

Owl found near S. Tahoe has new home in Carmichael nature center

By Hudson Sangree, Sacramento Bee

Folks at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center introduced their new great horned owl, Echo, to the public Saturday, in a presentation that delighted adults and children.

The event had a special meaning for the center's staff, who grieved in November 2010 when their beloved great horned owl and star attraction, Virginia, died after an extraordinarily long life of more than 40 years.

That was just months after the nonprofit American River Natural History Association took over the center from fiscally troubled Sacramento County in July 2010. Naturalist Shawna Protze led Saturday's nature camp program. She said introducing Echo, who is about 9 months old, marked a new beginning for the popular nature center in Carmichael.

"Having Echo is kind of like a rebirth," Protze said. "It's a new young energy for our new nonprofit."

"Unlike Virginia, Echo won't be on regular display in the lobby near the center's other raptors – a kestrel and a Northern saw-whet owl. Virginia had only one wing and could stand the confines of her glass enclosure, Protze said. Echo needs more room, but she will be a regular at events like Saturday's program.

The owl was found by a volunteer near South Lake Tahoe after she cried out in the night and took food from the person. It showed she had likely been raised by a human and had been released or escaped. She had imprinted on people as a food

source and didn't know how to hunt.

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