

## What's New

Safe to say, there is never a dull moment at AVWS!

We are in the midst of a very busy rehab season. To date we have received otters, mink, muskrats, beaver, fox, bears, raccoons, raccoons and did I mention raccoons. We have numerous squirrels, groundhogs, and fawns. This has also been a remarkably successful rehab season. It is with great pride and pleasure that I can report an unprecedented success rate with all the animals admitted to date! What a staff!

We have had the pleasure of enjoying the company and hard work of numerous volunteers from all over the world. These terrific young people have come to us from Germany, Austria, Australia, England, Scotland, and United States and for the first time in many years a wonderful group from Canada! These volunteers are the back bone of our rehab work here at the Sanctuary. With guidance from our staff the volunteers have played a huge part in this year's phenomenal success.

I wish that I could report all good news. I am sorry to have to advise that Grandpa Squirrel is no longer with us. Last month when Marilyn arrived for an early morning feed, she noticed that the old guy was very still. When she looked closer she determined that the old boy had died in his sleep the previous night. Grandpa was a great ambassador and a wonderful teacher to many, young an old alike. Having been born without eyes, Grandpa has taught us the harm caused from pesticides and chemicals in our environment as it was determined that his mother had most likely ingested poisoned food rendering her offspring blind. We thank you Grandpa for all you have taught us.

Another favourite of the Sanctuary has also left us. I reported last fall that Albear, the Albino Raccoon was off to the "spa". He was actually with a "friend" and "fellow" rehabber for the winter to be returned to the Sanctuary in the spring of this year. Unfortunately, this "friend" has refused to return Albear to us resulting in the MNR having to address the matter. It is being determined if Albear is viable to continue to be allowed to live. If it is determined that he is a viable animal the shame is that he will not be permitted to stay with this "friend" and unfortunately will not be returned to his former home here at the Sanctuary. Albear had been a long time resident at AVWS and was one of our adopt an animals. To have him manipulated in this manner out of selfishness especially by those we thought we could trust is a very sad commentary. We miss the big guy and hope all goes well for him.

The other permanent residents are doing remarkably well. Janalene and the staff have worked hard to ensure the bears, wolves, lion, lynx, skunks and owls now enjoy species appropriate food. Through the generosity of Sobeys we are able to feed the animals fruit, vegetables, and meat along with the dry food we receive as a donation from our good friends at Pet Valu. The wolves are now shaded from the hot sun and cold winds by new shelters. They are given enrichment to maintain their natural hunting instincts and deter boredom. Banshee's pen now sports an addition which allows the staff to enter her

enclosure safely in order to give her fresh water, clean out her home and when winter comes, supply her with warm bedding.

As of this writing, of the 22 bears that wintered over from last year there remains 7 to be released. This should be done within the next few days. Good thing as we need to prepare for this year's cubs. We have received four so far and anticipate we shall see more come autumn.

So as the hazy days of summer continue as does the work of caring for the orphaned and injured. A lot of work, yes. Great rewards – you bet!