

---

# RESCUE 911

---

**O**n January 13, 1999, Bob Jarman of Mount Brydges, Ontario, Canada, was charged with Failure to Provide Care, section 446 (1) (c) of the Criminal Code of Canada.

Mr. Jarman raised ferrets on goat food in small, wooden boxes that filled with snow in the middle of the Canadian winter while the water in their dishes froze solid. Mr. Jarman sold unaltered, unvaccinated ferrets at local livestock auctions. Mr. Jarman used tweezers to snap off the canine teeth of his ferrets. Failure to provide care, indeed.

## Rescue Me!

by *Randy S. Belair*

*The Ferret Aid Society*

*Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

In December 1997, the Ferret Aid Society of Toronto received a call from the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (S.P.C.A.). They were asking for assistance with some ferrets. We were told that there was a man in possession of more than 60 ferrets that were not being cared for. There was no running water on the property, and the ferrets were not fed regularly. As President of the Ferret Aid Society, I urged the removal of all of the ferrets and promised to find permanent homes for them.

A few weeks went by and the ferrets remained in the same conditions. I contacted the London S.P.C.A. (a local chapter of the Ontario S.P.C.A.), which was overseeing this case, and spoke with Inspector Mike Draper. Inspector Draper was sure that the ferrets needed to be removed from the property, but he said that he did not have the manpower to do so. Repeatedly I volunteered our Society's help, but repeatedly my offer was declined.

Having previous experience with backyard ferret breeders, I asked Inspector

Draper during one of our conversations to check the ferrets' teeth. Something in my gut was telling me that the ferrets were in trouble. Inspector Draper called me back a few moments later and told me that all of the ferrets' canine teeth had been cut. Again, I urged that the ferrets be removed from the breeder's possession with the assistance of the Ferret Aid Society, but my offer was turned down.

On New Year's eve 1997, I made what would be my last telephone call to the London S.P.C.A.. It was then that I was informed that the S.P.C.A. had ordered that the ferrets be sold. The owner sold more than 30 at a London livestock auction. None of the ferrets had been altered or given shots.

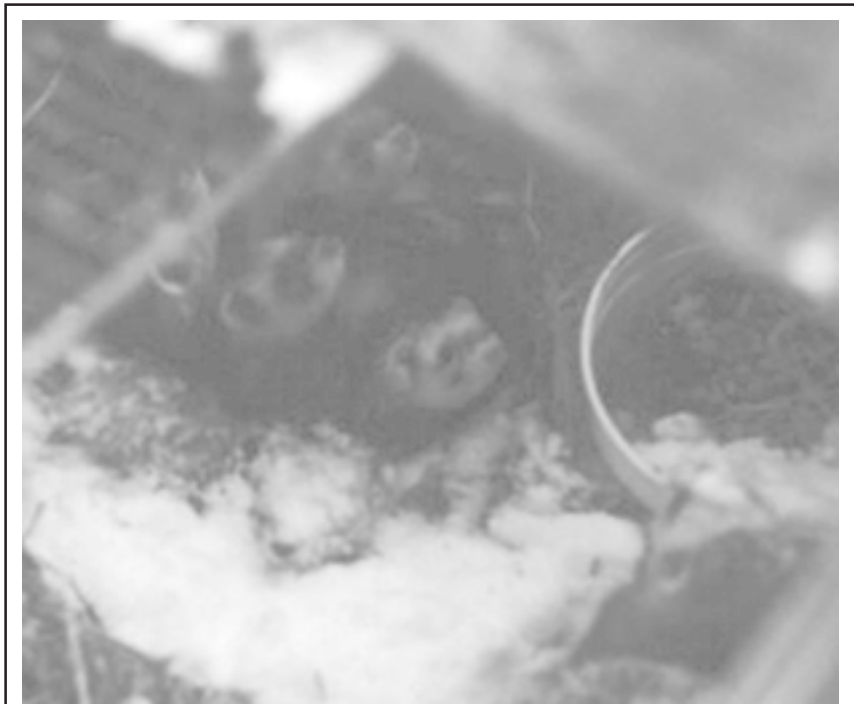
Angered by this lack of concern for the ferrets' welfare, I panicked and told Inspector Draper that the Ferret Aid Society would buy the remaining ferrets.

