CA. Co-worker with Dr. Crose.

Terry Baylor, W.T. Baylor Pattern Making and Tooling, Huntington Beach, CA. Developer of prosthesis.

Dee Barackman, Hospital Administrator, Veterinary Surgical Referral Service, Fountain Valley, CA.

Diana Scott, A.H.T., Veterinary Surgical Referral Service, Fountain Valley, CA. Surgical nurse.

Tammy Agajanian, La Paz Animal Clinic, Laguna Hills, CA. Surgical nurse and anesthesiology assistant.

Alex and Linda Delle, Manhattan Beach, CA, Founders of P.I.N. ●

Help the Pelicans – Get a T-shirt

By Alex and Linda Delle
Hermosa Beach, California

Being owners of ducks and other birds and animals, we were outraged by the cruel acts of mutilation against the pelicans. Learning that our own vet, Dr. Woerpel, was directly involved in the rehabilitation of these birds, we, too, wanted to help. In the months previous to the mutilation, Dr. Woerpel treated several pelicans for various injuries, at which time we became intrigued by their beauty.

We started Pelicans In Need (P.I.N.) to help defray some of the costs for the doctors interested in treating these birds. We named the organization P.I.N. so that any pelican, now and in the future,

can receive funds to help with medical costs.

Our organization (non-profit and tax deductible) sells T-shirts, 100% cotton, bearing the picture of a pelican framed by a heart with the words "I contributed to P.I.N., Pelicans In Need." The T-shirts are light blue with dark blue printing. The cost is \$9.00 + .59 tax and \$1.00 postage, each. The sizes are small, medium, large and extra-large. To help the pelicans and get a T-shirt that says you did, send a total of \$10.59 for each T-shirt and a note stating the size(s) you want to P.O. Box 56, Hermosa Beach, California 90254. ●

Linda Delle displays the T-shirt designed to help "Pelicans In Need," along with a pelican already the recipient of a new upper beak.

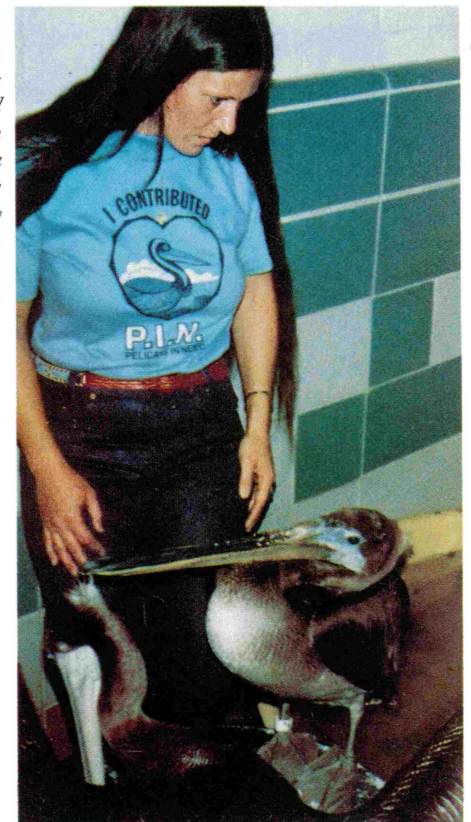


Photo by Alex Delle