



O'Donahue And King All Ready For Rescue Work

By JOHN GUERNSEY

The duck season is again underway and, as usual, bird's best friend is operating in the Klamath Basin. That is, Jim O'Donahue and his retriever dog King will be going out to bring in the crippled and sick birds so they can convalesce in the half-acre field O'Donahue has fenced in at his home near Klamath Falls.

The easy-going man with the grey bristly hair has been working at his self-appointed game conservation chores for more than 20 years now, and through his efforts is responsible for the salvation of what is estimated to be more than 100 birds a year. That number represents only the cripples which O'Donahue and his retriever bring in, to say nothing of the birds which make it through the exceptionally tough winters by virtue of the feeding program he maintains.

INJURIES DETERMINED

After bringing the crippled birds in from the fields or water, O'Donahue takes them to his home where the full extent of injuries are determined. If the birds are in such a condition that they can be put in the big half-acre pen they are placed in it after having one wing clipped.

If they require more treatment than can be administered in the open lot, the birds are placed in one of the smaller enclosed pens. O'Donahue has in his back yard. When they are sufficiently strong the birds are taken from the smaller pens, undergo the clipping of one wing, and are placed in the big lot.

The conservationist explains that he clips one wing so the birds cannot leave the lot until they have completely regained their strength or been branded as permanent cripples. The half-acre is enclosed with a four-foot high wire fence and the birds remain their throughout the winter and spring months until they have remounted and repaired the deficient wing.

The healed birds generally fly away during the late spring and summer, with the permanent cripples remaining.

What does Jim do with the permanent cripples? Well, that too has quite satisfactorily been taken care of. A few years back he and Jack Marks of the Washington Park Zoo in Portland concluded a highly beneficial working agreement. Marks now comes to Klamath Falls periodically and removes a truck load of the cripples to the zoo.

"That works out particularly well," adds O'Donahue, "the enclosure at the zoo is such that any of the cripples can leave if they recover to the extent that they can fly away."

Although he hasn't hunted birds with a shotgun in recent years, O'Donahue makes a particular point of stressing that he in no way objects to hunting. "I think it's a wonderful sport," he says, "it's just that I don't believe that all those wounded birds

should be left to die and waste or become predator bait."

HEALTH FAILED

How, you wonder, does a man become interested in such work and learn to pursue it with a full measure of satisfaction. O'Donahue explains it this way.

"A good many years ago my health broke down and I had to reach a desert climate for recovery."

For two years he lived alone

in a two room cabin in the isolated desert east of Banning, California.

"It can get terrible lonely on the desert," he recalls, "and I soon realized that the occasional birds, insects, and reptiles were great companions for breaking the monotony."

He worked with rattlesnakes and to this day maintains that they are one of the most misrepresented creatures or reptiles on earth.

After he satisfactorily recovered, he lived essentially alone in the mountainous Butte Falls region while developing some property.

During his stay there, O'Donahue was afforded the opportunity of being with and studying varied forms of both bird and wildlife. He later moved to Medford and came to Klamath Falls about 19 years ago.

"That's all there was to it," he chuckles, "I was fortunate in having a wonderful opportunity to study nature, learned to appreciate the value of conservation, and now have a thoroughly satisfying time working with the homeless and injured wild birds and animals."

In the early years of his venture business was a little slow. O'Donahue brought in what crippled birds he could find and nursed them back to flying strength.

"I really got into the thick of it about 10 years ago when we were losing so many birds because of botulism," he recalls. "I must have worked with more than five or six hundred sick ones during each of the bad years."

BUSINESS BOOMS

After that the word of O'Donahue's work spread throughout the state and he has been strictly up to his neck in the bird and animal business since that time. Conservation minded persons and employees with the fish and wildlife, game commission, and state police departments now bring him animals and birds from all over the county.

His activity is hardly confined to the care and treatment of crippled ducks and geese. He has in the past taken in a wide assortment of bird types, including the California house finch, eagles, falcons, and other types. He has worked with fawns which have been brought to town by hunters

who erroneously thought they were lost, winter starved coyotes, crippled deer, beaver, and other animals.

On hand now he has an assortment of crippled honkers, specks, cacklers, ducks, snow geese and one Ross goose. Also in the big yard are several peacocks, peahens, and two Australian Barnacle geese which were given to him.

Although he is highly interested in receiving and caring for wild birds and animals, O'Donahue does not encourage people to bring such as crippled cats and dogs or those which have been abandoned. He points out that there are agencies designed to care for such unfortunate domestic animals, with his intent being to care for injured or sick wildlife from a conservation standpoint.

Although O'Donahue employs no effort to make pets out of any of the birds at his sanctuary, he explains that some bird

types are especially adaptable to becoming pets.

"Both the Canadian geese and the pelicans are inclined toward becoming pets," he says, "why in the case of one old pelican it was so bad I couldn't even take a picture of it . . . each time I walked in the pen the old boy would move up and try to swallow the camera."

