

## Sparky ready to enter wild forests again

SPOKANE (AP) — Even as a wildfire closed in on their homes, residents of the Ponderosa subdivision took the time to direct wildlife rescuers to a frightened and injured black bear.

As a result, Sparky is alive and nearly recovered from burns suffered in the fires that swept through Eastern Washington six weeks ago. He'll soon be released to a new home.

When Lorraine Durick of the Wild Animal Clinic first saw Sparky, he was clinging to the top branches of a pine tree near the Spokane Valley subdivision.

"He was shaking from exhaustion and fright," Durick said.

She and her husband, Michael Durick, founded the non-profit clinic at Monroe 13 years ago to treat sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in Washington state.

Sparky had a number of first- and second-degree burns, including ones on his paws and rump.

After treatment, he will be released, probably near Okanogan rather than in his fire-damaged former home range, Durick said.

"We were really concerned for a while about infection, pneumonia and problems with his lungs because of smoke," Durick said.

SpokAnimal C.A.R.E., another licensed animal rehabilitator, rescued a lost lynx, three badly burned horses and a burned cat during the October fires. Director Gail Mackie said she didn't even know the Wild Animal Clinic people had traveled to the area because of the fires, but holds them in high regard.

"They're willing to take on things that other people can't," Mackie said of the Duricks. "They're wonderful people, and they do a really good job."

During the Oct. 16 fires, the clinic's volunteers raced from one threatened area to another, rescuing deer, raccoons and horses. They were in the Ponderosa area when they heard a citizen's band radio message about a black bear seen fleeing the flames.

People working feverishly to save their homes stopped long enough to point the workers toward the bear in the pine tree, where he had climbed to escape the fire burning the nearby woods, Durick said.

Clinic employees hit the 500-pound bear with tranquilizer darts, then loaded him into a horse trailer for the six-hour trip to the clinic. He was given strong antibiotics for two weeks.

The clinic treats 1,000 to 1,500 animals a year. Few of its rescues are as emotional as what staff members and volunteers experienced during the fires, Durick said.

## DNA tests may solve murder mysteries

**PORTLAND** (AP) — Police investigators plan to use DNA tests in an attempt to link a man being held on unrelated charges to two rape-killings in the Portland area 10 years ago.

Portland police detective Mike Hefley said Monday that Alvin Harold Brown, 36, is a suspect in the deaths of four women who disappeared over a 30-day period in the spring of 1981.

Brown was arrested Thanksgiving Day on third-degree robbery and aggravated theft charges. The following day, blood was drawn from him to determine if his DNA genetic makeup matches that found in semen in the remains of Kimberly Ann Stevens, 17, and Norene K. Davis, 31.

Stevens disappeared on May 8, 1981, while walking to her

boyfriend's house. Her remains were found two days later, on Mother's Day, near a southwest Portland church. She had been strangled.

Davis, a bartender at a Beaverton-area cocktail lounge, disappeared May 18 after receiving a phone call at work telling her that the friend of a roommate had been in an accident and needed help. There had been no accident. Her body was found a few hours later in a wooded area in Tigard.

DNA tests could not be used as evidence in the other two deaths because of the length of time between the women's deaths and the discovery of their bodies, Hefley and Washington County sheriff's detective Paul Lazenby said at a news conference.

Melina Crist, 17, was reportedly missing May 5, 1981, after her mother dropped her off at

the Sylvania campus of Portland Community College. Her skull was found by construction workers in southwest Portland 2 years later.

Sheila Burnett, 57, disappeared May 29, 1981, after leaving a note to her husband saying their son had been in a traffic accident and she was leaving with someone who had offered her a ride. Again, there was no accident.

Burnett's remains were found by police beneath a piece of sheet metal in the back yard of a Tigard home last August. The home had been rented by Brown at the time of Burnett's disappearance, Hefley said.

"In about the last year and a half, due to new technology involving DNA, Detective Lazenby and I got together and began preparing an affidavit to seize Alan Brown's blood specifically for DNA testing," Hefley

said. Stevens and Davis had been raped, Hefley said. Investigators were unable to determine if the other two women were raped.

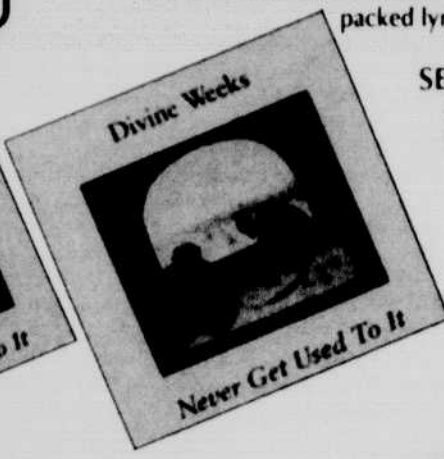
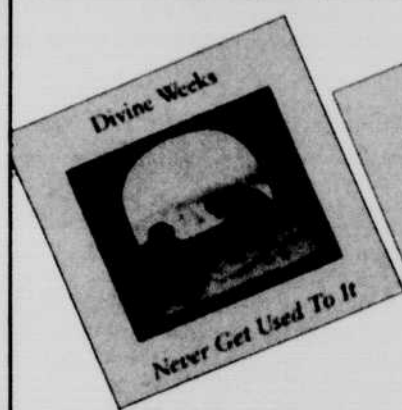
Brown was arraigned Monday in Multnomah County Circuit Court on the aggravated theft and robbery charges. Judge Ancer Haggerty ordered bail to remain at \$1 million.

Brown's court-appointed attorney, Ingrid Swenson, argued that the bail was excessive considering the charges. But deputy district attorney Gregg Lowe said Brown is a suspect in multiple murders. When Brown was arrested, he was packing and told investigators that he was moving to Idaho, Lowe said.

Lowe also noted that the 1981 murders occurred while Brown was free on bail on a rape charge.

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