

# Going above and beyond the call of duty

The humans at Aspen Valley have developed a real admiration for the caring co-operation of the Ontario Provincial Police and, I'm very sure, if some of the creatures here could really understand, they would join with us in a sincere thank you.

Daily we hear just how busy OPP officers are — the miles of road they have to drive, the weather with which they have to contend and, of course, the accidents and the drivers who are about to cause them, or do cause them. Their list of responsibilities is endless in the pursuit of a safe Ontario. However, they are not bound to care about the wildlife injured on the highways. In our experience, though, they do care.

Traffic on highways and roadways is a continual threat to wildlife. A deer will instinctively avoid confrontation with a wolf or a human. A bear will not knowingly confront a tractor-trailer. A raccoon or a fox does not instinctively know that a car, even a small one, can kill it. Yet these fatalities and accidents

## WILDLIFE SANCTUARY



BY AUDREY TOURNAY

occur often.

We have had so much help from the OPP. A bear near Bracebridge was hit by a car so the OPP called us and went out and found it and it came to the sanctuary. In the deep snow this winter, deer were leaping out from the drifts along the highways. The officers waited by an injured animal until we arrived and then helped us move it onto a stretcher and

into the van.

Jai responded to an OPP call when Tony was on the road to Sudbury to pick up another orphaned bear. She found a deer, badly injured, a little off the road. The officer came through the snow to help and he didn't even have snow boots on.

The evening of Christmas, just as we were on our way to dinner, Tony got a call on the van phone. A little bear was wandering, starving, up near Britt, north of Parry Sound. Two OPP officers found it by the road and waited with it

until Tony could get there even though they knew it would take more than an hour. They had a phone if they were needed somewhere else. When Tony got there the officers had the starving cub. It is now doing well.

So, all of us here want to join with

the deer and the bears and say, "OPP, thank you."

Visiting hours at the Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, near Rosseau, are Wednesday afternoon and Sunday afternoon from 1 to 4 p.m. For more information call 705 732-6368.

Photo by Jai Longhurst



**SAVED BY THE POLICE.** It may not be in the mandate of the Ontario Provincial Police to look after injured animals but many officers make sure they do. The Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary often gets calls from the OPP regarding injured animals, such as this deer that is recovering at the sanctuary.

## Muskoka becomes designated arts community

When something is worth doing it is worth doing quickly.

At least that is what councillors from the District of Muskoka felt when approached by Muskoka Arts and Crafts to help promote Muskoka's thriving arts community. This month a resolution has been passed declaring Muskoka a designated arts community — something that happened quicker than expected.

Sara Hall, the president for Muskoka Arts and Crafts, said an artist from Warkworth visited to give a workshop and mentioned that his village was a designated arts community and how it really benefitted local artists.

"As soon as he started talking a light bulb went off," said Hall. "It just made so much sense to get Muskoka designated. From national icons, international musicians, renowned artists as well people who are picking up a paint brush for the first time. Muskoka inspires creativity. Our artists have become as integral as our landscape."

Hall and the MAC committee approached the District of Muskoka and were directed to the economic development committee. Its members welcomed the proposal as a way of being able to promote Muskoka and it was instantly put before the main council that fully supported the initiative.

"It all happened so fast," said Hall. "There was so much support for



**BEST IN SHOW.** Muskoka has an incredible depth of artistic talent, much of which was on display at the recent Muskoka Arts and Crafts spring members show. Annie Vietch's *Nine* took two top awards, The Ruth Upjohn Memorial Award for best in show and the Doug Gatcke Award for members' choice.

Photo by Jake Good

the motion as well. It is great timing as we have another busy summer season ahead and we can get to work promoting all the art Muskoka has to offer. Muskoka Arts and Crafts helps promote hundreds of visual artists but there is so much more here. We have such a wealth of writers, storytellers, musicians that

will benefit from this."

Hall says that arts and culture are important to making a community stronger by contributing to the economy and quality of life of its citizens. Focusing on the arts will help to promote Muskoka as a year-round destination and this designation can be used by a variety of organizations and

groups such as Muskoka Tourism, the chambers of commerce, resorts, businesses, theatre and film, private and public galleries, studio tours, along with arts and music festivals.

"By passing this motion to declare Muskoka as a designated arts community, council has given the arts community visible

support and a tool for businesses and organizations to further develop Muskoka's reputation as a culturally vibrant area," added Hall.

Formally started in 1963, MAC represents a growing membership of more than 360 artists and art supporters. Through its annual art and craft shows, gallery

exhibitions, student art bursaries, permanent collection, workshops, lectures, open drawing studios, web site, outreach to community groups and schools, advocacy and lobbying, it helps to foster an environment where artists thrive and patrons can engage in the visual arts.