

# BEARS FIRST

Idaho Black Bear Rehab Update

May 21, 1997

## Please Help Orphaned Cubs



Peaches & Kodiak - Playtime is over..Where is dinner?

### **ABOUT THE IDAHO BLACK BEAR REHAB PROGRAM**

Wildlife rehabilitator Sally Maughan started the Idaho Black Bear Rehabilitation Program in 1989 under the guidance of wildlife manager and black bear expert John Beecham. John studied bears in Idaho for more than 23 years. During his bear studies, he raised and released many orphaned cubs. Using his bear expertise and her own rehab experience, Sally began forming rehab techniques used exclusively for bears. For five years, she studied their behavior during the various stages of development. From this study came the Idaho Black Bear Rehab Program. Between 1989 and December of 1996, Fish and Game placed a total of 31 orphaned cubs in the rehab program.

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## WHAT THIS PROGRAM MEANS FOR CUBS EVERYWHERE

Idaho is one of the few states that successfully rehabs bears. Most states will not rehab or release orphaned cubs. For those willing to try, it is difficult to find a rehabilitator with the funds, enclosures, and experience necessary to do the job. Zoos or wildlife parks will not take the cubs either. If left alone in the woods, the orphans won't survive. Fish and Game departments in many states have few options in handling these cubs. Most of the time there is no place for them to go.

In 1994, Sally presented this program at the Western Bear Conference. Many wildlife managers, biologists, Fish and Game departments, and bear researchers have since requested copies of the program. She has sent out more than 300 copies all over the US, Canada, and to Europe, Asia, and South America. Thanks to the successful release of cubs in Idaho, more states are considering rehab as an alternative to euthanasia.

For Idaho bears, it means orphaned cubs have a place to go. We don't have to euthanize them or leave them in the woods to die. For cubs in other states, it means the door is slowly opening for them to get a second chance. We can work with Fish & Game departments in other states to encourage and help them start their own rehab programs. We can teach other rehabilitators how to successfully raise and release orphaned cubs.



Chakotey - 1996

### AN OPEN LETTER FROM SALLY

We all share a memory of that special teddy bear from our childhood. This little cub may look like that stuffed teddy bear, but she is real cub. Unlike our teddy bears, worn with years of love, she was an orphan. If not for Fish and Game bringing her in, and this program to take her, she would have died in the woods.

Everyone has found an injured bird or a baby animal. Veterinarians can't provide long term care for them. Cubs can be in rehab for as long as ten months. How would you feel, finding a helpless cub like this and having no place to take it? Can you imagine putting that little bundle of black fur to sleep? I can't, and as long as I can prevent it, that won't happen. However, I do need some extra help this year to save these orphaned cubs.



For the past eight years, I've had the rare privilege of spending my life with bears. Many individuals helped me during that time. However, I'm asking everyone to help just once more. The main threat to the program this year is the change in my work. In December, my job moved to Salt Lake. I probably had the only job in Boise that would let me bring cubs to work and stop to feed every three hours. I'm looking for opportunities to work at home so I can manage the program and care for the cubs. However, until I'm fully established in that venture, I can't provide the finances needed to support the program for this year. That means I can't take orphaned cubs. And that means, like other states, our cubs won't have any place to go.

## WHAT IS NEEDED AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

I'd love to build a rehab center so no orphaned cub would ever be turned away. However, that is way beyond my means unless Publishers Clearing House happens to pay me a visit. For the present, I can only take as many orphaned cubs here in Idaho as I can manage. It takes about \$400 per cub to put them through the rehab program. The bears easily go through \$150 of formula a week, eat 20 pounds of dog food a day and several cases of fruit each week. The formula is vital to their growth and development for the first 5 months. It takes money to buy the formula. However, many people have fruit trees. With 3 or 4 freezers in good working condition to store it, there will be no need to buy fruit.

The **good news** is that it's just the immediate future that is at risk. Cubs will start arriving any day and I need some help right now so I can take them. It will take some money, lots of fruit and dog food. It is also crucial to find one individual to oversee the collection of the fruit each week from June throughout the season. One volunteer to find and coordinate a few others each week to pick up donated fruit will make a big difference.

There is so much needed in this world today and we all do what we can. Please give what you can without taking away from the needs of your own family. Maybe you can give a dollar, a bag of peaches, a sack of dog food, a used freezer. Maybe the kids can spend a little time collecting those pears that dropped off your tree before they rot. Maybe their school can adopt the program as one of their projects during the year.

During 1997, we will incorporate the program and apply for non-profit status. As plans progress, the board may establish a membership and an adopt-a-cub program. However, it will be several months before those steps are completed. For now, I will send out newsletters to anyone who donates to the program. I'll introduce you to the endearing Nipper, share the amusing antics of Griz, and the special spirit of Shoshone. I'll tell you how we care for the cubs and take you along as we place them in dens for hibernation.



Sierra & Chakotey - 1996

## UPDATE ON THE 1996 CUBS

For the many who asked, Poca, Sierra, and Chakotey are back in the woods. We started them in hibernation while still here in the enclosure. After delays due to weather and closed roads, we placed them in bear dens in the mountains during the first two weeks of February. Mollie McCarty from **KBCI**, Channel 2, joined us and did a great story on Poca and his trip back home. Thanks Mollie!

PLEASE, WILL YOU HELP? SHARE THIS UPDATE WITH YOUR FRIENDS, CO-WORKERS, RELATIVES AND ANYONE YOU FEEL CAN HELP. YOU MIGHT BE THE ONE PERSON TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE! IT COULD EASILY BE YOUR DONATION OR ACTION THAT SAVES ANOTHER CUB!

## BEAR NECESSITIES - WISH LIST

**URGENT:**        **\$\$\$\$ for formula - 3-4 Reliable freezers - Volunteer coordinator - Canned and fresh fruit**

**GENERAL SUPPLIES:**

Clean grass hay for bedding - Bath towels - Hand towels - Dog houses for dens - Lumber for roof and building dens - Large, medium, & small Vari-Kennels - Large metal Army dog transport carriers - Postage stamps  
Donated printing  
**Pipes & plumbing supplies to bring water to enclosure**  
**Plumber to donate work and equipment to lay water pipes**

**SPECIALITY ITEMS - AVAILABLE BY SPECIAL ORDER FROM PET-AG**

Multi-Milk        Esbilac (powdered)        Vionate

**FORMULA ITEMS:**

Jars of Gerbers fruit baby cereal - Flavored Yogurt - Honey - Cans of condensed milk (not evaporated) - Natural applesauce - Boxes of oatmeal - Boxes of Gerbers baby rice cereal

**FOOD ITEMS:**

Sacks of dry dog food - Bread - Acorns & Hazelnuts  
Fish (salmon or trout) - Raw carrots - Leaf lettuce  
Cans or jars of jars of fruit

**Fresh fruit of all kinds: apples, peaches, pears, grapes, plums, cherries, apricots, watermelons, cantaloupes, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, strawberries**



Ruggles - 1989 - He started it all!



**Idaho Black Bear Rehab.**  
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