



Altamont Enterprise

New officers of Guilderland Welcome Wagon, installed June 12 at Highland Farms Restaurant, are from left: Kim Gurney, secretary; Dena Markey, first vice president; Janet Grigsby, president; Donna Amato, second vice president; and Lauri Miller, treasurer.

Welcome Wagon Installs Officers

The Welcome Wagon Club of Guilderland installed its newly elected officers at Highland Farms Restaurant June 12. Officers serving for the 1986-87 term are Janet Grigsby, president; Dena Markey, first vice president; Donna Amato, second vice president; Kim Gurney, secretary; and Lauri Miller, treasurer.

The club, now in its 18th year, is primarily a service organization which provides newcomers an opportunity to meet one another and become involved in their community. Last year the club's members gave 300 hours in community service and raised \$1200 for scholarships and donations to charitable organizations.

Also serving on the board of directors are Sandra Torriani, community service; Mary Jo Conover and Pat Gifford, membership and newcomers; and Nan Lynch, ways and means.

Nursing Graduate

Jennifer Sparano was one of 509 women who received bachelor of arts degrees at May 25 commencement exercises at Mount Holyoke College.

Jennifer, a French studies major, is a Sarah Williston scholar. The daughter of Peter and Merry Sparano of Williamsburg Drive, Guilderland, she also received the French government book prize.

Audubon Honors Becker For Service To Wildlife

By BRYCE BUTLER

In the 13 years Dr. Edward I. Becker has practiced at The Animal Hospital people have brought him — as well as cats and dogs — chipmunks, squirrels, birds caught by cats and hit by cars. He has worked on these wild animals for free, building up experience and a reputation for wild animal care.

This reputation has gotten Becker an unpaid position as veterinary consultant for the State Department of Environmental Conservation and veterinarian for the state's endangered species program.

Tonight the Mohawk-Hudson Chapter of the National Audubon Society will recognize Becker's work with unowned animals by presenting him its conservationist of the year award. The ceremony will be held at 8 p.m., at the Five Rivers Center, Game Farm Road, Delmar.

Most Wounded
Most of Becker's wild animals are wounded, and the greatest number of them have been shot. Some have run afoul of wires, or



Altamont Enterprise — Bryce Butler

Edward Becker, DVM, examines a female kestrel (sparrow hawk) with a broken wing. Sally Vandenburg, who holds the bird, is a licensed technician employed by Becker who spends much of her time caring for injured wild animals.

been hit by cars. A few have been injured in traps.

This time of year, Becker said, many young animals are inexperienced and vulnerable to accidents. A male kestrel he was treating this week, a starving bird with unknown problems, seemed to be young.

Animals whose only problem is being young are farmed out to volunteers who raise them.

Becker exposes his charges to a minimum of human contact. People who want to visit the animals they placed in his care are discouraged. "The worst thing we can do is to make them trust people," Becker said. Animals are fed when possible so they don't see who is feeding them.

This method is normally used by the endangered species program Becker serves; the hawks and eagles to be released in the wild must learn to catch their own food, and not expect it from human hands.

Work with these magnificent predators is the highlight of Becker's wildlife practice. It is possible to ask what is the point of spending time fixing up a robin

when its parents will raise another brood of five the same summer.

Becker gets satisfaction from helping animals, however. And practice on robins and sparrows has taught him the skills he needed to work on the peregrines and eagles the state is trying to restore to New York's skies.

Satisfaction
EnCon buys drugs for the valuable animals Becker treats from the endangered species program. The state has bred these birds or brought them from Alaska, in either case at great expense. The state has also built a flying cage for his animal hospital.

But the time, the heated, insulated quarters and the bird cages are his donation. Becker gives his own time and nearly 40 hours a week split between two technicians, Sally Vandenburg and Nancy O'Donnell.

"I perform a service to people," Becker said. "If an eight-year-old comes up with a hurt chipmunk, I provide an alternative to killing it or letting it suffer.

"I'm realistic," he said. "I'm also a busy practicing veterinarian."
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Civic Theater Announces Season

Albany Civic Theater presents music, comedy and a look into the inter-workings of friendship and familiar relationships in its 1986-87 season.

The season opener is "Doonesbury" a musical based on the comic strip of Pulitzer Prize winner Garry Trudeau, directed by Doug de Lisle. In January, Eleanor Koblenz directs Marsha Norman's two-character study of a young

woman's quest for a solution to her unfulfilling life, "Night, Mother." March brings John Mountford's direction of "The Dresser" by Ronald Harwood, a play dealing with the friendships and tensions in World War II British acting troupe. The season concludes with a recent Broadway or Off-Broadway comedy hit directed by Joan Fisher. For subscription information, please call the theater at 462-1297.

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