

## Trapping business picks up when animals wake up

Spring is finally here and already many animals have come out of hibernation. The trapping business in general becomes very slow during the winter months. Early to mid-March shows a slow but steady increase in varmint sightings, skunk smells and calls for the removal of nuisance animals.



Trapper Ron Baker

Many people ask what I do with the animals I live trap, such as skunks. My standard, favorite answer is "Well, I let them go." When they ask where I release them, I respond, "At my next client, of course."

It usually takes about 5 to 10 seconds for it to register that I am kidding with them.

Releasing animals is not rocket science; however, how I deal with a trapped skunk is a trade secret. I do not want to be responsible for a novice accidentally getting a special gift from a new striped friend.

In reality, I must follow the guidelines outlined by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The license issued to me and others in this business is very specific in dealing with animals caught in live traps.

Most animals can be released in a habitat conducive to their well-being.

Unfortunately, some animals need to be destroyed, such as rabid and injured animals, or animals that otherwise will cause harm to themselves or their surroundings.

Remember, for the most part, animals just want to live quietly among us and will remain unseen. With our expansion into animal habitats, our encounters will only increase.

Removal should be considered when animals become a danger to humans or property. Apartment complex residents are usually the first to experience nuisance animal problems in the spring.

The sheer numbers of garbage containers in large complexes are a smorgasbord of fresh delicacies. Raccoons, opossum, and skunks are the main culprits that tend to starve residents as they dispose of their refuse.

Imagine yourself taking the garbage out early in the morning before you go to work. It's still dark out as you walk to your garbage bin across the parking area.

You have done this chore a thousand times since you moved in with nothing to fear except the cold morning air.

You approach the container and lift the lid; it slams loudly against metal.

Suddenly, one, two or more

raccoons jump out – or worse yet, you started a skunk or two.

I don't care how brave you are; the surprise of this would rattle the nerves of anyone, including Trapper Ron.

Calls from homeowners, urban and rural, follow the apartment complexes. Skunks hibernate in January and February, usually for two cold months of the year.

You may have already noticed the smell of skunks in your area; they are looking for food and a cozy place to sleep during the daytime hours. Low-lying dandelions, preferably those with dryer vents blowing warm air, are the preferred locations for bedding around homes.

Skunks primarily eat grubs, insects and worms when the ground is loose enough for them to dig. When the ground is frozen, they will eat anything, including irresistible tidbits in garbage cans.

For those who are brave enough to capture a skunk on their own, live traps can be purchased at your local hardware store (average price about \$45). Bait it accordingly, and wait for your skunk to be trapped. It may take a couple of days, and you may catch other animals in the process.

Eventually you will trap the skunk or skunks in your area. I can tell you there is no greater feeling when you trap the animal that has caused your nose to turn. The problem comes after the animal is trapped – now what?

I recently received a call from a local woman who decided to live trap a skunk on her property.

The good news is she caught the pesky critter; the bad news is she didn't know how to transport or how to release the animal. She was very concerned about getting sprayed and didn't want to put it in her car.

She was very concerned about the cost of removing the animal and I tried to accommodate her. As you all know by now, I will gladly assist anyone in need, when possible. As a compromise, I traded removing the skunk for her live trap.

In the end, everyone was happy; she got rid of the varmint and I got a new cage.

As always, anytime you decide to have a professional come out and review your situation, make sure they are insured and licensed with the Department of Natural Resources.

Do your homework and make sure you know what are all of the costs associated with the services and if there are any guarantees.

Ron Baker is a professional trapper and owner of Trapper Ron's Animal Removal & Relocation Services. He can be reached at (248) 478-7649. Questions may be e-mailed to rqbassocial@msn.com

## Night of STARS to raise funds for shunt research

BY SUE BUCK  
STAFF WRITER

A technology that saves hundreds of children's lives every year will get a boost April 5, thanks to the parents of those children.

STARS (Seeking Techniques Advancing Research in Shunts), a parent group within Children's Hospital of Michigan, is calling a dinner dance 7 p.m.-midnight on April 5 at the Hellenic Culture Center, 36375 Joy Road in Westland between Wayne and Newburgh Roads. The event will raise funds to help advanced research in shunt technology.

## Home service delivers grocery goodies

BY KIMBERLY MORTSON  
STAFF WRITER

When Bill Ansara made visits to his grandfather's Westland apartment, he never went empty-handed. Most occasions, he would bring an armful of groceries for the elderly man who is remembered as "strong-minded," but was limited in his ability to shop for himself due to his age.

It wasn't long before his grandfather's elderly neighbors started asking Bill if he would do the same for them. Twenty-one years later, he is president of Residential Grocery Service Inc., a Livonia-based business to which Bill, his wife, Norma, and three children, Billy Jr., Jimmy and Steve, devote their lives.

RGS has worked with Value Center Food Market on Six Mile for the past four years where it operates a personalized shopping/delivery service for individuals, families and senior citizens.

