

Billie Zwolinski Wins Both a National and a Local Award

by Patricia Abreu

Billie Zwolinski is a remarkable woman who is a lifelong champion of animals. She is a quiet, modest, unassuming, hardworking, kindhearted person who has helped and loved animals her whole life. For the past four years, Billie has been an outstanding volunteer at the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley.

In June, Billie was chosen to receive the Doris Day Animal Foundation (DDAF) Kindred Spirit Award. In April, Billie was chosen to win a Crystal Bowl Award from the Junior League of San Jose (JLSJ). In November, Billie was given the WCSV Volunteer of the Year Award.

DDAF created the nationwide Animal Kingdom Kindred Spirit Award to acknowledge individuals who have shown extraordinary compassion toward animals and to inspire other people to do the same. The award consists of a letter of commendation from the executive director of DDAF, a certificate of recognition, and an Animal Champion pin. "The winners of the Kindred Spirit Award ... prove that one person really can help make this a kinder world" according to the web site: <http://www.ddaf.org/kindredspirit/>. Along with famous television host Bob Barker, Billie received one of the 27 Kindred Spirit Awards given out this year.



In April, the JLSJ held its 36th annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon at the San Jose Convention Center to celebrate the everyday successes of local volunteers. At this luncheon, the Junior League honored 110 outstanding volunteers in our community with Certificates of Appreciation and they honored 16 top volunteers with Crystal

Bowl Awards. Billie was chosen as one of the 16 Crystal Bowl Award Winners as a tribute to her accomplishments. Visit <http://www.jlsj.org/sanjose/index.jsp>.

In 2004, Billie logged in over 1200 volunteer hours working with the wildlife at the WCSV, giving medical care, cleaning cages, preparing food and feeding the animals, answering the telephones and counseling citizens on their animal concerns, transporting animals, and doing homecare for juvenile raccoons, squirrels, and ducks. With only three paid staff, the WCSV relies heavily on the time and talent of over 125 volunteers to keep the Center going year after year. At our annual volunteer party in November, Billie was celebrated as our Volunteer of the Year, and amid a round of applause, she was given a pair of sturdy work gloves.

When Billie came to WCSV, she wrote on her application that she believes that every baby deserves a chance to grow up. Billie truly embodies the saying attributed to Mother Teresa: "We can do no great things, only small things with great love." Billie spends thousands of hours doing small things with great love: she has spent the past four years of her life helping those who truly cannot help themselves—injured and orphaned wildlife.

For ten years prior to joining WCSV, Billie volunteered in a Pet Therapy program. Twice a month for ten years, Billie would visit the Veteran's Hospital in Palo Alto and the Children's Hospital at Stanford with her beloved, gentle animals: her dog, Punkin; her rabbit, Jeff; and her cat, Amelia. Together with her well-loved and well-trained animals, Billie brought comfort and hope to many sick and dying people through the Pet Therapy program.

Billie grew up traveling every year, from Canada to Central America, from Florida to California, and numerous states in between. Her first dog was Peppy and she has loved many cats and dogs since then. In 1963, she moved to California, and she currently shares her home with her partner and loving husband, Paul, their cats, bunnies, and dog. She is the mother of three sons, a former nurse, and now a full-



time volunteer wildlife rehabilitator. She is an exceptionally kindhearted, hardworking, gifted person who deserves this nationwide and local recognition for her compassion for animals.

WCSV is recruiting new board members

The WCSV board of directors is actively and strategically recruiting new board members to help us achieve our mission and long and short-term goals of serving Silicon Valley's wildlife and community. We are looking for talented, dedicated professionals who can make a strong commitment to working as a team and individually to help WCSV thrive and grow. Board members contribute anywhere from 5 to 10 hours per week on board work, attend a monthly board meeting, and head special committees and projects. We are currently seeking people with skills and experience in the following areas: fundraising, public relations, nonprofit organizations, business management, human resources, accounting, marketing, event planning and law. Interested individuals are asked to fill out an application form, submit a resume, and participate in an interview. We also have a probationary period in which candidates work on a project with a mentor and attend three board meetings. If you or someone you know would make an excellent candidate, please contact Patricia Abreu at patricia@wcsv.org or 408.323.9133.