

Vets heal owl, return her to wild

BY MICHAEL FIACCO

Thursday, February 18, 2010 1:11 PM EST

The Alley Pond Environmental Center has an extra pair of wings in its skies, thanks to the caring work provided by one Queens- and Nassau- based veterinary center.

An adult female screech owl was found by police officers on Friday, January 22, lying on the street on Union Turnpike. They immediately brought her in to the Central Veterinary Associates' (CVA) 24-hour hospital in Valley Stream. She was thought to have been hit by a car on the turnpike.



Photo Courtesy Central Veterinary Associates
Dr. John Charos and Dr. Karina Salvo of the Central Veterinary Associates release "Athena," an owl they rehabbed, at the Alley Pond Environmental Center.

[Print Page](#)

Dr. John Charos, who works for the CVA, which has an office on Bell Boulevard in Bayside as well as others throughout the borough, admitted the bird for care and monitored her rehabilitation. Dr. Karina Salvo looked after the daily treatment of the bird, as well as the CVA's various other veterinarians.

"The owl was brought in a state of shock with head trauma," said Charos. "Its right eye was closed and there was swelling to the right side of its head."

Charos immediately treated the owl for shock. He and Salvo then kept the bird on injectable antibiotics to help heal her wounds, and had her tube fed three to four times a day until her soft tissue trauma had healed and she was able to eat on her own.

During her stay, they also gave her a name - Athena.

Fully healed and after a long goodbye, Athena was released in the Alley Pond Environmental Center, near where she was found, on the morning of Tuesday, February 9. Charos is an active board member with the environmental center, which he called "a little known gem of our city parks system," and arranged for the release, which took place in front of five classes of kindergarten students.

Alley Pond Environmental Center is located in Douglaston, and accounts for 150 acres of protected woodland with various streams and ponds. It also operates an aquarium and an education center, where students from all over the borough learn about animal care and environmental conservation.

The environmental center and Central Veterinary Associates have a relationship which extends far back, as the veterinarians there have cared for the education department's pets free of cost for over 20 years, said Charos.

According to Charos, the environmental center will be an area in which Athena can thrive, with an ample supply of food. He also said that there are numerous other owls currently living at the environmental

center, as well as throughout the borough, for the newly healed bird to join.

Upon release, Athena flew about 100 feet and settled on a high tree branch, before taking off again and soaring across Alley Pond's wetlands, according to Charos.

"I suspect that this owl will do very well back in the wild," he said.

The Queens Courier

[x] Close Window