FEBRUARY 2 IS GROUNDHOG DAY
Dear friends,

January is the month to stop and remember the year that just passed and decide on ways to make the coming year even better. The Kindness Club has had a great year. Charlotte Baker's books in school libraries throughout America are being read by new students each year. They read the special note to the reader in the back of the book, and then write and ask how they can become Kindness Club members. Several magazines have published special articles about The Kindness Club during this year, and many more members have joined when they read these articles. Through the efforts of all these additional Kindness Club members, many more animals have been helped.

Every division of The Humane Society has had a good track record for 1973. Many more people are learning about the pet population problem, and getting involved to help us solve it. Veterinarians, at their annual meeting, have agreed to help us solve this problem. More and more teachers are teaching respect for animals in the classroom. Zoos are making significant improvements that benefit their animals. Enforcement of federal laws is improving because people have written government officials and asked them to get busy and enforce these laws that help animals. We saved 19 wild horses from being slaughtered, we have sued two government agencies, and we are now watching to see to it the horses are cared for properly. Now we're trying to save the whales from extinction.

How many animals did you help in 1973? You may be able to count those you helped directly, but if you wrote letters to public officials, told your friends and neighbors about animal problems and how they could help, sent a donation for the animals to KIND, or wrote a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, there is no way of knowing how many hundreds of animals may have been helped by what you have done.

Make a list of things you think you can do during the coming year that will help animals or people. Don't forget the animals at the pound, or people in rest homes or in the hospital. A smile or a friendly gesture may make someone else's day more pleasant. If you are happy and friendly, those around you will probably be, too.

Someone once said that this is the first day of the rest of your life. It's true. Right now, in January, make plans for what you want your life to be, helping others. By helping and doing nice things for others, make 1974 the very best year yet. The rewards that come back to you in gratitude and affection will more than pay you for the little effort it takes.

Your friend,

[Signature]

GROUND HOG DAY

February 2 is Ground Hog Day. It is said that if he comes out of his burrow and sees his shadow, he will return to hibernate for six more weeks of winter. If he isn't scared by his shadow, spring will soon be here. Known also as woodchuck, or whistle-pig, the ground hog is the only animal that has a special day on the calendar of his own.
HELP SAVE THE WHALES. Use the poster to tell about the problem and the petition to let people sign their protest to the killing of whales. This packet can be used in school in the front lobby, the hall, the library, or just circulated in each classroom. Be sure to get permission to put it up, then order the packet for just $1.00.

SPECIAL FUND TO BAN THE TRAP
Donations received to date to help The Humane Society ban the steel jaw trap now total $47.75. KIND members who want to help ban the trap may wish to send a donation to KIND.

BARN CATS
Many people keep cats in their barns to control rodents. Some believe a starved cat is a better mouser, but this isn't true. A well-fed healthy cat is a better hunter than a weak, sick cat. If you keep barn cats, be sure they are fed properly every day.

A POEM OF ST. FRANCIS
All creatures feel as we do;  
All creatures long for happiness as we do;  
All the animals of this world live, suffer and die just as we do;  
Therefore they are like us;  
Created by Almighty God--our brothers.

COUNTRY LIFE
If you live in the city, you may have dreamed many times how nice it would be to live in the country. There are many people today leaving the cities, and returning to the country life. But rural life is not all fun and games, especially if you can't just buy a house and move.

I'm one of those back-to-the-land people. But I built my cabin by hand. It was hard work, and there were many problems. I discovered I was too pampered by modern conveniences and couldn't endure the hardships the pioneers had experienced. It was so tough that at times I almost gave up. But there were fun times too, like the bull that stole cookies, the bear that got into the garbage, and the skunk that came in the dog door.

Future articles will tell about these experiences and what I went through to be able to live in the country. I wouldn't have it any different today, but I would have done many things differently.

Just as you plan how you will help others this new year, it is important to plan any big project well. Otherwise something will come up short. I hope you'll enjoy learning how one country home was built and what it took to get it done. Perhaps it will give you ideas on what you will plan as you grow up, or help you realize everything can't be just as we always want it to be. I can't hear the sound of the stream from my house, but if I had built it where I first planned, it would have washed away in the first flood. We've had five floods since then. I'll settle for knowing the stream is there, and walking down the hill and sitting on its banks, when I want to listen to it for awhile. So it will be as you plan for your own future. There may be compromises, but, if so, you will learn to make the best of them, and build your life around them. Watch for the ARAHKUN Builds a House feature.

WHOOPING CRANES THREATENED BY BOMBERS
The Air Force practices bombing raids on Matagorda Island, near the wildlife refuge that is the winter home of the whooping cranes. They don't use real bombs, but the Interior Department claims the planes high-speed, low-level flights are upsetting the birds. Fifty-five cranes were counted last year; only 46 have been seen this winter. Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger could issue an order to practice the bombing raids somewhere else. He is a birdwatcher himself, and if enough KIND members wrote him, he might help protect the whooping cranes. Write him at The United States Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301.
Third Prize Winner in Last Summer's Photo Contest Has Fred Deckant, Age 10, of Canfield, Ohio. Photo is a Picture of the Goose Family That Lives on the Deckant Pond. Fred's Mother Wrote a Story About Their Geese to Send with the Photo.

