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Fred Philips  
*Iowa State University*

Mary Ann Nieves  
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Susan Barrows  
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# Zew Club Organizes Fund Raising Drive

Fred Philips, BS, MS\*  
Susan Barrows, DVM\*\*  
Mary Ann Nieves, DVM\*\*\*

The Zoo, Exotic, and Wildlife (ZEW) Club of Iowa State University is organizing a fund raising drive for the Wildlife Care Clinic (WCC), located at the ISU Veterinary College. The WCC is a new clinic within the Veterinary Teaching Hospital dedicated to the care and rehabilitation of injured nondomestic animals. The ZEW Club is an organization composed of ISU students, primarily veterinary students, that volunteer service to the WCC. They perform the daily routine of feeding, treatments, and general care of the patients and facility. They also obtain food for the patients and materials from the Ames community for use in the facility.

The focus of the ZEW Club fund raising drive is the construction of a flight cage in which releaseable wild birds (and wild mammals) may exercise prior to their release back into the wild. The flight cage would also have a few quiet, stress-free, weathering rooms where animals could become re-acclimated to the seasons, and an exam room. This pre-release conditioning gives these animals a better chance of survival in the wild.

More room is required by the WCC to treat nondomestic animals optimally. Currently the WCC is allotted a single, small room that can hold six cages and shares a door with a canine isolation room. In past years, there have been as many as 13 cases in at one time with an average of six. The noise associated with the canine isolation room is very stressful on wild animal patients.

At the present time, exercising wild birds involves flying them in a long hallway at the veterinary school or placing them on a tether and running alongside out-of-doors. Either method is highly stressful on both the birds and their handlers. While exercising these birds in the hallway, there have been several near misses between the birds and people walking into the hall unaware of what was going on. Alternative locations have been considered. Shorter hallways are easier to secure, but do not allow for sustained flight. Attempts to modify stalls in the barns have met with limited success. The stalls are just not large enough for extended flight and there are too many escape routes and pipes to cover.

