



The Paul A. & Veronica H. Gross  
**WILDLIFE CENTER**  
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA  
Educate Rescue Rehabilitate Release



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**Wildlife Center of Southwest Florida awarded a \$14,269 grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County to fund the wildlife hospital's anesthesia system.**

*The grant received will be used to purchase a Drager Fabius GS electronically controlled anesthesia system.*

**Venice, Florida** – The Paul A. and Veronica H. Gross Wildlife Center of Southwest Florida is in the midst of a major expansion of its wildlife hospital and rehabilitation center. The multi-phased expansion includes renovation of the center's existing hospital and triage building. Part of this renovation includes the replacement of some existing systems with more medically advanced systems that meet the latest National Wildlife Federation standards.

The Community Foundation of Sarasota County's Animal Welfare Grant has awarded the Wildlife Center of Southwest Florida with funds to secure a new anesthesia system. This new system will allow the application of anesthesia to wildlife patients both for examination and during treatment. The Center treats over 6,000 sick, injured, and orphaned wild animals each year and more than 50% of these patients require anesthesia.

The addition of this system alone will minimize stress to the animal without causing it further injury. The anesthesia machine will also protect the Center's rehabilitation specialists from injury from the animals. The Center treats all species of wildlife from large mammals like bobcats, adult deer, and coyotes, to large birds like eagles, pelicans, and vultures, as well as large reptiles. As you can imagine, handling a large animal that is sick or injured can be very dangerous. The Drager Fabius machine protects both the animal and the rehabilitator.

The drastic decline in our native wildlife population is a major cause for concern. The mission of the wildlife center is to protect and preserve Southwest Florida's native wildlife through educational outreach and to rescue and rehabilitate sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife and return them to their natural habitat when healed. With our area's rapid development, Florida's wildlife is experiencing human encroachment at an unsustainable rate. Every animal the center can save is one more chance at repopulating a local ecosystem.

With the larger influx of patients, the center's expansion is imperative. The upgrading of medical equipment in the center's hospital building will improve the treatment of every animal that comes into the center. Reducing their overall stress levels, helping them to recuperate better and faster.

The center's Executive Director, Pamela DeFouw shared "We are excited about all the changes and upgrades happening. All the upcoming improvements have been designed with each animal's welfare and survival in mind."

Thanks to the grant, with funding provided by the Martha Leiter and Nancy Streetman Fund I, the center is ready to move into the future of wildlife rehabilitation.

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### **About the Wildlife Center of Southwest Florida**

Wildlife Center of Southwest Florida, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, extends care to native wildlife including reptiles, mammals, and birds but excluding marine animals. They have various programs to help educate the community about the importance of wildlife to the environment and ecosystems and how humans can successfully co-exist. For more information about the Wildlife Center of Southwest Florida, visit [wildlifeswfl.org](http://wildlifeswfl.org).

### **About the Community Foundation of Sarasota County**

The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is a public charity founded in 1979 by the Southwest Florida Estate Planning Council as a resource for caring individuals and the causes they support, enabling them to make a charitable impact on the community. With assets of \$489 million in more than 1,580 charitable funds, the Community Foundation awarded grants and scholarships totaling \$40 million dollars last year in the areas of education, the arts, health and human services, civic engagement, animal welfare, and the environment. Since its founding, the Community Foundation has been able to grant more than \$435.8 million to area nonprofit organizations in our community thanks to the generosity of charitable individuals, families, and businesses. For more information, visit [www.CFSarasota.org](http://www.CFSarasota.org) or call (941) 955-3000.