

# Sea lions, otters, penguins trained

Hot Springs National Park is rapidly becoming the nation's leading center for the training and performance conditioning of unusual and exotic animals and birds.

The latest addition to the spa's facilities for this purpose is Animal Arts, located on nine and one-half acres on Shady Grove Road. The building has 1,500 square feet of training area, and includes a four-foot-deep pool, eight feet by 15 feet in size, for the training of sea lions, otters and penguins.

Bob Garner, a native of Hot Springs, is the owner and trainer at Animal Arts. He is assisted by Johnny Suit. Garner is under contract to Busch Gardens and is presently training birds and animals for a new show at Busch Gardens in Los Angeles, Calif.

The Busch Gardens are located in the proximity of the brewery in every city where Anheuser-Busch operates. They were originally operated as an advertising adjunct to the promotion of the firm's beers and were not intended as a profit-making enterprise. Their popularity has grown to the point that they are now operated as money-making tourist attractions.

The new show which Animal Arts is currently producing involves otters, sea lions, penguins, macaws and cockatoos. The animals and birds are trained to perform specific acts fitting the script of the show, just as their human actor counterparts.

The working script for the new show calls for a sea lion movie director, complete with sunglasses and beret. He must be able to shake hands and clap his flippers. Other sea lions, otters and penguins are being taught to pull a multi-colored macaw on water skis. Naturally the macaw, a land bird, must be taught to water ski.

Most penguins, contrary to popular opinion, are not cold weather birds. Practically all penguins trained to perform come from South America or Africa and are semi-tropical birds. Besides learning to pull a water skiing macaw, Animal Arts penguins are taught to roller skate and come down a slide feet first. The slide will become a simulated expressway in the show in which the birds will eventually perform.

Two kinds of otters are being trained for the production. The large Canadian otters are easily trained to enter the stage carrying a suitcase, giving it to the trainer, shaking hands and waving goodbye. Another act has an otter "lifeguard" diving into a pool and rescuing a drowning "baby" rubber doll.

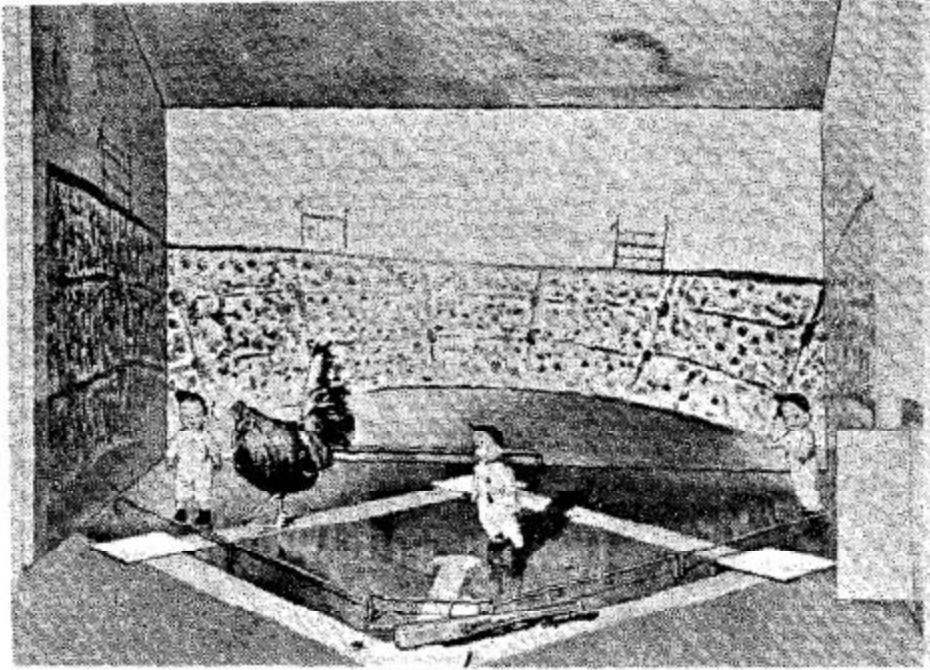
The smaller Asian clawless otter, naturally an aquatic animal, must be taught to enter the water before anything else.

All of the "actors" at Animal Arts are trained by the conditioned response method. Every satisfactory performance is rewarded with a bit of food — fish in the case of the aquatics. An unsatisfactory or incomplete action goes unrewarded. Punishment of any kind is not allowed, but extreme patience on the part of the trainer is a necessity.

Since the performance time of any bird or animal is limited, several of the same species must be trained to do the same act. As an "actor" becomes tired, he is replaced by a "double."

At some time in the future, Garner has an idea for training a travelling show that will feature scenes and activities of Hot Springs National Park. All that's necessary is a performing script. Garner and his "actors" will do the rest.





*The slugger is a chicken*

## IQ Zoo: where the animals learn

When you think about a tight-rope walker, a fire chief and a piano player you don't see any connection — unless you've been to IQ Zoo.

If you have been to IQ Zoo at 380 Whittington, then you know that the tight-rope walker is a chicken, the fire chief is a rabbit and the piano player is a pig and that their connection is the fact that they were all trained at Animal Behavior Enterprises, Inc. of Rt. 6.

If you've been to IQ Zoo you also know about the Educated Hen, Bat Bird and Peter Rabbit's Photo Shop.

While at IQ Zoo you may find out that these same animals have appeared in television commercials and as guests on the Johnny Carson Show and

with Ed Sullivan and Flip Wilson.

IQ Zoo begins its 17th year when it opens February 5 after an extensive interior remodeling. Last summer 50,000 people visited the attraction.

The animal acts will be automated this year for the first time, according to Gary Davis, manager.

A master timing unit that will control lights and sound and will also activate the animals' performances is being installed.

