

Family, animals find splitting up is hard to do

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Caring for wildlife is yet another example, Cornell said, of what amputees and handicapped people can do if they are determined not to let life and others push them into a corner.

She is an award-winning swimmer despite the loss several years ago of a leg to a bone disease, polyostotic fibrous dysplasia. Cornell also is the founder of Amputee Support and Service Group.

"You can do anything you want to as long as you have it in your head to do it and it doesn't hurt anyone else," Cornell said.

WITH THE DNR license, Cornell must do two things. If an animal is injured and cannot be released to the wild, she must agree to have the animal put to sleep. And second, she must provide an annual report of the animals she has nurtured and where the animals have been released.

"We're having more of a problem with orphaned animals because of all the building and traffic here," Cornell said.

Weighing 10 ounces each, Jack and Jill arrived when they were just 1 week old, after their mother had been illegally shot. In the beginning, Jack and Jill lived in an aquarium warmed by spotlights. Now they live in a baby play pen and are often visited and taken care of by the Cornell's other pets: two cats, two dogs and a cockatiel.

"A lot of the time, the cats — Pebbles and Squeebur — will jump in and sleep with them," Cornell said. The cockatiel is ambivalent about

the babies. "He flies over and goes, 'yuck.'"

At four weeks, Jack and Jill have furry black bandit masks across their brows and their tails already have the characteristic black rings. Their little paws — which look like human hands — are velvety soft and are always inquisitively reaching for something to play with. "They can open everything but Tupperware," Cornell said.

THE PAIR is so soft and cuddly, it's easy to forget they were born to be free. "I always warn people they are wild animals. You can't reprimand them when they bite or growl because they need to do those things for when they go back into the wild," Cornell said. "You can't be naive. You can't treat them like domestic animals."

Wild or not, they still are babies and demand a lot of care and attention. Jack and Jill have accompanied the Cornell's to picnics and parties. They can't be left alone because they must be fed every four hours.

It's illegal to have the raccoons in-cubated for rabies or distemper, but Cornell isn't worried about disease because Jack and Jill have never been in the wild.

Soon, the furry pair will go into the back yard and, as best as she can, Cornell will begin to teach them how to be wild raccoons. They will learn to climb and collect food. The fact that Jack and Jill are a pair helps because they are bonding and learning from each other. When August comes, Jack and Jill will be taken to live in their own world, most likely in the same preserve with Patty and Farfel.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Beverly Cornell bottle feeds one of her 5-week-old twin raccoons.

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Schools propose major bond issue

Continued from Page 1

has been tentatively scheduled for Sept. 13. Flanagan said the district has already received preliminary state approval for the bond application.

The board's building and site committee is working with district staff in reviewing 15-20 architectural firms for the proposed new buildings, and for a revamped media center for Farmington High School, according to Abernethy who heads the committee. The new elementary school and early childhood center

would house some 500 students.

The upgrades would include lighting replacement, asbestos abatement, removal of vinyl asbestos flooring and replacing it with new tile or carpeting, handling contamination in lighting ballasts and revising electrical service throughout the district. Work would be done in all buildings.

Serious discussion about a new elementary school on the west side of the district began as officials studied alternatives to alleviate overcrowding in the past year.

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