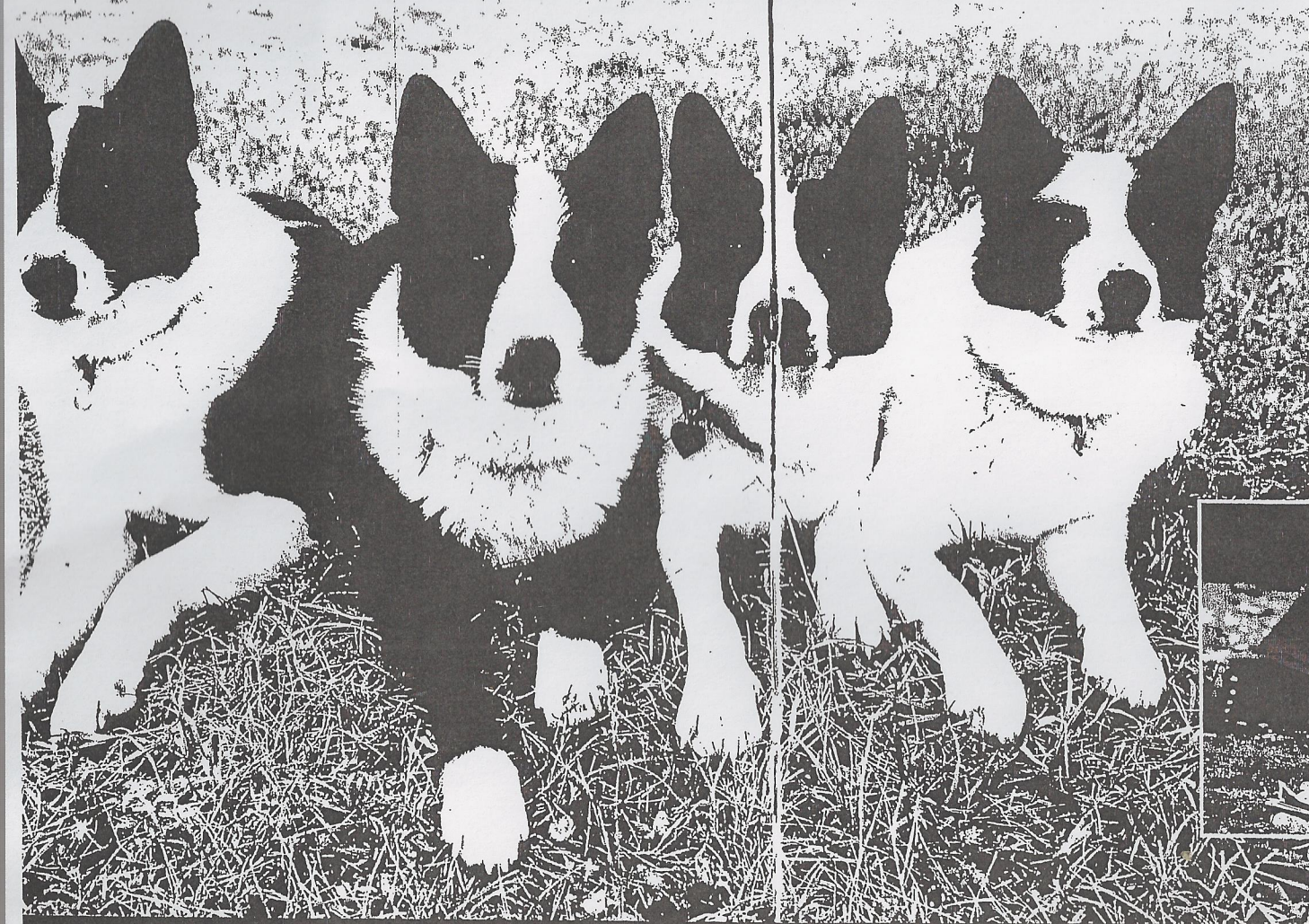


HEY Bear... Beware!



BY CYNTHIA VAN CLEEF
PHOTOS BY TED WOOD

Meet Gila, Cassie, Eilu, and Rio, in the photo at left. These black-and-white wonders are Karelian bear dogs. Karelians (kuh-REE-lee-yuns) are a special breed of dog from the country of Finland, in Europe. People once trained them to hunt bears, moose, and other large animals. The dogs were smart, full of energy, and brave. Today, in some wilderness areas of the American West, Karelians are playing a new role: keeping bears away from places where people live, work, and play.



JOEL SARTORE

r Necessities

did these dogs get their reer? It was the bright Carrie Hunt, their owner iner. She's a scientist idies bears. Carrie knew me bears were looting 's houses, barns, cars, mppgrounds. Others were nging around too close ple. The bears seemed to st their fear of humans. as bad—one of these ould hurt someone. a bear couldn't learn to ay from people, it often be killed.