Their customer-driven business streamlines the grocery shopping process through a 30,000-item (name brands and Spartan brand) selection of fresh produce, meats, deli, baked goods, canned foods, dairy, prepared foods, cleaning products, personal hygiene products and paper/household goods. They also offer a 1,000 products for people with special dietary needs, including sugar-free, low-sodium and low-calorie items.

"This is a very emotional subject to me," said Bill, who started a similar business more than two decades ago, but had little success. "It has taken me a long time to find a grocery supplier to work with me, to get the computer software together and to prove to people that we're reliable and honest and genuinely real."

The process was designed to be as convenient for clients as possible, shifting the responsibility onto RGS staff to fill orders, complete paperwork and deliver goods.

According to Billy Jr., a cus-

All children helped by STARS have hydrocephalus, commonly called "water on the brain."

About one in 500 children is born with hydrocephalus, according to Sandra Bruzovich, a group member and event organizer.

Hydrocephalus can also develop as a result of brain injury such as a tumor or trauma incurred in a car accident.

A Farmington Hills resident, Bruzovich's daughter, Beth Ann, 19, and a college student, received a shunt when she was nine years old.

The catheter tubing and valve are surgically implanted in the brain and allow for

drainage of cerebrospinal fluid to another part of the body. Most shunts are in place for life and require multiple surgeries to correct malfunctions, Bruzovich said.

According to information provided by STARS, children with hydrocephalus would have died 40 years ago. While advanced, shunt technology still needs vast improvement because the tubing can easily become blocked or infected, may break and possibly create complications with the body's other systems.

Shunt surgery is relatively common with more than 25,000 operations performed in the United States each year.

STARS is committed to providing research dollars needed to advance shunt technology.

"Ring the Bell for STARS," the April 5 event, will feature a truck raffle and an indoor carnival midway.

From 6-7 p.m., champagne and hors d'oeuvres will be served during a wristband reception. Cost for the dinner party only is \$60.

The reception and dinner party is \$120.

For more information contact Dianne Kean, a Redford Township resident, at (313) 255-1302 or Vida Hamilton, a Canton Township resident, at (734) 207-3751.



Thomas Wesley bags an order for delivery.

### ORDER, PLEASE

After RGS receives the grocery list, Norma Ansara, Bill's wife of 25 years, enters the order into the computer and then a personal shopper does all the legwork in the store to fill the order. According to Bill, the same person processes the order each week, so shoppers become familiar with the preferences and brands customers want. Within two to three days, the order is delivered in refrigerated trucks by uniformed drivers who bring the order in bags stored in plastic totes.

"Half the truck is 20 degrees below zero and the refrigerated side is 35 degrees so frozen foods stay frozen and produce and meats keep cool and fresh," added Billy Jr., 21, who oversees marketing and delivery.

A minimum \$75 order must be placed and the delivery charge is \$20.

"I'll never grocery shop again since I found this service," said Sharon Yesh of Plymouth.

The 46-year-old suffers from a physical handicap that currently limits her ability to get out and do things for herself, things she says at one time she was accustomed to doing.

"I used to work in the theater as a designer. I worked 20 hours a day and would have loved this service even before I couldn't get around," said Yesh. "I have tried for the last two

years to find a grocery store to deliver and couldn't."

Yesh said her 80-year-old mother brought her a local newspaper where she read an article about Residential Grocery Service.

"Everyone I have talked to has been so nice on the phone. They'll look for the best price for you because they have Spartan brands or buy brand names. If you have specific ones you like, like I do for coffee," Yesh said she also has to maintain a low-sodium diet because of her limited activities and found the dietary selection outstanding.

"How can you beat this? They do all the work for you, deliver it and carry it into your house for \$20," said Yesh. "I can't believe more people won't take advantage of this service once they hear about it."

There is no extra charge to have items such as lottery tickets, cigarettes, beer/wine and money orders included in the grocery delivery. RGS accepts coupons and also returns cans and bottles – cashing them out on-site.

In addition to accepting cash and personal checks, drivers also carry hand-held cordless credit card machines to process charges from MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express and the Bridge card (food stamps).

"I have lived and worked in the area for 25 years and people have come to know me and know how I'm trying to help," said Bill. "This service is a vehicle for many people who don't have the time or the ability to grocery shop for themselves."

Dorothy Balla says the convenience and affordability of the service isn't the biggest appeal.

"My three children are great, but I hate to have to depend on them to take me shopping," said the 79-year-old Westland resident.

Balla has received four deliveries since she first learned of the service in November from a neighbor who also uses RGS.

"They have been so pleasant and personable. Everything is very fresh and just as I ordered it," she said.

Once the initial grocery order is processed from the master list, a more modified list is mailed to clients that features the brands and products they requested with room for changes and additions to size, quantity and brand name.

A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided so they can drop their next order in the mail free of charge.

If you would like more information about the grocery delivery service, call (734) 525-2300.



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