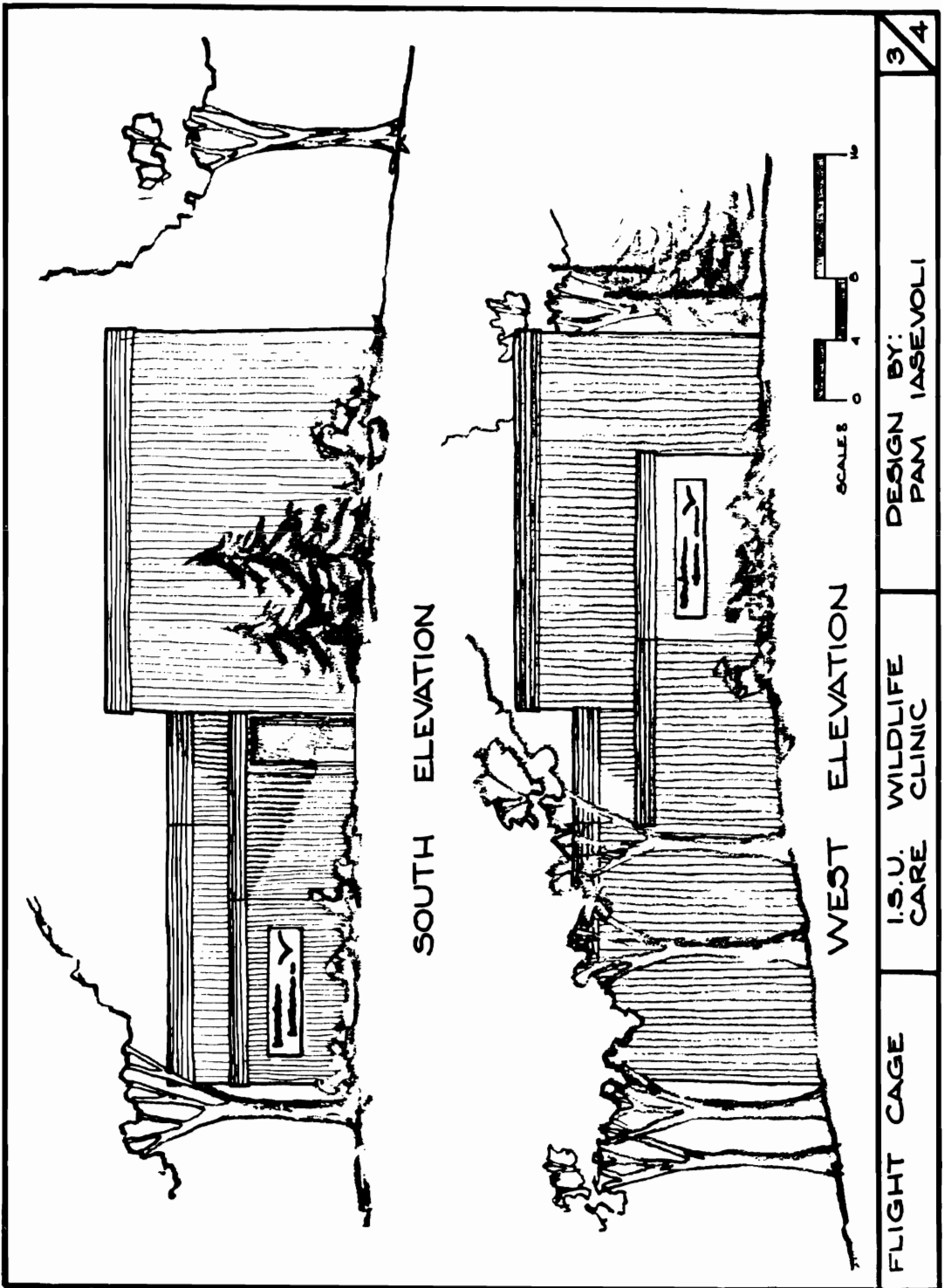
A flight cage would alleviate these problems and allow for better re-conditioning of wild animals. Handling by and interaction with humans could be reduced to a minimum by turning the animals loose in the flight cage as soon as medically possible. The animals would be returned to the wild more quickly, less stressed, and in better condition.

Financial support of the WCC is important. Thus far the major support for the WCC has come from the veterinary students themselves. Last year SCAVMA voted to donate \$2500 to the WCC to demonstrate the students' support of the WCC. Support from Iowa's non-game programs is limited to the care and treatment of endangered and threatened species. In some cases of non-endangered species, concerned people have volunteered to pay for the cost of some treatments. In many cases there is no one to pay. This is a financial burden on the clinics that the members of the ZEW Club work hard at keeping to a minimum. The case load is increasing as the word of the existence of the WCC spreads. During the past year alone, over 100 cases were treated at the WCC. These included five Bald eagles and one Golden eagle as well as several other endangered or threatened species. The remain-

