



SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

Farmington Hills resident Bev Cornell talks about how she cares for the wild bunny. She warns people not to pick up wild bunnies, because they could, literally, scare them to death.



Birmingham, a wild bunny, awaits the day when he will be released into Heritage Park in Farmington Hills. Birmingham's leg was broken and his abdomen punctured by a dog, as he and a sibling sat in their nest. He is being nursed back to health by Bev Cornell, who is licensed to care for orphaned animals.

Wild bunny boom

They're multiplying like . . . rabbits

By Casey Hans
staff writer

THEY'RE MULTIPLYING like . . . well . . . rabbits. The fur is flying at the Cornell residence in Farmington Hills, where Beverly Cornell is fielding numerous calls because of an apparent bunny baby boom this summer.

Licensed to care for orphaned baby animals by the state Department of Natural Resources, Cornell said she had received an unusual number of calls because of the increase in the wild bunny births.

Cornell said she's not sure if the exceptionally warm weather has contributed, but many wild rabbits are apparently having second litters late in the summer this year.

"I don't know," she said. "There's an exceptional amount (of bunnies) running around the neighborhood. And I've gotten a lot of calls."

PROOF OF THE BOOM can be seen in a cage at her house where "Birmingham," one of two baby bunnies found mauled by a dog in the yard of a Birmingham house, is staying until he can be released into the wild at Heritage Park.

"If they run across a nest in their yard, people think there's no mother," she explained. "The mother is around. She only comes and feeds them twice a day."

Cornell said people should take special care around wild bunnies, because they can be, literally, frightened to death. "They have a high adrenal system," she said. "Under any kind of stress, they give themselves heart attacks and die."

Wild bunnies, which in Michigan means the White

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— Beverly Cornell
cares for rabbits

Cottontail rabbit, often make their homes in the middle of people's yards, and seem alone because of the mother's infrequent visits. She said unless a bunny appears to be injured, people should leave them alone. Cornell also warned that no one should ever try to handle a wild bunny, although those who have been handled will often be taken back by the mother unlike other animals.

SHE HANDLES her visitor Birmingham, only once each day to feed him. He eats everything from old-fashioned dried oatmeal to fresh sprouts, a variety of grasses and clover and Queen Anne's Lace. He also enjoys tomatoes, apples, grapes — if they're cut in half — and occasional vegetables.

Cornell said if a person feels "compelled to feed (a wild bunny) they can put out old-fashioned oatmeal, raisins and maybe a little apple."

In addition to working with the injured bunny, Cornell also has two orphaned squirrels this summer named Mary and Joseph. The raccoons she raised earlier this year have already been released to the wild, and are doing fine, she said.



Birmingham the bunny shares a moment with Cricket, one of the Cornell's house cats, although he remains safely out of reach. She expects to release the bunny to the wild in the next week or so.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

● OFFICE FLOODED

A Farmington dental office was flooded by vandals Aug. 24-25, causing some \$1,000 in damage.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, someone put a water hose into the mail chute at Castle Dental Lab, 23333 Farmington Road, causing about one inch of water to collect on the floor. Damage was done to the carpet, according to reports.

● DOG BITE

A 48-year-old Farmington man was bitten by his own dog in mid-August, causing him to seek treatment at Providence Hospital in Novi. If the bite wasn't enough, hospital

officials contacted Oakland County animal control and police and the man was ticketed for failing to license his dog, according to a recent Farmington Department of Public Safety report. The dog was confined for 10 days, until its health could be determined.

● SMALL FIRE

Damage was estimated at \$100 after a circuit shorted and resulted in a fire in a plastic cover of an outdoor light fixture on the northwest corner of Farmington Hills Chrysler-Plymouth, 29301 Grand River, Aug. 27, according to a Farmington Hills fire report.

● THEFTS REPORTED

Window screens valued at \$200 were reported stolen from Flanders Elementary, 32600 Flanders, in Farmington Aug. 23-26.

● DAMAGE REPORTED

Damage was estimated at \$200 when the door of a car parked on Colchester in Farmington was scratched Aug. 25-26.

Tires and wheels valued at \$900 were reported stolen from a storage yard at Classic Restorations, 20785 Orchard Lake Road, Aug. 27-28.

Personal items valued at \$500 were reported stolen from a storage unit at Independence Green Apartments, at Halsted and Grand River, Aug. 16-23.

An AM/FM car stereo, control head and computer, and CDs valued at \$4,000 were reported stolen from a 1987 Buick parked at Strawberry Lane Apartments on Middlebelt, Aug. 28-29.

● DAMAGE REPORTED

Damage was estimated at \$1,200 when someone smashed a large window at Leo Adler Nissan, 28200 Eight Mile, Aug. 28.

Program helps kick smoking habit

Smokers interested in giving up their habit once and for all can get help at Oakland University. The Meadow Brook Health Enhancement Institute is offering a "Cease Using Tobacco" stop-smoking program. It begins with a free information night at 6 p.m. Sept. 19.

CUT relies on group support, positive behavior modification, stress management and relapse prevention to help smokers quit. An on-going support group is available to offer encouragement for participants who complete the classes. Terry Dibble of the institute and guest speakers will lead eight one-hour classes. The sessions will be at 6 p.m. Sept. 23-26 and Sept. 30-Oct. 3. The registration fee is \$50 for in-

stitute members and \$60 for non-members, but that cost can be recovered quickly by not smoking. Instructors point out that pack-a-day smokers, in addition to draining their health, deplete their wallets by more than \$600 a year.

For registration information, call 370-4524. Registration will also be accepted at the information night program.

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