

Antler Ridge Wildlife Sanctuary

The Rescuer

SAVING WILDLIFE, PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT, ENRICHING LIVES

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The Official Newsletter of Antler Ridge Wildlife Sanctuary

Winter 2009

ANTLER RIDGE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Antler Ridge Farm was purchased by Jim and Kelly Simonetti in 2000. Because the 120-acre farm is protected under the farmland preservation program of New Jersey, it can never be developed. Over the years, some of the land has been restored to the original farming fields, while the rest is being maintained as a wildlife sanctuary.

Under the guidance and direction of several agencies such as The NJ Audubon Society, Tree Farm Stewardship, and Ridge and Valley Conservation, these ongoing efforts will help maintain and continue to nurture the flora and fauna native to New Jersey. The loss of habitat in our State has put a tremendous strain on the wildlife populations, and forced the animals to live in conditions to which they are unable to adapt.

Established a year after the farm, The Antler Ridge Wildlife Sanctuary is licensed by the State of New Jersey to care for all small mammals that include, but is not limited to, fawn, raccoons, skunks, squirrels, woodchucks, rabbits and opossums.

We are a 501©3 non-profit organization supported exclusively by public donations and grants. Our staff of experienced volunteers provides immediate care for animals 7 days a week, all year round.

Did you know it costs as much as \$75.00 per animal per month to care for them?

With over 200 animals a year received at Antler Ridge Animal Sanctuary, expenses can really add up. And our animals get only the very best of care. The veterinary care services provided are at the same quality level as you would give your own personal pets.

So..Imagine the bill if you had to visit your vet EVERY WEEK with an animal that was hit by a car, or attacked by another animal. We count on the compassion and generous services of the local veterinarians and veterinary hospitals that support us... AND on donations from the public to help us continue in our quest for excellent ongoing care.

Every animal we treat is considered a patient until its release. Sanctuary Founder and Director Kelly Simonetti operates the sanctuary like a healthcare facility, with Admission, Diagnosis, Treatment Plan, Rehabilitation then Discharge as standard procedure.

Every step of the process is considered critical to the goal of discharge or release; however human safety comes first, and every effort is made to prevent imprinting to humans to ensure a successful release.

OVER THE HEDGE**"In Rehab" at Antler Ridge**

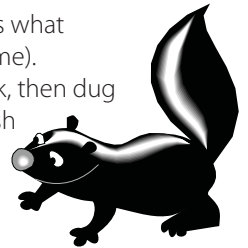
I am sure many of you have seen the movie, "Over the Hedge", by DreamWorks. It's about a group of animals that have lost their habitat due to the development of our natural lands, and who now must adapt to city life.

We have decided to continue on with the story and tell it from the animal's point of view, taking the city animals back to the country.

Here is our first episode:

Hello everyone! My name is Oreo (don't laugh - that's what happens when you allow a 13-year-old girl to name me).

I was recently plowed into a snow bank by a BIG truck, then dug out 10 hours later and taken to some supposedly posh animal sanctuary, Antler Ridge. I was plowed under because my incredible skills and reflexes were a little off due to a tough night being chewed on by a BIG, evil creature with LARGE teeth.



I am writing to tell you the story of my stay so far at Antler Ridge. At the risk of sounding like I am ungrateful, I must say that it has NOT been 5-star rated. First of all, that woman with the long ponytail insisted that I must stay in the garage! Can you imagine?! The garage! There is another skunk already there - some Chico dude. He has a double-decker condo, much larger than mine (how does he rate?).

And the food...yuck! Much too cold and mushy. Where's the beef? (Wellington, that is).

But, the worst part is the constant interruption while I am trying to sleep. Every time I go to sleep, I get picked up by the back of my neck and my tail gets stuck up between my legs, tickling my chin! How am I supposed to squirt her when she annoys me if she tucks my tail down?

Then, she picks at my nose! Every day! Constantly! Can you believe it? She evens squeezes my feet - all four of them! I am seriously considering complaining to management about her. The only reason I haven't yet is because I can't figure out who to complain to. Is there anyone out there who can help?

I can be contacted at the SMALL cage in front of the small white car (has anyone else noticed that all the cars here are white?) ... **TO BE CONTINUED...**

written by Tamala on behalf of the skunk

Oreo, 1 week into care



You can read more about Oreo and the other arrivals by visiting our website at www.antler-ridge.com

Letter from the Director

As Director of Antler Ridge Wildlife Sanctuary, I wear many hats. My favorite is that of primary care giver, not only to the animals under our care but to the volunteers and many sponsors who make it all happen. Over the years, I have met so many people that share the same love for and appreciation of animals and the places they live. I find it really hard to believe we still have sub-standard conditions for many of the animals, but as we know too well, you cannot save them all. So in our own little world here at Antler Ridge, we do our part to save all that come to us. Many have called us the "Angels on the Hill," and I am grateful for that label. We will continue to darn our wings and take on the task of helping all orphaned and injured wildlife that find us, and will always offer a kind word and strong advice to any who comes here.



