

Animal Protection Society

Volunteers give time, love for homeless pets

By BETH PARSONS

Stray dogs are plentiful in Chapel Hill, especially on the UNC campus. Many make nice playmates and dorm mascots.

But what happens to the little mut you've been feeding all semester when it doesn't show up one day or you pack up and go home?

Chances are, that dog will show up again later—starving, dehydrated, hurt or maybe dead.

Less than 10 years ago, stray dogs were taken to the Orange County Pound and, if not claimed by their owners within a few days, were killed by carbon monoxide poisoning.

Today, stray dogs and cats in Orange County are treated more humanely through actions by the Animal Protection Society, a community volunteer organization concerned with the care and adoption of homeless animals.

Since 1962, when it first began as the Orange County Humane Society, APS has worked with Orange County and Chapel Hill to provide better facilities for stray animals.

A recent achievement of APS is acquiring the new Orange County Animal Shelter on Airport Road. The shelter was built on county property and financed jointly by the town and the county. APS, however, persuaded town officials to build the shelter. "APS was finally able to persuade the town and

county to build the building on county-owned property" said Pat Kennedy, past APS president. "It came to the point that we had to accept what the town and county would give us," she said.

With several successful auction and fund drives, APS raised \$10,000, earmarked as the shelter fund, which was spent to equip the new shelter.

In the last 10 weeks, APS has moved its equipment into the new shelter and assumed operation as agreed in a five-year renewable contract with Orange County.

"The city is trying to get the county to assume complete financial responsibility for the shelter," Kennedy said. "APS thinks it should be a joint responsibility. We may appeal to the town for funds, at least the amount they got at the old dog pound."

The shelter is more sanitary and better-staffed than the Chapel Hill Pound, which closed permanently May 7. "It's a wonderful thing and a very gratifying experience to work here," said Frances Stagg, assistant manager of the shelter.

The new shelter is already overflowing with stray and unwanted animals. One sound-proof room houses 20 to 30 cats and kittens. Across the hall, rows of cement and wire compounds erupt with barking whenever an attendant passes.

Identification tags on the doors of the dog compounds say "stray" or "surrender." "Surrender" are dogs (and cats) that have been given to us by their owners for one reason or another," Stagg said.

A pure-bred black Afghan lay in one cage marked "surrender." "Isn't that something?" Stagg said. "The owner didn't want it anymore."

In its first month of operation the shelter handled 268 animals. Only 20 animals were reclaimed by their owners and 40 were adopted. Of the remainder, 127 animals had to be put to sleep with an anesthesia called sodium pentobarbital.

Animals with proper identification are held at the shelter for at least three days, pending claim by their owners. Those without identification are held as long as possible but the holding period is decided upon by APS managers.

After the holding period and a physical examination, animals are put up for adoption. Those deemed unadoptable because of critical injury, ill temper or age are put to sleep by a veterinarian. Animals in poor physical condition may be put to sleep sooner than healthy animals.

Sodium pentobarbital is the only drug APS allows local veterinarians to use. It causes no pain and, therefore, no unnecessary anxiety.

Necessary killing because of overcrowding is difficult for any shelter, Stagg said. "It's never a case of becoming hardened to it, it's just a case of reality. They're better off here or dead than out somewhere uncared for."

"People seem to have this idea that nature will take care of animals. Well, that's just plain wrong. Nature is the cruelest environment an animal can be subjected to," Stagg said.

APS adoption fees for dogs and cats are \$5 and anyone can adopt an animal from the shelter. But those who do are warned of the responsibility of pet care. "We won't talk you out of adopting, but we won't talk you into it either. Few people have any idea of the responsibility necessary to care for a pet," Stagg said.

Besides getting instructions for the animal's care, each new pet owner agrees to have the animal spayed

or neutered. The shelter ensures this procedure by charging new owners a deposit—\$15 for dogs and \$10 for cats—that is refunded when they take the animal to a veterinarian.

"We don't have the facilities to spay and neuter animals here," Stagg said. "So we charge the deposit as sort of an assurance to us that the owner will have it done." Many of the older animals are already spayed or neutered.

Spaying and neutering pets is a necessity, according to Jan Reist, an APS member and major fund raiser. "Only one of every eight animals finds a home," she said. "Those other seven don't. We've all got to stop pulling an ostrich act about it and realize what's going on in the county."

Many people concerned with protecting stray animals are members of APS. Its membership since 1971, when it became the Animal Protection Society, has grown to approximately 500.

"Saying we have 500 members doesn't give an exact picture," Reist said. "There's a small core of people who do an incredible amount of work."

