

realized none was coming.”

Shocked that no outlet existed to help nondomestic animals, Frati, 50, decided to earn her license as a wildlife rehabilitator. By 1995 she was caring for critters at the Sag Harbor, N.Y., home she shares with husband Augie. “I had swans, gulls and a loon in my bathtub,” says Frati, who also held down a secretarial job. “I had baby birds in my desk drawer. I’d feed them every half hour.”

Exhausted by her dual duties and frustrated by the calls about injured animals she’d miss while she was at work, Frati quit her day job in 1997 and three years later opened the Wildlife Rescue Center of the Hamptons. Now she and her staff of six (and 45 volunteers) take calls 24-7 and will go out any time of day or night to help everything from a sick swan sleeping in the middle of the road to deer hit by cars. “I always wear boots because I never know if I’m going to be running in a field somewhere,” says Frati, who goes out at least once a night during the busiest months. “Yesterday I chased down a goose with a broken wing—man, could he run!”

In the Rescue Center’s intensive care unit, Frati dotes on a diamond-back terrapin turtle who was discarded in a Dumpster after a pet store closed down, a possum whose leg was amputated after it got caught in a lawn chair, and a Canadian goose shot—and then abandoned—by a hunter.

“Encounters with humans account for just about all of their problems,” says Frati of her patients. With her staff and donations, she’s able to treat more than 1,000 animals a year, half of which are eventually able to return to the wild, which is Frati’s ultimate goal. Among her most rewarding moments? Releasing a robin she helped heal after it had hit a car’s windshield. “When he flew, I got teary-eyed,” she says. “And he just started singing.”



“It became my mission that these animals would leave the earth knowing they were loved,” says Moyer (with four of her charges).

FINDING HOMES FOR PETS WHOSE OWNERS ARE DYING

KELLY MOYER, GURNEE, ILL.

When Kelly Moyer’s father realized he wasn’t going to survive his second bout with cancer, he couldn’t relax until he knew his cat Garfield would be okay even after he was gone. “Once we found Garfield a home,” says Moyer, whose rigorous work schedule prevented her from taking him in, “my father was so relieved.”

Wanting to provide that sense of calm to other dying pet lovers, Moyer, 48, left her

job as a ConAgra food saleswoman in 2002 and founded Tails of Hope. “A lot of these folks are worried their animals will end up in a shelter or euthanized,” says Moyer. “Tails of Hope guarantees they’ll end up in a good home.” Since 2002, Moyer and her volunteers—who often take in pets until prospective adopters are found and screened—have placed 1,200 animals with new caregivers.

For Moyer, her new line of work (which is supported entirely by charitable donations) is rewarding but can be emotionally draining. She often has to wait outside a room while dying pet owners say a final goodbye to their companions. “It can break your heart,” says Moyer. “But it feels good to know you’re taking a sad situation and making it better.”