SPONSORSHIP

Antler Ridge Wildlife Sanctuary would like to thank the following sponsors:

HUDSON GUILD FARMS
for their generous donation

**THE MARKET PLACE
GOURMET FOOD STORE**
for their food donations

DR. KAREN DASHFIELD
for her many hours of service

*And the many volunteers
and special people who
give of their time!*

GOOD KARMA: A Short Story on Rescue

Dan and I have been involved in companion animal rescue near the New York City area for over 20 years. We've had the honor of working with some of the best, most devoted people whose mission is to rescue, care for and hopefully find permanent homes for the abandoned and often abused cats and dogs that were fortunate enough to be saved.

As you can imagine throughout this time, we've had a house full of our own... generally those that just aren't adoptable, plus those that give back more than one could ever dream...

Then we moved to Western New Jersey and met Jim and Kelly. What an impressive team...and I immediately thought, "This must be good karma; how could we be so lucky to meet these great people that are actually doing what I've always had a calling for? How can I help? How could I be involved in this important work?" These thoughts were immediately followed by "boy, do I have a lot to learn!"

Knowing a bit about rescue, I'm in absolute awe over the effort and work involved in wildlife rescue. There are some glaring similarities to that of companion rescue (mainly that both require an incredible amount of work, dedication, sacrifice and time), but there are also many differences. Like the treatment, feeding regimen and housing (if you think it's hard to find a home for a feral cat, try placing a big horn goat that charges...not easy!).

Kelly knew how to ease me into this new world of wildlife and farm animal rescue. She found the first good opportunity for me to help when an older female goat became available for adoption. Taken from a foreclosure situation, one of Kelly's wonderful volunteers, Carrie, nursed this aging goat back to a healthy state of mind and body. But like most foster care situations, it is best to free the foster homes for other rescues and find permanent placement for those that are ready to move on. Well, we were ready for our goat.

We named her Beatrice, and she is the matriarch of our little farm. She knows everything that is happening on the farm and let's me know too if she thinks that I'm not fully aware. She tells me that all is good with the world or if something is a little off. Who knew that a goat could have such an impact on one's life? She's smart, loving, really beautiful and very funny. Beatrice has me very well trained and insists on saltine oyster soup crackers at least two times per day...her preference is three. The A&P supermarket must think that someone opened a soup kitchen; they just have to notice the spike in purchases of this product.

From the little bit of history that I know about Beatrice, she's not had a very easy life...now she knows that her only job is to watch out over all of us - not such a small job, but she is rewarded well and very respected. The responsibility suits her well.

Too often farm animals and wildlife are simply discarded, not respected or honored. Antler Ridge works effortlessly to right that wrong. We have benefited so, so much from their work. Beatrice makes us smile each and every day.

- Written by Melinda, Volunteer



Additional Thanks!

Our "Antler Ridge Boxwood Center" piece fundraiser was a huge success. Our special group of volunteer elves created boxwood centerpieces and decorated them with natural items found at the farm and traditional holiday decorations. We sold over 50 pieces raising a total of \$1,200. Special thanks to Barb Connolly for her expert guidance to the working elves, Missy, Tamala, Jackie and Hannah (what a team!). We will definitely do it again next year!



Feeling Good About Volunteering

Next to being a mom, the most rewarding part of my life is helping Kelly at Antler Ridge with the deer. I can't wait to get that call from Kelly when the first fawn has arrived. The joy I have in holding these babies and bottle feeding them is unbelievable.

As they grow and start to know your voice when you get out of your car is so heart warming. The one deer that will always hold a special place in my heart is Ernie. Let me tell you about him. Ernie didn't realize he was a deer. He would follow you around like a puppy dog.

As Ernie got older, I would drive up the driveway, get out of my car and yell, "Where's my Ernie?" All of a sudden, from the backyard, he'd come running out to me because he knew it was time to eat. Before I gave him his food, I would kiss his head and nose, and he would just stand there. He'd follow me into the garage where I was making the bottles and wait. Did I spoil him... YES I DID! Did I always give him special treats... YES I DID. If there was any way I could have taken him home with me and kept him as a pet with my horses and goats I would have.

But as we all know they are wild animals, to be released back to be free. Eventually Ernie stopped coming and I would see him with the rest of the herd on the mountain ridge. He would peer through the woods, keeping his distance, and when I would approach and say Ernie its me he would hesitate and then bolt away. I was sad for a moment but the truth is we did our job. We rehabbed him back to the wild.