Members pay annual dues of \$5 per person or \$8 per couple. Lifetime memberships are \$100.

Dedicated members like Reist and Kennedy help organize fund-raising projects for the organization. The annual APS Auction, held each October at Carr Mill Mall is the organization's primary fund raiser. The auction made \$12,000 for APS in 1978.

The auction and membership fees helped make the Orange County Animal Shelter a reality. The shelter with 32 dog compounds should represent a victory for APS, but according to some members, it was too small before it was built. "We felt it would be too small for the volume of animals we handle," Kennedy said. "We thought we'd need 20 to 30 more dog runs at least."

"We're now looking into the cost of adding more runs at our own expense. Even with more runs, there will still have to be a great deal of killing."



Manager Marjorie McGlothlin
... cares for one of the strays

Storybook Farm

Warren Barrett shares his home and hopes for children's futures

By KIMBERLY MCGUIRE

It's hard to imagine a man as good as Warren Barrett and a place as picture-perfect as his Storybook Farm.

Out Jones Ferry Road, you'll see a sign and the stone house, complete with vegetable garden, pond, greenhouse, woodshop and a spring-fed swimming pool. It is all framed by 40 acres of mowed, green fields and a hill.

Meet owner and head of the operation, Warren Barrett, 64, and he will win your heart as he tells the tale of how Storybook Farm came to be.

"I was reading a book to the kids when they were small and we lived on McCauley Street," Barrett said in his grandfatherly manner. "In the center there was this picture of a farm that had everything—a horse and cows, you name it. We called it our storybook farm."

"We had no idea then. But, when we found this place in 1955 and decided to move out of town with the six kids, there was nothing else to call it."

Since then, it has been home to the Barrett family and much more to those who have visited there.

Storybook Farm was used for a time as a site for a drug-rehabilitation program for teen-agers and as a home away from the hospital for children needing speech therapy.

Since 1961, the family has been operating a preschool and a kindergarten in the winter months and a day-camp and picnic ground in the summer.

"Some people are motivated by fame or money and material things, but that doesn't mean a thing to me," he said. "Here we can expose a child or a young person to nature and discreetly try to teach them this is all one thing. Really, we're all in this together and we must learn to cooperate."

Cooperation and family are very important elements in making the programs at Storybook Farm work. Mrs. Barrett runs the school for nine months during the year. Her mother and one of the Barrett children live on the property and help with the gardening and other chores.

Other aspects of the "farm" include a craft and woodworking shop, which is now run by a furniture maker from Chapel Hill. "We've also added a greenhouse, and a landscaping service," Barrett said.

But Barrett is quick to add, "Mostly we're still involved with kids."

"Underlying the physical set-up are the kids and our idea for a kind of spiritual development," Barrett said.

"I happen to be a missionary's son," he continued, "but my beliefs are more practical than most organized religions. It's not dogmatic. I say if you're looking for an answer, go to nature and see the fantastic simplicity and beauty of it all."

"All I can begin to do personally is to be an example and start here with something simple to share," Barrett said.

"Nineteen years ago, we opened camp charging \$18 a week. Now we charge \$52 a week and that's still cheap compared to most places," Barrett noted. "Our purpose is to reach as many children as possible, and that includes the little guy who can't usually afford to go to camp."

Day-camp begins Monday and Barrett expects about 60 elementary-school aged children this season. He hires 15 to 18 counselors each summer.

"I give them a lot of responsibility for planning activities and buying supplies. These young people don't come here to make money as much as to learn about the kids and about themselves," Barrett said.

Storybook Farm started as a non-profit venture, and it has stayed that way. "The way it all came about was kind of a coincidence," Barrett recalls. "When we first moved out here, our friends with children brought them out for weekends. We had boating, and canoes on the pond, and horses."

"At the end of that summer, the parents wanted to pay us for our trouble. We didn't want that, so instead, a camp grew out of it the next summer and then the school that fall."

"I had always had the hankering to do it," said Barrett, who was a camp counselor himself in the summer of 1938 in Tuxedo, N.C. "But I was afraid to give up my working life, in stocks and bonds, to take the chance."

"I remember when I decided," he said, his light green eyes flashing. "I was on my way back from Minneapolis on business, laid over in the Chicago airport. I called up my sister and told her I was giving it up and starting a camp and that was that."

And he claims he hasn't worked a day since.



Barrett with children at farm
... daycamp program starts Monday



Safari Mathenge, journalism student from Kenya,
... wears native attire and enjoys American lifestyle

African student at UNC

Kenyan reflects on experiences here, at home

By MICHAEL SHARSKY

Safari Mathenge has a T-shirt that says "Where the hell is the African guy?" on the front and "Who cares?" on the back.