Woof! Woof!
Where's the rest
of that bear?

Paws and Claws

One of the most important dog-training lessons is learning to bark at the smell of a bear. That's what Tuffy is doing after sniffing a grizzly paw (left).
Good dog, Tuffy!

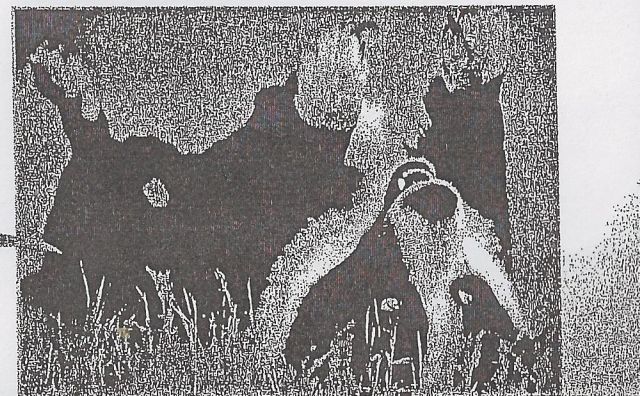
Carrie, seen in the middle of the photo above, and her team often put the dogs' training to the test. In this case, several black bears have been hanging out too close to tourists. They are a possible danger to people and themselves. The dogs pick up the bear scent, and the chase is on!

Bear Scare

The barking pooches have chased a bear into a tree (right, top). Bears don't like loud noises, so they'll stay away from places where they've had a scare. It's a good bet this bear won't come back here!

In the photo at right, is Cassie playing dead? Yes. She's showing what happens to bears that DON'T learn to stay away.

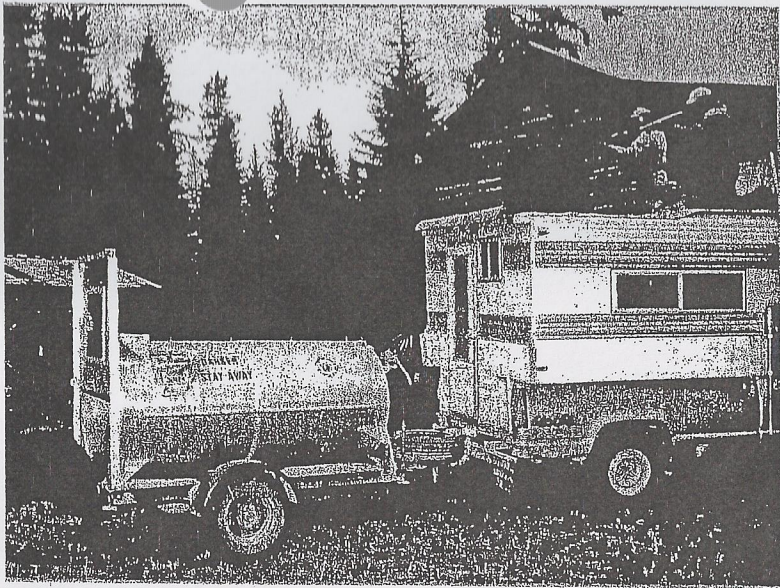
Beware, bear,
or you'll end up
like this!



JOEL SARTORE

Carrie started the Wind bear Institute in Utah. Its n: to teach people and o live together peaceful- re Institute, Carrie began ; Karelians. She discovnat only a very special

puppy has what it takes to make a good bear dog. These puppies go through a super-tough training program. They're taught how to scare bears so they stay far away from people.



Bear Be Gone

Karelians often get called in to deal with "burglar" bears—like Louie. Louie, a grizzly, had broken into a shed looking for food. Now Carrie and some rangers have trapped Louie. The trap is the silver "tube" in the photos at left.

The rangers turn the trap so it faces the forest, not the shed. Then they climb up onto the camper. Can you see them in the photo at left? When the trap is opened, Louie dashes out. The rangers fire rubber bullets at the fleeing bear's rear end. The noise and harmless bullets terrify the bear, sending him on his way.

Then the yowling, howling Karelians set out after Louie (bottom left). They chase him into the forest. Many bears need only one serious scare like this. The goal is to teach Louie a lesson he'll never forget.

Let's Hear It For the Dogs

At day's end, Carrie gives Cassie a high five—"Good job, Cassie!"

Over the years, Carrie's dogs have helped more than 100 bears steer clear of people, once and for all. Carrie and her dogs have also taught many people how to behave around bears. Who knows how many lives—bear and human—they've saved? So let's give these dogs lots of high-fives! 🐾