"Baby Goose"—You Know Who You Are

One summer our family decided to buy a pair of geese as 'watch-geese' for our small farm. We had just had our beloved shepherd dog put to sleep because of a severe arthritis condition and we had heard that geese are very protective of their own home. We selected a pair we liked, a beautiful buff-colored pair. We brought them home and it was at once very clear that they didn't need us. They were completely independent of us, completely devoted to one another and so we stood as bystanders and admired them, seeing only that they had food to eat.

As winter approached, the family expressed concern about the ice on the pond so we built what we called 'the compound' with fencing and a shed. Finally we herded our flock inside.

All through the winter months, twice a day when it was very cold, we carried water and food to our feathered friends. Then suddenly it was spring and the ice was gone and we set our little friends free. It was a sight to behold. After several months in captivity, they were so happy to get back into the water. On March 10, the mother goose made a nest of straw in the shed in the compound and laid her first egg. For two days she would lay an egg, then skip a day and then lay two more eggs. This went on until there were nine eggs in all. When the final egg was laid, she sat on the nest and the male goose was her protector from that moment on. She barely let us pat her on the head and say kind words to her; she had a job to do and she knew what had to be done. Each day she would turn the eggs to keep all sides evenly warmed and after 30 days, on April 18, the first gosling was born and the father honked loudly, announcing the event. That night another baby was born, very weak, and we wondered what the parents would do. The next morning, the father honked, and out of the nest and down to the water went the family. From that moment on the 'baby' knew exactly who it was. Mother on one side, Father on the other, protecting, encouraging, leading, always there to lend a helping hand.

We did wonder about the weak gosling they had left in the nest and the remaining eggs that were unhatched. Our family, trying to help nature, decided to put the second baby in the pond. Mother and Father were troubled, they knew something was wrong, but they tried to coax the little one to follow them. They nudged it gently but it wouldn't budge. So, standing there, looking back on, looking forward, they tried again, but it was not able to follow. It only lived a few hours and the rest of the eggs never did hatch. Mother goose knew her job was complete when she left the nest.

'Baby Goose' from the moment it was born had the attention and protection of both its parents. Father helped it up the steep bank of the pond, both parents were watchful, honking very loudly whenever danger threatened. In the months since its birth, the parents have taught it to honk and flap its spreading wings. Our 'baby' is now 3 months old and it still has a devoted Mother and Father to care for it. It has grown rapidly and is nearly as large as its mother but it is never out of their sight. It has, of course, gotten a little independent. The parents have even allowed it to stand guard while they nap. Sometimes it will lead the way when the three of them decide to tease the ducks.

We love them all and have been rewarded with much knowledge of their behavior, but a lot remains a mystery. How do they know what to do? There is no doubt in the little goose's mind who he is and I'm sure some day he'll continue with all he's been taught while growing up.

Have you met...

the little animal native to Central and South America, and a few of our southwestern states who walks with his tail upright, travelling in groups, searching for food? He eats most anything and climbs trees easily, hunting for birds and lizards. He is equipped with a funny long snout that probably is useful in sniffing out insects. His sharp little teeth are set in a mouth farther back, and he often uses his hands to hold his food as he eats. His long claws are so sharp he could tear a terrible wound in a dog's stomach if he were ever threatened by one. A cousin of the raccoon, he maintains the same independence, and usually cannot be trusted as a pet. Our friend, pictured above, is Carlotta, who was found in a wilderness area, in a cold climate that she could not live in. She was rescued and brought to the animal shelter. Our veterinarian made friends with her, and taught her to lie down next to the wire of her cage, so she could get her back scratched. Carlotta's special treat is a piece of cookie. She often stretches out on the shelf of her cage like this, watching everyone who passes by. Carlotta's formal name is Nasua narica. See if you can guess who she is.
HAVE YOU GRADUATED?

If you will turn 11 this year or are 11 or older, you shouldn't be receiving this newsletter, but the special DEFENDERS newsletter for people ages 11-14. If you should be getting DEFENDERS instead of The Kindness Club newsletter, please send us your year of birth so we can correct our records. DEFENDERS is still a part of KIND, but its older members are even more active in helping animals. You'll continue to enjoy your newsletters just as much as you did before—perhaps more so.

TIME TO RENEW

If you haven't renewed your KIND membership for 1974, do it now. Use the form below and send your dues in right away.

1974 KIND MEMBERSHIP

New Member □ $2.00

Renewal □ $2.00

Name ____________________________
Birthdate ________________________
Street Address ____________________

City ____________________ State ______ Zip Code ______

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R. Dale Hylton, Editor

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