The sophomore journalism major from Mombasa, Kenya, wrote those lines with a black magic marker, and they're a symbol of his good-natured appraisal of his situation on this campus.

Safari decided to study in the United States after he was exposed to Peace Corps volunteers in Mombasa, who had reams of praise for Carolina, their alma mater.

Unfortunately, red-tape problems prevented his entry into UNC, so he enrolled at Louisburg College in North Carolina, where he worked on the student newspaper. Five months after entering the United States, Safari became a summer-session student at UNC.

A country about the size of Texas, Kenya is located in the eastern region of Africa that borders the Indian Ocean. Mombasa is Kenya's major seaport and the second largest city in the country.

Kenya's major language is Swahili, and Safari occasionally reels off a burst of the fluid and emotional language, especially when he is excited.

Kenya is, in fact, a very diverse land. There are 40 separate tribes; Safari belongs to the Meru. The concept of the tribe is misleading to some Americans. "Africa is not all Tarzan land," Safari said when asked

what he'd like people to know the most about his home.

Safari has found that many Americans really think of Kenya as just a savage jungle land, but he'd never seen African wildlife until a recent trip as a tourist into the Kenyan interior.

The diversity of Kenya has led to some problems. Mombasa has a large Indian population, and Safari attended a private high school where he was the only African student among Indians. He said he had to be wary of phony advances from students who tried too hard to be nice — or didn't try at all.

Such problems are, however, overshadowed by the special Kenyan spirit of friendship. This is something very basic to Kenyan life, and parents impress their children with the importance of maintaining many close friendships.

Safari indicated a Kenyan friendship is much more trusting and sharing than the average American counterpart. Property is readily shared, and much emotional support is understood as sacred to the system of friendship, forming a backbone of community structure.

Courtship is a good example of tribal custom in Kenya. "It depends on how much you follow tradition. Each tribe has different customs," Safari said. Such customs are centuries old, but the "grass hut" image obscures the fact that customs are practiced in modified form in more modern settings,

including the bustling metropolitan areas. Commenting on love and marriage, Safari said "I don't see anything wrong with a traditional marriage." When asked what would happen if he became attached here, though, he said "You can't quite say what would happen if you fall in love," and grinned.

A Kenyan is not raised to "do it alone" and the American ideal of self-reliance put Safari to the test.

When he arrived, he was virtually alone. He knew a few friends in New York from contacts in Mombasa, but they were hard to find. Safari was scared. "All my friends were gone. I couldn't find anyone to help me," he said. He learned to get along with infrequent encounters with helpful strangers, and eventually located the people he knew. They told him he'd experience prejudice in the South.

Has he? For the most part, no. "Most people are friendly once they know you're foreign ... and you reach out," Safari explained.

He insists that racism is not a problem, although he agrees life on a college campus is more tolerant.

"I was kind of shocked at first," he said, because in Africa many people have a picture of America as all New York or all "western," depending on TV programming. This problem of stereotyping extends to a personal level. He spoke of being just "the African guy" with feeling, because that image has led to depression and loneliness.

Few came to him, as is common in Kenya. Safari had to reach out and break the shell of being a campus curiosity.

His experience in the all-Indian school helped him form tolerance, adaptability, and the guts to establish himself in a strange and lonely situation.

Some do not fare as well. A student Safari knew at Louisburg from Ghana could not overcome the barrier of loneliness that being different erects in the country. He spent most of his time alone in his room, could not communicate effectively and eventually suffered a nervous breakdown.

Safari warns against the danger of withdrawal for foreign visitors; not all lands are as supportive as Kenya. Safari appeared to be a quick-witted guy who worries about a lot of the same things most American students do and who also shoots a mean game of pool.

Sports? "Soccer is the big thing," he said, and Americans are picking up on that. He also likes to run, reads a lot and loves to disco.

In spite of what many people think, Safari is, after all, a human being no different from other students. He isn't the African guy who is also a decent chap. He isn't a walking tourist information center, a dashiki that speaks or an example of what civilization can do for the "poor African natives."

He is an articulate, highly motivated man with a restless intellect, needing to know and to write—and he happens to be African. Most college students worry about loneliness and pressure—what of those who take a bolder step, seeking their fortunes, farther from their roots? Safari thinks students need to be more sensitive to the needs of others; his experiences make that need clearer.

The essence of Safari's message as a foreign student reflects his character admirably. He's warm and easy to be open with, and the reason is clear.

"Growing up learning to give," he said. By giving us an honest look at himself, he's given us a better look at ourselves.