"Then there was the case of a pelican that learned to catch. All you had to do was throw the food and he'd snatch it in mid air . . . that boy could have held down a berth with the Dodgers just about any day."

In the field of intelligence, it is O'Donahue's thought that the magpies, honking geese, and pelicans are the boys with the \$64,000 question IQ's.

Although operating his game conservation program on a strictly hobby-like basis, O'Donahue works in close relation with mem-

bers of the fish and wildlife, and game commission. He points out that the named services maintain excellent conservation programs in the Basin area.

In addition to other cooperative arrangements, the government agencies have made it possible for O'Donahue to become one of those rare exceptions . . . for his type of hunting there's no daily or bag limit.

How do O'Donahue and his wife Helen feed all the birds they keep at their home and where do they get the grain for the large number of wild birds fed during some winters. There's quite a bit of the feed money comes from his own pocket and there are several persons and agencies lending a helping hand to the Basin's remarkable conservationist.

You can help him too. When the birds are out of effective range this year don't warm up your gun barrel with a few chance shots.



GETTING A WING TRIM JOB IN THE UPPER left photo is one of the convalescing speckled breasted geese at Jim O'Donahue's bird convalescent home. The wing is clipped so the bird cannot leave the fenced-in pasture until he is sufficiently strong to fly over the four-foot fence. O'Donahue explains that some of the birds would otherwise leave before being strong enough, and would either die or become victims of predator animals. In the center top photo the big bird is being released into the half acre fenced-in portion where he will remain until next summer. The bird will not be able to clear the fence until he moults again at which time he will be fully able to take care of himself and continue with normal bird flights. Looking on as O'Donahue puts the bird in the pen is King, his 8-year-old Labrador retriever who annually assists Jim when working the icy waters to retrieve the crippled or sick birds. In the upper right picture O'Donahue looks over one of his most prized possessions. It is an original bird life painting by John J. Audubon, and was given to him by the late E. R. Driver, well known naturalist and conservationist who lived in the Medford area for more than 30 years. The painting is of three mottled owls, and was painted in 1830. The great detail found in the paintings portrays the genius type ability of the artist. In addition to the owl painting, Driver also gave O'Donahue another Audubon original painted in 1837. In the lower left photo Mrs. O'Donahue assures Corporal, the couple's pet skunk, that the cameraman means no harm and just wants him to smile . . . and there isn't a thing to worry about, Corporal's fuscous has been removed. Concerning the quality of skunks as pets, Mrs. O'Donahue isn't quite sure at this time concerning the pet qualities of such as Corporal. "He's a real nice little animal, but when he wants to he can get into more mischief than any six animals or people." In addition to other chores about the house, Corporal spends some of his time scratching the back of the O'Donahue's big retriever. The dog doesn't mind in the least until Corporal elects to bite instead of scratch.

(Photos by Kettler)

SINGER DIVORCED

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Singer Peggy King has divorced trumpet player Knobby Lee, testifying he drove a car so fast it made her nervous. "I finally had to go to a doctor because I was breaking out and I couldn't stand it," she told Superior Judge A. A. Scott yesterday.

BANDLEADER DIES

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP)—Isham Jones, 63, one of the nation's top bandleaders in the 1920s and 1930s and composer of some 200 songs including oldtime hits "It had to be you" and "I'll see you in my dreams," died Friday.

Lower Price Index Shown

That consumers are receiving the benefit of lower food price levels was indicated last week by the Consumer Price Index issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Attention to these lower prices was pointed out by George M. Mangan, division manager of the Safeway Stores throughout Oregon.


Mr. Mangan stated that the BLS index as released last week, discloses all food prices had declined 1.5 per cent by mid-August from their seasonal peak in July. Foods consumed in homes dropped 1.8 per cent at retail stores.

Furthermore this latest BLS index if 4.1 per cent lower than the all-time peak in retail food prices reached in August, 1952—four years ago. During those four years, incomes have continued to rise, with weekly earnings in manufacturing plants, for example, up about 19 per cent. This means the average factory worker's paycheck now will buy about 24 per cent more food than in August, 1952, Mr. Mangan said.

"Anyone in our business knows," he explained, "that the food industry's modern methods and its competitive self-service retailers constantly press against rising food prices and help to translate our increased wages and higher consumer incomes into higher standards of eating."

Reports of "higher" food prices often distort the real situation when normal seasonal fluctuations are not discounted or emphasized, Mr. Mangan pointed out.

What are your Qualifications for County Judge, Mr. Mack?



"I am a native of Klamath and grew up on farms in the Pine Grove and Spring Lake areas. Following my education at Klamath High School and Oregon State College, I worked three years on the editorial staff of our Herald-News then served two terms as Klamath County Assessor. Many of the policies put into effect in the assessor's office are not only still being used here but have been adopted state wide.

"The following four years I served in administrative capacity with the Kaiser Corporation and Weverhauser Timber Company. The past eleven years I have operated my own business. I have lived in Klamath County most of my life and know the problems in each area. My five years residence in the suburban area familiarized me with those problems.

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