When complete the zoo's main showroom will offer a panorama that includes caged animals behind protective glass. There is a baseball game played by chickens, an act called the Dancing Bantams, a musical extravaganza which features a drumming duck and a piano

playing duck. There is a kissing bunny, a chicken that plays basketball. There is also Bulls Eye Bunny and a fire fighting unit composed of a chicken and a rabbit.

A second showroom in the building which houses the performing animals will have a human in the act. He will introduce the talent and trigger their performances. He will introduce a rabbit, a duck, a chicken and a Macaw called Pogo.

The gift shop in the building is also being expanded to include more souvenirs of the zoo and of Hot Springs along with a variety of novelties ranging from shrunken heads to plastic balls.

Animal Behavior Enterprises, parent group of the zoo was started 25 years ago by a

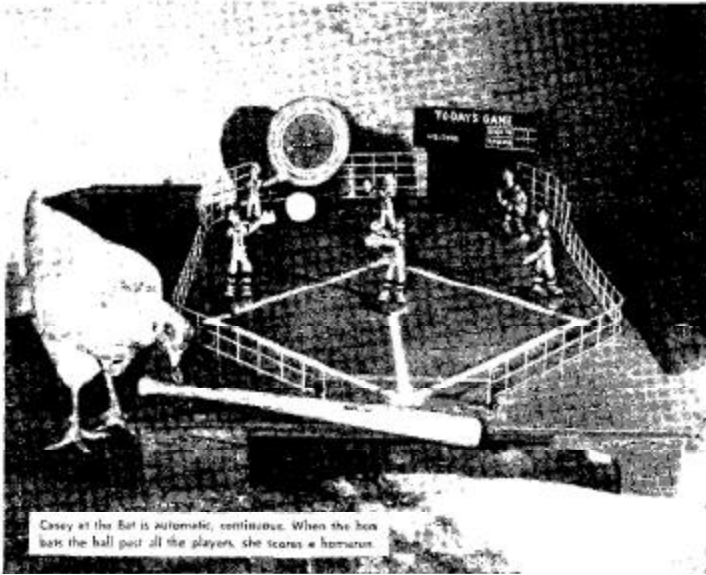
husband and wife team of graduate psychologists, Keller and Marian Breland. Breland died eight years ago. Mrs. Breland continues to supervise the operation that has trained some 15,000 animals.

The ABE farm on Rt. 6 currently has about 500 animals in training and about 20 employees, with Robert Bailey as general manager.

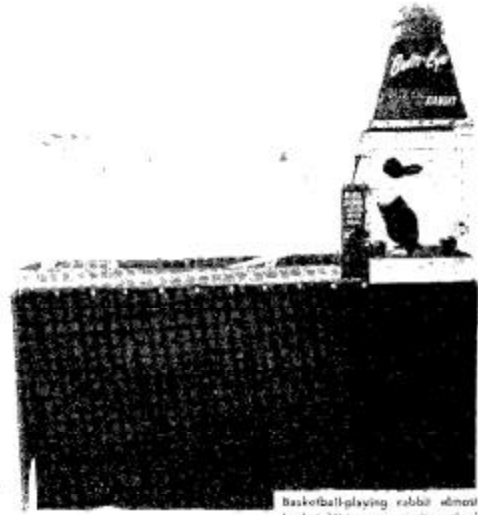
It can boast of being the world's largest producer of coin operated animal acts and of having animals that are now performing in Florida, Colorado and Tennessee.

It can also boast of having trained IQ Zoo's resident fortune teller, a chicken named Henda.

What's next for IQ Zoo? Ask Henda.



Casey at the Bat is automatic, continuous. When the box bats the ball past all the players, she scores a homerun.



Basketball-playing rabbit almost always hits the basket. Victor may position the ball for the rabbit.

## ▶ CHICKENS AND RABBITS

### ● *Play Games* FOR THEIR DINNERS

● The animals you see performing here are the result of something new and different in the use of psychology in animal training. They have been trained by Keller Breland and his wife, Marian, who operate the Animal Behavior Enterprises, Rt. 6, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

These chickens and rabbits have been trained to

perform these acts by the use of the reward system. The reward is food when they do the right thing.

There is no punishment involved in the training at all. If they do the wrong thing, they are simply not rewarded, and gradually the wrong behavior drops out. Once they are trained, they will not forget, and are happy and eager to perform.

# POPULAR MECHANICS

NOVEMBER  
1953

WRITTEN SO YOU CAN UNDERSTAND IT  
VOL. 100 NO. 5



A quiet poker game in the firehouse. Animals learn to take their positions, then remain absolutely motionless

## WHO SAYS ANIMALS ARE DUMB?

*You can teach any animal—hen or cat, pig or rat. Take a lesson from the Brelands, who teach hens to play baseball and pigs to vacuum the floors. Their educated animals are wowing audiences from coast to coast*

By Clifford B. Hicks—Part I

AT A LITTLE FARM near Hot Springs, Ark., I saw a chicken do arithmetic problems and a rooster knock out a tune on a piano. I played a pinball game against a turkey, and invariably lost. I watched a hamster imitate Tarzan on a trapeze, a rabbit play basketball and a dozen chickens swing baseball bats.

After spending a few days in the society

of these incredible creatures, I came away completely convinced that anyone can train an animal or bird, and that most animals can be taught spectacular tricks. You just have to be smarter than the animal.

The Arkansas farm is the research laboratory of Mr. and Mrs. Keller Breland, a pair of graduate psychologists who train animals and birds as a means of studying behavior patterns. By teaching a 10-day-old chick to run up a ramp and ring a bell, a turkey to operate an electric train and a

In 25 minutes, using Brelands' methods, author taught chicken to turn the pages of *Popular Mechanics*. Fowl is rewarded with grain from "reinforcer" at right

