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Noah's Ark gets a new bear cub

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By Jaya Franklin

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The Noah's Ark shelter for children and animals in Locust Grove has a new furry addition to the family.

A black bear cub was rescued from Detroit, Mich., and now resides at the center. The highly active bear is seven months old and weighs forty pounds.

"He's the only baby black bear at Noah's Ark, and he plays with the dogs at the center," said Charlie Hedgecoth, Jr., board member of Noah's Ark. The center already has an adult black bear and a Himalayan bear.

The baby bear is in a habitat away from the other bears until he gets used to his new environment.

"We want to get him acclimated [to the environment.] He's not on public display right now," said Hedgecoth.

Hedgecoth said the bear was rescued from its owner, because he didn't

Photos by Renee Richardson This 7-month-old bear cub now calls the Noah's Ark Rehabilitation Center home after being rescued from Detroit, Mich.

have a license.

"The bear was flown here through Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport," said Hedgecoth. Hedgecoth said the bear is cuddly and cute, but it is also bi-polar.

"It has split personalities," said Hedgecoth, who said the bear will be happy one minute and then become feisty. "You can never get the wild out of them," he said. The baby bear likes to be clean. He likes to groom himself by licking his feet and paws.

Noah's Ark will conduct a name-the-bear contest from Nov. 1 until Nov. 30. The contest is open to everyone of any age.

"Staff will vote on the name, and the winner will get their picture taken with the bear cub, and receive a T-shirt," said Diane Smith, assistant to the director at Noah's Ark. Smith said the winner will also have the privilege of saying, "I named the new bear at Noah's Ark."

Individuals who want to participate in the contest can send their suggestions through U.S. mail at 712 Locust Grove-Griffin Road, Locust Grove, Ga., 30248, or via e-mail at dsmith@noahs-ark.org.

Noah's Ark is a rehabilitation center for animals, and a group home for children from birth to 17 years old. According to the organization's web site, the center's mission is to bring children and animals together to provide unconditional love, unconditional service and a future full of hope.

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