

## New Aspen Valley chair pledges greater communication

Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary's new board chair wants to bring about greater communication with the local community.

Recently elected to the sanctuary's board of directors, Peter Jennings says he wants to use his new role to help the organization step-up public awareness of what it does. Based in Rosseau, the non-profit rehabilitates injured, orphaned or diseased wildlife, and is funded completely by donations.

"Going forward, I would like to see us launch an awareness campaign and heighten our public relations so that people are aware of what we do," he said. "Getting folks to make donations in the current economic climate is certainly a challenge."

Jennings replaces Ed Brown, who will remain on the sanctuary's board of directors. A marketing executive by trade, Jennings is also board chair for Hope Air, a co-chair for the Bracebridge Arts Council, and an advisor to the Muskoka Arts Festival. He is also a member of the Muskoka Lakes Chamber of Commerce.

Last year, the sanctuary was cleared of allegations of animal mistreatment by the Ministry of Natural Resources, but also lost founder Audrey Tournay, who retired. Jennings hopes a renewed focus on communication will bring the local community closer to the sanctuary's cause.

Recently, the sanctuary announced it had achieved an 87 per cent success rate in rehabilitating admitted animals in 2010 – an improvement of 20 per cent from previous numbers.

"My focus is on helping as many animals as we can," Jennings said. "As we achieve success, we want to share that success with the community so that they know we are a positive organization that is totally focused on rescuing rehabilitating animals."



**COMMUNICATION IS KEY.** Recently elected as chair of the Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary in Rosseau, Peter Jennings is hoping to bring about greater communication with the local community in his new role.