I cannot wait until the season starts! – *Written by Lisa Ferenc, Volunteer*



Our Mother and Daughter **SPOTLIGHT**

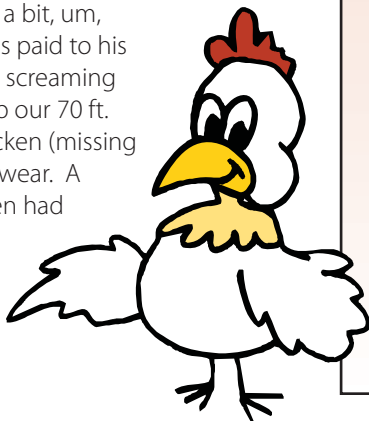
"It hard to find the time to spend quality time with our children these days", I hear from my many friends. We have a unique thing at Antler Ridge Wildlife Sanctuary, Mother and Daughter volunteer teams. Molly and her mom Kim came to Antler Ridge three years ago with a small raccoon they named Rose. She was only three weeks old, and Molly begged her mom to help save her. Kim being an avid animal lover sprung into action and brought Rose to Antler Ridge.

Well I am happy to say they haven't left! Over the years, I've seen Molly develop from a youngster into a mature teenager with a love for all animals. She and her Mom have devoted many hours to our mission and to helping the many farm animals we have here as well. They've also created their own backyard sanctuary for wildlife as well as their mini-farm. It all started when Molly and her mom fell in love with the chickens. Here is an excerpt on the Byrnes mini farm:

My daughter Molly insisted we order some chicks from a hatchery to keep our only chicken named Margaret company. We had two ducks, but they were inseparable, so didn't pay any attention to Margaret. Last August, when the three chicks were five months old, we had a visit from a plump, orange neighborhood cat which ended in disaster. We were left with a late night trip to Kelly's farm for emergency services on the duck and a missing chicken. Unfortunately, we lost our duck - the injury was too severe. We had no idea how the cat got the white chicken out of her run. There was not an opening or rip in the fencing, nor was there a feather anywhere in sight. Nonetheless, we sadly gave up hope, thinking that the cat injured the duck and took the chicken.

Six days had passed when a friend was in our backyard training his new Ridgeback puppy. He liked to use our chickens and duck as distractions to see how well he could get the dog to concentrate on commands. Molly and her friend were in the yard with Peter when he looked down the driveway and asked "what's with the little white bird walking up your driveway?" Peter is always a bit, um, devilish, so not much attention was paid to his comment. Suddenly Molly started screaming "it's the chicken, it's the chicken", up our 70 ft. driveway walks our little white chicken (missing for six solid days) no worse for the wear. A family friend insists the little chicken had a stick with a pack attached to it!!! (Molly immediately named the chicken "Hope").

– *Written by Kim Byrnes, Volunteer*



RECIPE CORNER

by Creative Confections

...by Melissa Rowe

VEGAN CHOCOLATE CAKE

8 servings

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ c. all-purpose flour	1/3 c. vegetable oil
1 c. white sugar	1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ c. cocoa powder	1 teaspoon distilled white vinegar
1 teaspoon baking soda	1 c. water
½ teaspoon salt	

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 9" x 5" loaf pan.
2. Sift together flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda and salt. Add the oil, vanilla, vinegar and water. Mix until smooth.
3. Pour into prepared pan and bake for 45 minutes. Remove from oven; cool in pan 10 minutes then remove from pan and allow to cool completely.

Flying Squirrel Vs. Sugar Glider



Flying Squirrel

Although similar in appearance, Flying Squirrels and Sugar Gliders are different. Flying Squirrels are mammals that give birth to their young after a 40-day gestation period. There are typically four babies per litter. The young are fed by drinking milk from the mother's mammary glands. The mother is the sole caregiver. Flying squirrels can be found in the United States in forests of the Sierra Nevada region and into North Carolina, and even New Jersey.

Sugar Gliders on the other hand are marsupials; they birth their young usually in pairs. They are quite undeveloped after a short gestation period of only 17 days. At birth, the young must make their way into the mother's pouch where they attach to a mammary gland then develop and mature for an additional 60 to 70 days inside the pouch. During this time, the father will help rear the young by collecting food and offering it to the young while still in the pouch. Sugar Gliders are native to Australia and Indonesia.

Neither type of animal can achieve true flight, but rather can glide from one platform to another by using a special excess of skin that attaches front and hind legs, and works much like a kite. Both are omnivores and have a similar diet of nuts, fruits and insects that are readily available in their native homes. Both are nocturnal, meaning they are active at night, and can live in large groups. What's more, they can also be kept as pets, and are by many enthusiasts, though we discourage it unless you do extensive research of dietary, health and housing requirements prior to purchase. This can be a commitment of up to 15 years.

If you want a pet, we suggest choosing another type as there are so many other critters out there in need of a loving home. The Flying Squirrel and Sugar Glider should be free to range and enjoy their native homes rather than live in captivity. But if you feel strongly about having one, look into rescue first.

With special thanks to Kelly for introducing me to Sugar Gliders. An article by Hannah, volunteer



2008 ANIMAL INTAKE REPORT

Raccoons – 67
Opossums – 28
Squirrels – 77
Rabbits – 12
Chipmunks – 8
Groundhogs – 8
Fawns – 58
Skunks – 7

We also took in 12 birds that were transferred to the Avian Wildlife Center and The Raptor Trust

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