

Stella was the inspiration for this illustration by Calvin Laituri and is used with his permission. https://www.calvinlaituri.com/

For more than 40 years, 87-year-old Fred Homer of Newfane has rehabilitated injured birds, attempting to save more than 4,000. Inspired by a childhood experience when he was prevented from helping an injured bird, the former teacher became a licensed bird rehabilitator. He and his wife, Debbie, share their Williamsville home with birds such as Stella, a partially blind Barred owl, while others, including Jasper the crow, are cared for until they can be released. Homer views his work—and even the coffin he built as a daily reminder of mortality—as motivation to appreciate life and make each day meaningful.