



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

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Rescued Harris hawk returned to his Gold Canyon neighborhood

By Dana Trumbull

On Thursday, April 12, Dr. Andy Baldwin and a gathering of family and friends released a rescued Harris hawk back into his home environment.

Andy and Jana Baldwin and their Gold Canyon friends love their Harris hawks. The raptors live in a familial group, nesting in the tops of trees in their human neighbors' yards, hunting in the open desert fields that interweave with the streets of the

The human and avian residents have lived in close proximity for several years, each growing accustomed to the habits of the others. So when Andy spotted one of the hawks huddled behind a water jug on a neighbor's porch, he knew something was wrong.

Andy, a biologist and chair of the Life Science Department at Mesa Community College, took the injured bird to [Liberty Wildlife](#), where an examination revealed some fierce and potentially lethal puncture wounds. “The most likely scenario,” explained Baldwin, “is that he was defending the territory from an intruding bird – or he was an intruding bird, driven out by ‘our’ hawks. Harris hawks are very territorial.”

The rescued hawk was treated at Liberty Wildlife, where he remained for about three weeks, healing and regaining strength. On Thursday, April 12, Andy picked him up and brought him back to the ‘hood for release.

“Maybe we’re reading too much into this,” Jana mused, “but it seems like the remaining hawks have missed him. They’ve just been behaving differently. We want to think that we rescued one of the hawks from our group; but, if not – if he was the intruder, we hope he’s smart enough to leave the territory quickly!”

Friends and neighbors gathered for a convivial reception, happy to welcome the hawk home and watch his release.

As Andy lifted him from the carrying case, the Harris hawk took a few minutes to orient himself to his surroundings, eyeing his benefactors as if evaluating this new twist in their relationship; then he powered across the open field, buoyed by the sound of cheers and good wishes. Neighbors helping neighbors.

Harris hawks live in familial groups of up to nine birds and are the only raptors known to hunt cooperatively, sharing their kills.



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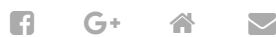
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