

Group provides food, care for animals

Mill Race fowl get help from Friends

By Diana Elliott
Of the Emerald

On any sunny weekend afternoon the Mill Race ducks just may be the most well-fed residents of Eugene. But when the clouds roll in and rain douses the banks of the pond, the hundreds of waterfowl who frequent the area must search for any morsel of bread they can find.

It's a common misconception, said Patt Rollins, founder of Friends of the Mill Race Ducks and Geese. Just because ducks get overfed during the good weather, people think they are well-fed all the time; Rollins said.

"In fact, the ducks are overfed during the summer months and are underfed during the rest of the year," she said.

Friends of the Mill Race Ducks and Geese is an eight-member organization dedicated to feeding the animals twice a week, caring for sick waterfowl and relocating them when the pond gets overpopulated.

Rollins founded the organization in January 1984, after Lane County Animal Regulation sought volunteers to help the ducks who were suffering during the icy weather.

The weather was so bad that the ducks' feet were actually freezing to the ground, Rollins said.

That winter, Rollins and her cohorts worked at getting duck feeders built and at collecting donations for seed. University sororities kicked in \$500 for seed money. A Boy Scout troop used Weyerhaeuser Company-donated lumber to build feeding stations.

Now members of the Friends take turns feeding the water fowl twice a week, Rollins said. The animals gobble up 80 pounds of seed each week, at a cost of \$9.20.

Now that the animals are well-fed and basically healthy, the group focuses on relocating ducks and geese when the pond gets overpopulated, Rollins said.

Dumping unwanted ducks and geese at the Mill Race has increased the overpopulation problem, Rollins said. The problem not only causes shortages of food but also creates a hazard during mating season in the spring, she said.

"Ideally it's best to have one male for every five females," said Joan Walker, Animal Regulation program manager. "But this spring we've had one female for every five males."

When the ratio is reversed, the male ducks

often chase the female ducks until they run onto Franklin Boulevard for refuge, Walker said, adding that most ducks do not make it back safely.

Although most people think that leaving an unwanted duck or goose at a pond is acceptable, Walker insists that it's not. "You wouldn't abandon a dog or a cat," Walker said. "And it's just as bad to abandon a duck."

There are regulations against dumping waterfowl in public ponds and those caught doing so may be slapped with a citation, Rollins said. She encourages anyone who sees someone dumping animals at the pond to report the vehicle license number to Animal Regulation.

Rollins does not think people realize they are being cruel to the animals when they abandon them. Most of the time, she said, people get chicks during Easter and find they do not have the facilities to accommodate them. So they get left at the Mill Race and other duck ponds.

When Rollins and her group set out to relocate the animals, they take the sick ones first because those are the ones most likely to be alienated by the others.

Rollins has devised a funnel-shaped contraption to trap the animals. The device, which is constructed of net, allows the ducks to wander in for food. After several days, they get used to the structure and when Rollins comes to catch the animals, she can easily shoo them into the cage.

The group delivers the animals to farmers who use the ducks and geese as farm pets, Rollins said. They thoroughly check out the homes before they leave the animals.

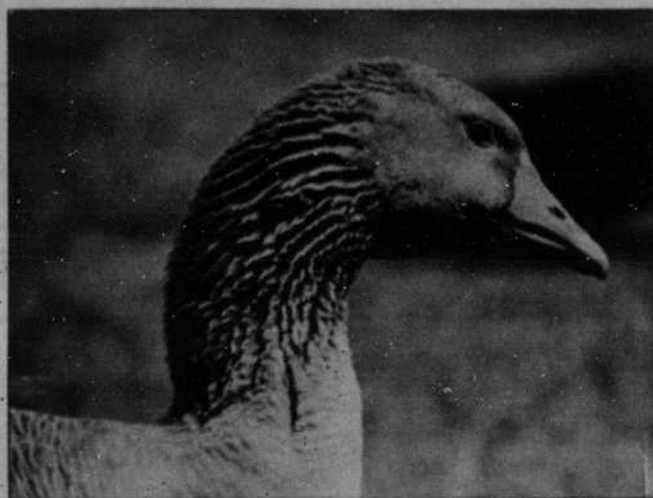


Photo by James Marks

Feathered Mill Race residents are fed and cared for by Friends of the Mill Race Ducks and Geese, a group devoted to helping the birds.

Despite improvements, main library ranks low

By Scott McFetridge
Of the Emerald

A recent report ranks the University library behind most research libraries in a number of categories, but the University librarian said these statistics do not show the advances that have been made in the last several years.

For the 1983-84 academic year the University library ranked 90th out of 105 university research libraries in the United States and Canada, according to an index developed by the Association of Research Libraries. The index takes twelve factors into account.

The University ranks behind all eight other Pacific-10 Conference universities with research libraries. Oregon State University does not have a research library.

But George Shipman, University librarian, said the current ranking is much better than three years ago when the University library was ranked 99 out of 101 research libraries. And in the last five years there has been a 50 percent increase in the number of volumes added, he said.

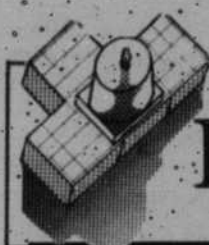
The University library added 52,868 volumes in 1983-84, ranking 73rd in volumes added.

Although the library is purchasing a large number of books, it still should be buying more, Shipman said. Only a small number of books were bought during the 1950s through 1970s, so the library now must buy retrospective books in addition to current books, he said.

Because the library administration's emphasis for the last several years has been on purchasing books instead of hiring more staff members, the current staff has had an increased workload, Shipman said. Many staff members have to do two or three jobs, he added.

Staff members cannot continue at their current workload, so money now being spent on books will have to be transferred to hiring, he said.

"You can't just buy books," Shipman said. "Books stored are useless. We're not a warehouse yet, but we could become one."



Legislative Update

Here are highlights of the Oregon Legislature last week.

Divestment

The House approved a bill that could require the state to divest millions of dollars from companies doing business in South Africa.

House Bill 2001 would require the Oregon Investment Council to order the state treasurer to divest state funds in companies doing business in South Africa, except those following the Sullivan Principles, which are anti-discrimination standards. The bill now goes to the Senate.

Higher Ed

House Education Committee heard testimony from political, educational and business leaders seeking a four-year state college in Central Oregon.

Backers of the idea believe it will help the area diversify its economy and attract high-tech industry.

Supporters of the idea are not seeking approval now but are laying groundwork for the next legislative session. Some are considering the possibility of

converting Central Oregon Community College to a four-year institution.

Miscellaneous

A House committee heard testimony from those seeking retail sale of Coors beer in Oregon.

Beer distributors and truck drivers supported the sale of Coors, but members of the

Women's Rights Commission claimed the company is racist and discriminatory.

The House Legislative Rules and Operations Committee recommended that the Legislature meet every year instead of every other year.

The Senate defeated a measure to extend the Oregon Bottle Bill to include wine coolers.

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