



Harlan Hall and a fawn that will be released as soon as it is able to care for itself



Bear cub in custody of the Wildlife Resources Commission. (photos by Jim Stratford)

They're Not Pets

A Caswell County refuge where displaced animals are rehabilitated for return to the wild.

By CONRAD PAYSOUR

Harlan Hall held the three-week-old fawn in his arms as if it were a baby, caressing it gently. The fawn, with its big brown eyes and white spots on its tan body, looked like Walt Disney's Bambi.

"People think they are cute," Hall said. "And they are."

And that, he added, is the problem — A few minutes later, Hall carefully put the baby deer in a large "holding pen," a large fenced-in area on the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission's Caswell County Game Lands near Yanceyville.

The commission has set aside about 40 acres of the 14,000-acre game lands for the rehabilitation of displaced and injured and wounded animals, especially deer and bear. The 40-acre rehabilitation facility is surrounded by a 3,000-acre sanctuary in which hunting and trespassing are strictly prohibited. The rehabilitation facility itself is closed to the public.

"It's important that the animals have as little contact with humans as possible until they can be rehabilitated," said Hall, the Wildlife Commission's supervising biologist for the 11-county Piedmont district which includes Caswell County.

One person feeds and cares for the animals at the facility and that is the only regular human contact the animals have.

Greensboro Bear

A 200-pound bear captured after wandering into downtown Greensboro recently was held in the facility until it could be taken to eastern North Carolina and released into the wild.

Hall, a tall and clean-cut young man with a tanned outdoors look, said the refuge usually gets about 50 deer and several bear each year. The animals are brought to the facility from all over North Carolina.

Hall pointed to two six-month-old bear cubs in a compound near the deer holding pen.

"I believe those were found by loggers in eastern North Carolina," Hall said.

The bears will live at the Caswell facility until they are old enough to take care of themselves and then they will be released into the wilds. Like the fawn Hall held, the bears were appealing and seemed to enjoy their temporary home. They climbed up the fence and reached out their paws to touch a photographer's camera.

Illegal "Pets"

But Wildlife Commission Captain Sterling Baker and other wildlife officials stressed that keeping wild animals as pets can be harmful to the animals and also pose a threat to humans. In fact, many of the animals that are brought to the Caswell rehabilitation facility are animals that were once pets.

"I couldn't count the number of times we have received calls from people who have asked us to come get their 'pet' deer," Baker said. "They say, 'We can't understand it. We've raised it from just a little baby, and now it is trying to kill us.'"

Baker said male deer especially can turn vicious during their first mating season.

Hall agreed.

"It almost always ends up badly when a person tries to keep a deer or other wild animal as a pet," he said.

Hall and Baker noted that it is illegal to keep wild animals as pets except in a few limited circumstances.

Rehabilitation

Some of the deer and bears turned over to the Wildlife Commission are already so dependent on humans that they can never be returned to the wilds. They are turned over to approved zoos and other educational institutions.

But Hall said he thought the three-week-old fawn he was holding was still young enough to be rehabilitated.

"She came from a family that picked her up in Cabarrus County," he said, still stroking the fawn's neck. "She even slept in bed with them. But then they decided she was too much to care for."

Hall said some deer at the refuge

(Continued on page 39)

FRIENDLY ENEMY

(Continued from page 12)

end of the war a step toward reconciliation between our two countries had already begun.

Through all the horror of war, somehow the people maintained that quality which separates them from the uncivilized. What could explain the bonds which were forged in this one camp in one isolated spot in the world? A place where a local farmer permitted the German Captain to pick up his little girl and hold her for a moment imagining that she was his own little girl back home in Germany? A place where the local dairyman provided the extra quart of milk each day for the prisoners to supplement their daily ration so that their health would be maintained? How can one explain the desire of prisoners to return to the site of their incarceration, not only to visit but to live permanently? One can only wonder at these things, and thank God that in spite of our many differences, a common bond binds mankind one to another.

THEY'RE NOT PETS

(From page 17)

have been picked up by farmers and other people who assume the animals have been abandoned by their mothers.

"People mistakenly think they are doing the animals a good turn," Hall said. "But most of the time, the mother is just out foraging. We try to educate the public not to pick them up unless they know the mother is dead."

Sometimes, farmers using combines and other farm equipment uncover fawns. Terry Shankle, Wildlife Commission educational specialist, said the commission would like to educate farmers to carry the fawns to the side of the fields. Most of the time, he said, the fawns' mothers will come to them.

Some of the deer brought to the wildlife officials have been injured by farm equipment.

"Fawns have been taught by their mothers to lie real still," Shankle said. "That's why they don't get out of the way of the equipment and farmers don't see them until it's too late to stop."

The Caswell County refuge is not equipped to treat injured animals. Those that need treatment are taken to veterinarians until they are well enough to be brought to the facility.

Some of the animals have been confiscated from owners who have been holding them illegally.

A few of the animals have been intentionally mistreated. Several years

ago, the Wildlife Commission confiscated a bear from a western North Carolina man who had removed its teeth and was promoting fights between it and dogs.

The story had about as happy an ending as is possible under those circumstances. The bear was turned over to animal lovers who are licensed to care for abused animals.

ANSWERS TO "BIG" QUIZ

(Continued from page 8)

1. Big Ben — the great bell (not the clock itself) in the Parliament clock in the tower of London. 2. Big Dipper. 3. Mr. Big — the villain. 4. Big Ten. 5. "Big Mac Attack" — ad campaign by McDonald's — sudden craving for a hamburger. 6. "Big Bad John". 7. Big house. 8. Big Horn Sheep. 9. Big Top. 10. Big D (Dallas). 11. Big Brother — George Orwell's novel, "Nineteen Eighty-Four". 12. "Big sea water . . ." in "The Song of Hiawatha" by Longfellow. 13. Big stick (Teddy Roosevelt). 14. ". . . big shoulders" — Sandburg's poem about Chicago. 15. "The Big Sleep". 16. Big George the cartoon character. 17. Big Bertha — huge cannon used to attack Paris. 18. Big Mabel of song. 19. "Big Mud-

dy". 20. "Big Rock Candy Mountain" song. 21. Big Apple. 22. "So Big". 23. Big Foot. 24. Big Bang. 25. "Big Daddy" 26. "Big Red".

TOPSAIL ISLAND

Century 21

ACTION, INC.

SALES - RENTALS - CONSTRUCTION

Rental brochure

Call: (919) 328-2511

Write: Box 566, Surf City, N.C. 28445

GOULD'S CHARTER BOATS

For the Best in Fishing



MATTIE G. II

Licensed to 23

CAPT LEROY

Twin Diesel — Radio Loran — Fish Finder

HARRIET L.

CAPT TERRELL

Twin diesel — Radio Loran — Fish Finder

Box 174, Morehead City, N.C. 28557
Phones (919) 726-3821 or 726-4080



Don't Miss

A Unique Dining Experience at

Capt. Charlie's

Seafood Paradise

where cooking is an ART. . . .

. . . . and EATING is a PLEASURE

FINE TABLE WINES

DOMESTIC & IMPORTED BEERS

MIXED BEVERAGES

Summer Hours: 5:30-Til 10:00

Each Evening

Hwy. 24 and Front Street
SWANSBORO, N.C.

919/326-4303