

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

A.R.K. Association to **R**escue **K**ritters is a Wildlife Rehabilitation Center located in Maple Valley, between Houghton Lake and St. Helen. Our purpose is to rescue, rehabilitate and return to the wild injured and orphaned wild animals. We are available to help in Roscommon, Crawford, Ogemaw, Gladwin, Clare, and Missaukee Counties. We offer help to people who find themselves in unpleasant situations with our wildlife neighbors, such as raccoons in the chimney, or under the pontoon boat cover, squirrels in the attic, skunks under the shed, etc. We spend countless hours bottle-feeding orphaned fawns, raccoons, bunnies, squirrels, opossums, and birds. We make hundreds of trips to pick up, or rescue animals caught in unfortunate situations, that just require a little assistance on our part to help get the animal fixed up and ready to go back to the wild, the way life was originally intended to be. Many times, all that is required is just a little extra support during a difficult time.

A.R.K. Association to **R**escue **K**ritters was formed in January of 2001 by Director Ruth Fruehauf. Ruth and her husband Dennis had been “mom & pop” in-home rehabilitators for seven years, the numbers of animals coming for help kept increasing until it wasn’t possible to continue without help. We held our first meeting on January 31, 2001. A decision was made at that time to become a Non-profit Organization and **A.R.K.** was born. Our summer was busy and we had wonderful help from many volunteers. The following September, we received an e-mail from Critter Alley, a Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Grand Ledge, that they were closing their doors and wanted to donate all of their assets to **A.R.K.** That incredible offer changed everything. We were able to purchase a one bedroom log cabin with a 2.5 car attached garage, plus other detached garages on one acre, which abuts Ruth and Denis’ property to the rear. This gave us a Wildlife Rehabilitation Center on a main road with an additional acre of property; the attached garage is now a nursery, complete with incubators, stainless steel cages, a refrigerator and everything necessary for us to help the hundreds of animals that come through the Center each year. The one bedroom is now an Emergency Room for caring for the many injuries we see each year. The laundry room handles about a dozen loads of laundry a day in “baby season”. All of this is now called **“THE ARK”**. We were truly blessed when Critter Alley chose us to donate all of their assets to, but it also puts a great deal of responsibility and pressure on an organization that isn’t even two years old yet. The number of animals that have come into the Center has more than tripled this year.

Our organization is strongly focused on education, and the director is in the process of obtaining a Federal Education Permit. Along with all of the wonderful equipment that we received from Critter Alley, we were also given custody of all six of their Education Birds. We plan to go into the schools, in the communities we serve, and be able to take with us those owls and hawks, which were used to help the children from the Lansing area learn about the important part that the Raptors play in the Ecology of our state and the world. We hope to instill in the children the importance of caring for all of the animals. We have been working with the Ecology clubs at the high school and middle school in Houghton Lake and hope to involve the Gerrish-Higgins Schools, Crawford, and Ogemaw Schools this spring. The Boy and Girl Scout Troops have also worked very hard on several cage building projects and Spring Clean up days.

We are growing very rapidly and we have an incredible group of volunteers that put in countless hours helping with the animals, the clean up, the cage building, and especially the feedings. You can't imagine how much noise 48 baby raccoons make when they all want to be the next one fed. But without these dedicated caring people, this would only be a one-bedroom log cabin with an attached 2.5 car garage, with 2 other detached garages. Because of [them](#) we have a truly amazing adventure going on here everyday!