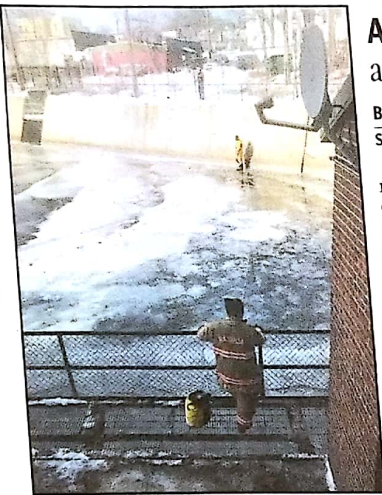


Nashua Fire Rescue saves goose stranded on ice

Officials strategize to rescue Bruce, a goose who was stranded on the Nashua River for almost a week.

Courtesy photo



Aid | Injured bird stuck on ice for almost a week inspires daring rescue.

By HANNAH LaCLAIRE
Staff Writer

NASHUA – After an almost hour-long “wild goose chase,” Bruce the goose, the injured bird who was stuck on the ice in the Nashua River outside Margarita’s Mexican Restaurant for almost a week, has been rescued.

Margarita’s assistant general manager Chris Connolly said an “army of people” arrived to help rescue the now famous Bruce, including the crew of Nashua Fire Rescue Ladder 1. The firefighters

arrived with their diving gear, and were accompanied by police personnel and NPD’s Animal Control officer.

Finally, after “chasing him around” for awhile, the bird was cornered and rescued.

“This is not something we normally do,” said Brian Rhodes, NFR assistant chief. “Wild animals are usually not (part of) our jobs, but we had to step up.”

Due to the attention that Bruce was receiving, in part from Margarita’s staff posting about him all

over social media, several people were going down to the water’s edge to try to lure him out themselves, Rhodes said, which presented a safety concern.

So they felt there was no other choice than to try to get Bruce – who Rhodes called “stubborn” – out of the water.

“All in all it worked out well,” he said.

NFR handed the bird, who had a large chunk of ice stuck to his wing, over to Animal Control personnel, who in turn transported him to Critter Control in Merrimack.

Jesse Fraser, a Critter Control transporter, drove Bruce to Wings of the Dawn Wildlife Rehabilita-

tion Center and Bird Sanctuary in Henniker.

The wing was clearly broken, he said, and would need to be amputated.

Birds’ bones are hollow, Fraser said, and it only takes a few hours after a break before the bone essentially starts to die. Bruce’s wing, he surmised, had been broken for over a week, and could have resulted from the ice build up weighing it down.

Maria Colby, director of Wings of the Dawn, said Bruce, who may be male or female, was scheduled to have his wing amputated either Thursday or today at Weare Animal Hospital.

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They will only remove what is absolutely necessary, she said, and will save what parts of the wing she can.

His (or her) recovery period will be six to eight weeks with antibiotics and frequent bandage changes, but once recovered, Bruce will join Colby's other geese to live out his days.

"I really appreciate the effort that went out for this goose," she said.

As for Bruce, he or she seemed pretty thankful to be rescued, too, and Colby said, the first thing he did when he got to the sanctuary was to start "chowing down right away."

No word on whether or not he'll be eating more tortilla chips and hamburger buns in the future, but he has likely had enough for quite some time.

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