

ZOO

FROM PAGE B1

Ethical Treatment of Animals) learned about them. That came as no surprise to any of us who regularly cover and visit the park. During the Sunset at the Zoo benefit in June, Carter looked particularly gloomy after the bears lost a round in court. Finally on Nov. 3 the U.S. government confiscated the six polar bears after investigations revealed violations of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

So this was a day for celebration. Of course, every time an animal is given a chance to escape an unnatural existence, it calls for applause. In the last three years, the Detroit Zoo's rescued more than 30 tigers, bears, cougars, monkeys and

lions, including two from drug houses in Detroit. Next time you're there, read about the Hammy bear. Signs tell of some animals' plight before they reached the sanctuary in Royal Oak.

HOW SHE FARED

"She's very stiff. It's not surprising," said Kagan an hour after Barle was released into her new home on Friday, Dec. 20. "If you'd lived all your life in a cage, you'd be stiff, too."

It didn't take much to get Kagan talking about the frail bear with skin and fur hanging from her bones. He'd been to Washington, D.C., and back to help influence legislation banning polar bears in U.S. circuses so that, in the future, those animals wouldn't suffer from sores developed while lying on the concrete and steel bottoms

of cages.

Barle's fur seemed unnaturally white. The seven other bears in the Arctic Ring of Life usually look yellowish to downright dirty. That's from rolling in the dirt, jumping into one of three pools, and then back out again and into the dirt. It's what makes a bear's life fun. Bears live into their 40s in captivity, so Barle has plenty of years left to enjoy this particular activity.

"She weighs 350 pounds. Female polar bears usually weigh between 400 to 500 pounds, so she's a little on the small size. She's going to put on some muscle."

"We're just thrilled the U.S. government did the right thing through the Department of Fish and Wildlife Service. Sometimes these rescues take years. We estimate she was with the circus 12-13 years. She was taken out of the wild when

very young and sent to a trainer. She was trained to be a clown. That's not a great destiny to live a life of ridicule."

No, it's not for anyone especially bears, who have no say in the matter. Seven polar bears were rescued from the circus, one in March 2002. Alaska is now doing well at the Baltimore Zoo. Sadly, one of the remaining six died shortly after being rescued on Nov. 5. The rest went to good homes in zoos in Tacoma, Wash., and Charlotte, N.C., thanks to the efforts of PETA, the Humane Society of the United States, the U.S. Congress, and the Detroit Zoo.

IN A NEW HOME

Barle was kept in quarantine for a month at the Detroit Zoo before release into the tundra portion of the Arctic Ring of Life. She'll be kept separate from the other bears for the next couple of weeks until she learns all the rules and routines of her new home. One of the first crevices she conquered was a cave near the entrance of the Arctic Ring of Life. She inspected the interior then went outside and climbed to the top where she proceeded to sniff the air, first in one direction then another.

"She's smelling to learn her environment," Carter said. "Bears love to smell. She's very placid, very mellow. She's going to take her time. From the very beginning when she first arrived on a FedEx flight (Nov. 19), she surprised us with her mellowness. Then, on the ride coming from the airport, she was alert and interested. We didn't know what to expect. Now she's doing what bears do. Smell is so important to bears. She's climbed up to the highest point to be bombarded by smell."

"Animals in a circus spend the majority of their time in a cage. It's going to take a while to develop muscle. Eventually we'll introduce her to the other bears one by one, first to Sissy. They're a lot alike. She's also small."

Carter seemed quite pleased with the addition of the eighth polar bear.

"Eight was our goal when we designed the Arctic Ring of Life (which opened in October



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE DETROIT ZOO

Bears don't pant but the heat of Puerto Rico left them with no other way to cool themselves.



The cramped conditions make life difficult for the bears.



There's not much to do when you're hot and miserable but lay around and wait for time to pass.

2001). We're now entirely up and running. The ice machine is making 300-pound blocks filled with carrots and other treats for the bears to play with."

It's no wonder she's been smiling all morning long, bear keeper Elise Poulsen said.

"She's not being particularly active. She needs to learn the environment," Poulsen said. "She's learning how to step on different terrain. She's not used to rocks and pebbles. When she goes into the water is up to her. Their mothers teach them to swim. We don't know what level she's at because she was taken away from her mother so young. She can work into it slowly."

