

DARE . . .



. . . Strapped into the passenger seat of a patrol car, was the biggest Teddy Bear this clown has ever seen, along with a very special Deputy Sheriff Anderson Hall of Gulfport, Mississippi.

On my cross country trip to the American Association for Therapeutic Humor Conference in Florida I stopped on the Mississippi Gulf of Mexico Shore for one night. Coming out of a gas station, I saw the above car. I spoke to Anderson Hall about his work with D.A.R.E (to Resist Drugs and Violence). After driving off I thought, "There is one very special person, who's not a clown, but has the heart of a clown. Maybe everyone would like to meet him through the Newsletter." So I went about town to try and find him.

Everyone had a story about Anderson and everyone seemed to have just seen him go in one direction or another. When I finally caught up with him, I took the above picture and asked the following questions.

HCH: *How did you get the bear?*

Hall: About three years ago the mascot for DARE was the bear. It was Yogi the bear. So to get the kids excited about the program, I went and bought the six-foot teddy bear. Now we have a lion also, but he's at home today.

HCH: *Now tell me about these pigs.*

Hall: I worked with two drug sniffing pigs named Scruffy and Muffy. Pigs sniff for truffles in France, so why not train them to sniff out drugs? We wanted a dog, but couldn't get one so we got pigs instead.

We have a trailer for the pigs. It's a trailer like a little jail. I put it on the back of the truck. We have eleven Vietnamese Pot belly pigs. I can name seven of them. We have: Baba, Prissy, Chop, Sassie, Lucy, Maggy and Arnold. Maggie just gave birth to four little piglets. We are going to retire Baba and Prissy - they've been here for three years. Arnold weighs about 180,

Prissy weighs about 150, the babies weigh about 15 lbs. As long as you keep feeding them, they will grow bigger. I learned that real fast. Now its time to retire them.

They'll go to the county farm. We have horses, cows, pigs, chickens, rabbits etc. The kids go out to see them. No, we don't eat them! They become like family. I learned to train the pigs from Captain Smith. He is over the K-Nine Division. He said "The kids like Anderson, so give the pigs to Anderson!" So I was blessed with these famous pigs.

HCH: *How do you train pigs?*

Hall: We take like a rabbit cage and put a partition in the middle. In the front would be the food and in the back would be the drugs that you want to train them to sniff. Gradually you pull the food out, but they will be rooting for the drugs. That's how they know the drugs are there. I train them at the county farm.

We don't take them out to the interstate that is for the dogs. But the kids get to see them in town with the pig unit. I'm the Pig Unit. Some of the kids are afraid of dogs, but children are never afraid of pigs. So they get the idea they don't need to be afraid of a trained animal. It's good for our dogs too.

HCH: *Everyone in town told me about your hearse. What is it?*

Hall: It's a 1969 Cadillac hearse that I donated to the sheriff's department. With Sheriff Price's help we got together this idea with MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) and SADD. If you drink and drive someone is going to get hurt. It's part of the sheriff's alcohol awareness program. There are skeletons that light up and there is a skull on the hood. Inside the coffin there is a mirror. We let everyone look into the coffin and they see themselves. Anyone can be a victim of a drunk driver. The point gets across and we have a lot of fun doing it.

HCH: I gave Anderson Hall a bunch of red noses and later sent him THE RED NOSE AWARD for the use of humor in the community above and beyond the call of duty.