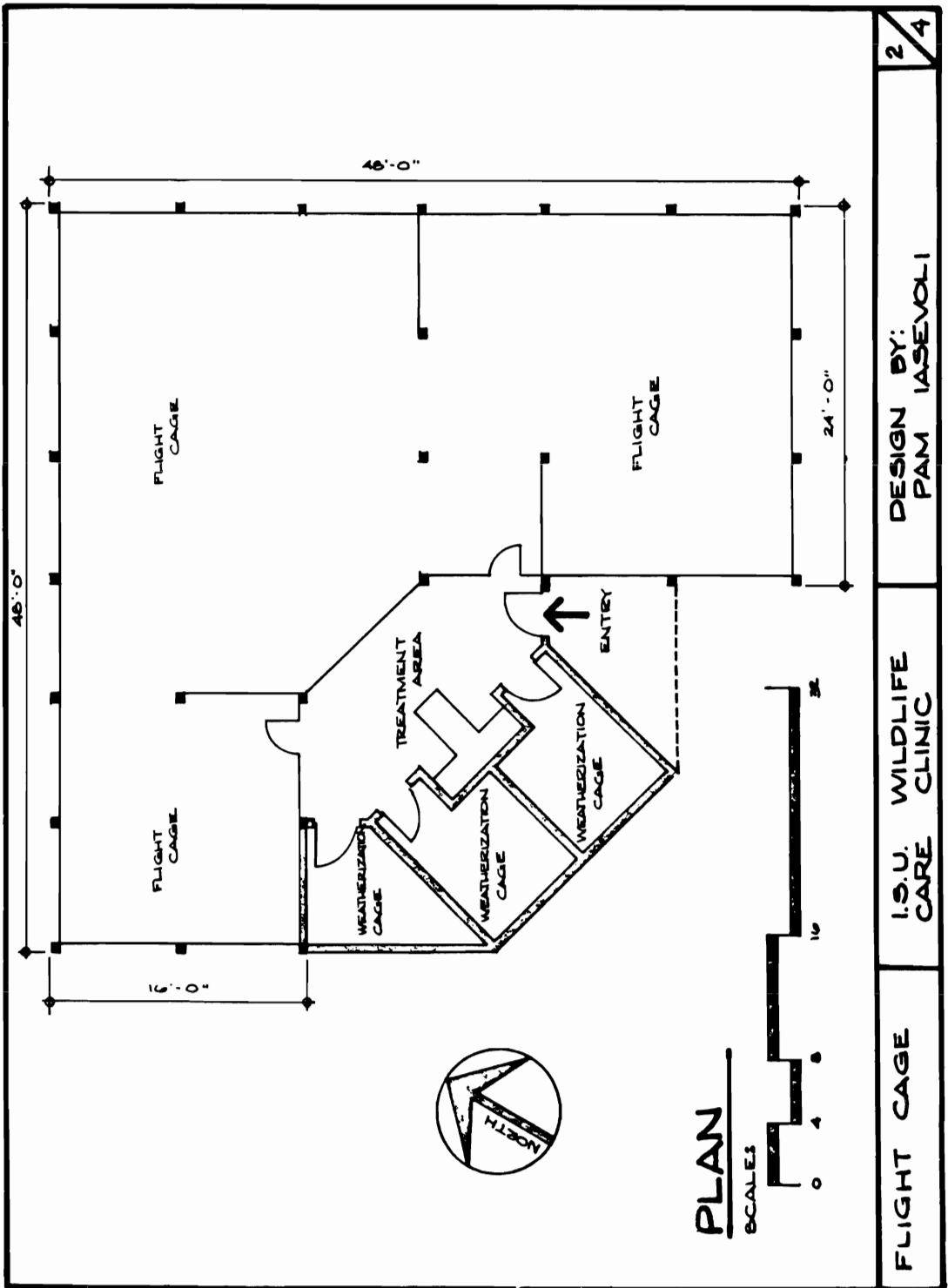
\*Mr. Philips is a third-year student in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University. He is an active member of the ZEW Club.

\*\*Dr. Barrows is an adjunct instructor with half-time appointments to Laboratory Animal Resources and Veterinary Clinical Sciences.

\*\*\*Dr. Nieves is an adjunct instructor and resident in Veterinary Clinical Sciences.



Preliminary drawings of the front view of flight cage. The exterior cage walls will be vertical wood stripping set one inch apart.



Preliminary floor plan of flight cage.

Note: Final plans have not yet been completed.

ing cases were non-endangered wild animals. Three of the Bald eagles, and approximately 45 percent of WCC's non-endangered patients have been released back into the wild.

There are several reasons for treating non-endangered species. It is good practice for the treatment of endangered species; normal physiological values for wild animals in captivity can be studied; and the potential for research projects exists. Finally, species common today may be threatened tomorrow. The experience gained now may make the difference in the future. A project involving toxicological screening of raptors is currently underway in the Pathology Department. They hope to determine the extent of environmental contaminants in Iowa's wildlife. Raptors make the perfect random sampler of the environment, because they are at the top of the food chain.