He swore that the ferrets at the farm would be gone in two days. We had to get there soon. I told him we would come out the following day, January 1.

On New Year's Day, a group of caring volunteers and I drudged through the snow and cold to save the ferrets. We were accompanied by Inspector Draper and his wife, who were both on days off.

Upon arriving at the farm in Mount Brydges (near London), which used to be a city dump, we stepped into hell. The temperature was -30 degrees Celsius, and the cold pierced my skin. Looking past the farm, I could see old car parts rusting away, garbage, and filth.

Mr. Jarman lived in a small trailer cap that covered the bed of a pickup truck. He had no running water or electricity for himself, let alone the animals in his



*These ferrets were among the first rescued from the property of Mr. Bob Jarman. The white areas of the photograph show where snow has invaded their pen and covered the goat pellets that were their food. All photographs provided by the Ferret Aid Society of Toronto.*

---

# RESCUE 911

---



*RESCUE (continued from page 31)*

eventually reached the farm, they were greeted by more than a dozen cats and two chained dogs. There was no water in sight, and it was so cold that the cats had icicles hanging from their whiskers. The food for the cats was frozen bread under a makeshift, un-insulated shelter. The dogs had no shelter. There were chickens and a rooster running wild.

Countless calls to Mr. Jarman received no answer so one of the volunteers carefully walked to the door of the trailer cap, now sitting on a bed of snow, and tapped on the open door. Mr. Jarman popped his head out and said hello. He didn't recognize any of the volunteers from the previous year and told them that even though he had been or-

dered not to have ferrets he still did. Unfortunately, he had sold all but one of his ferrets at auction that very day.

Again the path to the remaining ferret led through the field and past the now many horses to a small, wooden box in the snow. Mr. Jarman pulled out a small, clearly emaciated and dehydrated male ferret from the straw-filled box.

Quickly, the ferret was whisked back to a warm and safe car. Mr. Jarman began talking about the S.P.C.A. and about how last year and "a bunch of weeks ago" the S.P.C.A. had taken all of his ferrets. He then proceeded to tell how he cut the ferrets' teeth out to prevent them from biting. When asked how he did this, he said, "Oh, I take tweezers

and just snap them out." He then asked if he should do that to the ferret just rescued. Horrified, everyone said no.

The rescuers soon left the farm and headed home. Snowy, as the little albino came to be called, soon had a bowel movement at the shelter. I cannot imagine what went through his little head, besides sheer desperation for food, to make him eat the straw he slept in.

It took about three days for Snowy to pass all of the straw he had in his belly. He also had an abscess on his back about the size of a small egg that required surgery and antibiotics.

The morning following Snowy's arrival, I contacted the London S.P.C.A. to let them know that Mr. Jarman still had ferrets. To my pleasant surprise, Inspector Locke was now more than willing to help us press criminal charges against Mr. Jarman.

So, on January 13, 1999, Bob Jarman of Mount Brydges, Ontario, was charged with Failure to Provide care, section 446(1)(c) of the Criminal Code of Canada. Unfortunately, in Canada any animal offense is only a minor conviction and is not indictable as in most parts of the United States. A new bill is being put forth to change this, however.

In most of Ontario, a case of cruelty against ferrets has never been brought before the courts, so we have started a letter writing campaign to show our support for Snowy and Mr. Jarman's previous ferrets. Please show your support for the case against Mr. Jarman by writing a letter (please include your address for verification) to

London Criminal Court  
c/o Prosecutor's Office  
PO BOX 5600 Term. A  
London, Ontario  
N1A 2P3 Canada