And visitors can watch her take those first steps and swim. Winter is a wonderful time to go to the zoo. North American animals become more active as temperatures drop. A few of my

co-workers, my sister Gwen and I spent several hours there last February. Just dress in layers and don't forget the hat, scarf, boots and gloves. As my mom used to say, this is no time to be beautiful. You're here to have fun. Walk through the Polar Passage, a 70-foot acrylic tunnel, and marvel at the bears as they swim within nose length. On Dec. 20, the seals were playing and poking each other with their noses.

WILD WINTER

"Most people don't know the zoo is open in winter," said Rana Kozou, zoo publicity person. "It's an opportunity to see animal behaviors that are different. Arctic fox change colors from grayish-brown to white. Arctic animals are more active like polar bears, Arctic fox and Siberian tigers and they do interesting things."

"Wolverines have been known to make snow angels. There are snow monkeys in the hot tubs which are kept at 103 degrees in winter. They jump in and out and look so cute. It's like the hot springs in their native Japan. The red pandas' coats are beautiful."

"Elephants, zebras, giraffes like to stay indoors where it's an up-close look. You're just 10 feet away. There are 15 indoor buildings so if they get cold they can warm up inside."

"We tell people bundle up. There's hot chocolate for purchase or duck indoors to see the reptiles, river otter, amphibian, Wildlife Interpretive Gallery, Penguinium, Butterfly Garden and exotic birds where it's 80 degrees with lush tropical gardens. And every weekend we have Wild Winter activities like arts and crafts or ice carving. On Saturday, Jan. 4 (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.), we'll have students from Henry Ford Community College carving sculptures at the front of the zoo."

For more on Wild Winter, visit the Web site at www.detroitzoo.org or call (248) 541-5717. See you at the zoo.

Have an interesting idea for a story? Call Observer & Eccentric arts reporter Linda Ann Chomik at (248) 923-2945 or send e-mail to lchomik@ee.homecomm.net.

OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About	Arctic Ring of Life Polar Bears 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM Admission: \$10.00 Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About Includes: Polar Bear Encounter, Polar Bear Feeding, Polar Bear Walk-About
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Brides To Be

Observer & Eccentric

Presents...

The Biggest, Best Brides-To-Be Show

Register to WIN at Brides-To-Be Shows or log on to www.bridestobeshows.net and fill out the "One Stop Shopper"

"1st Biggest Show of The Year!"
SUNDAY, JANUARY 5 - 12:00pm
HILLCREST BANQUET CENTER
Clinton Township

"Biggest Winter Show"
SUNDAY, JANUARY 26 - 12:00pm
HYATT REGENCY
Dearborn

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2 - 12:00pm
MAC & RAY'S BANQUET CENTER
Warren Township

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 - 12:00pm
HOLIDAY INN
Livonia

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23 - 12:00pm
POLO FIELDS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB
Ann Arbor

SUNDAY, MARCH 2 - 12:00pm
FARMINGTON HILLS MANOR
Farmington Hills

SUNDAY, MARCH 9 - 12:00pm
NORTHFIELD HILTON
Troy

WIN A \$10,000⁰⁰ DREAM WEDDING

- A 14kt Diamond Engagement Ring containing .75ct tw of Diamonds from Elegant Jewellers
- Quintessential All Inclusive 4 Day Jamaican Honeymoon at Complex
- \$10,000 in Tuxedos for your Wedding Party by President Tuxedo
- Stashbox 2 (2) Entertainment Wedding DJ Package
- Deluxe Engagement Session by A Pair of Photographers
- Hairstyle, Nails & Tanning by Studio 58 Hair & Nail Salon
- Complete Make-Up for the Entire Wedding Party & \$50 Certificate for the Bride by Mary Kay - Sherr Serrano
- Free Bridal Veil, Gown & Pouch from Bridal Veils & Shoes Unlimited (\$275.00 value)
- Wedding Cake by Mrs. Maddox Cake Shop
- Custom Invitations and Ceremony Programs by Antiquarys Printing
- \$500 Gift Package by Christian Dior
- \$500 in Bridal Accessories from the Manhattan Collection
- Therapeutic Massage for the Bride & Groom by N.E.A.R. Perfect
- Free Arch Rental or Candelabra from Norma's Exquisite Garden
- Designer Dress from Almay & Forever Jinda
- Chocolate Fountain w/ chocolate and delivery included by The Chocolate City
- Double Heart Ice Sculpture by Ice Dreams

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS \$7.00 IN ADVANCE AT WWW.BRIDESTOBESHOWS.NET OR CALL (586) 228-2700 \$8.00 AT THE DOOR