The benefits derived from the WCC for wildlife, ISU, the Ames community, and the state of Iowa are relatively tangible. First, injured wildlife gets a second chance at life. Second, the exposure of veterinary students to the proper handling and care of wild animals is an invaluable part of their education. Their knowledge reflects back on their training at ISU. Third, this educational experience is shared with the surrounding communities through slide shows, exhibits, and releases coordinated by the faculty, students, and staff of the veterinary college. The communities derive an enhanced understanding and awareness of wildlife and the environment. Finally, the WCC

generates a significant amount of positive publicity for Ames, ISU, and the state of Iowa in general.

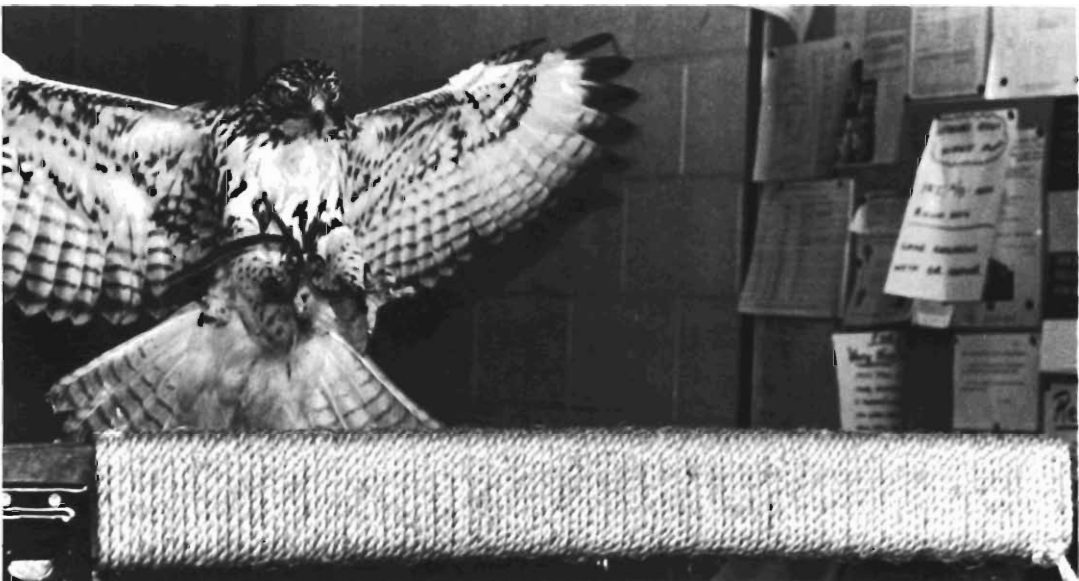
How can you help? In addition to private donations, you, your business, or your organization can organize local fund drives for the WCC flight cage. Fundraising possibilities are endless, and your practice or organization will benefit from the publicity.

If you would like further information concerning the WCC flight cage fund raising drive, please contact Fred Philips at the address given below. Private tax-deductible donations and proceeds from fund raising activities may be sent to the ISU Veterinary Medicine Endowment Fund in the name of the WCC Flight Cage. Please remember that with the recent state budget cuts against higher education, Veterinary Clinical Services in general need your support to continue providing quality care for the state of Iowa.

**ISU Veterinary Medicine Endowment Fund**  
(Wildlife Care Clinic Flight Cage)  
c/o Dr. Frank K. Ramsey, National Director  
Veterinary Medicine Endowment Fund  
College of Veterinary Medicine  
Iowa State University  
Ames, IA. 50011

**ZEW Club Flight Cage Committee**  
c/o Fred Philips, Class of '89  
151-H University Village  
Ames, IA. 50010

BMC



Pre-release flight training of a Red-Tail hawk in long basement hallway of the Veterinary College.