

# KEEPING TRACK . FOLSOM CITY ZOO SANCTUARY

January 2013

In 2013 we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary.

This year KT will take a moment remember the animals who have been rescued, admired and loved.

## It Takes a Whole Forest to Raise a Cub

Black bear cubs **Sequoia** and **Tahoe** continue to make it clear why Nature puts bears in forests. Recently, keepers wired a big former Christmas tree to a post in their enclosure. Quick as a wink the upper branches were stripped bare or removed. Keepers moved wheelbarrows full of pea gravel into the exhibit. The cubs took possibly two minutes to rake all the gravel up from Where Humans Thought It Belonged to where Bears Thought It Should Be. You intuit that the planted cedar tree and the grape vine already are toast. Fortunately, as soon as possible, grants from the **Bosack and Kruger Charitable Foundation** and the **Friends of the Folsom Zoo** will be used to fund an upgrade for this exhibit, providing some interesting, cub proof (is there such a thing?) furniture for this dynamic growing duo. (Sequoia celebrated his 15<sup>th</sup> birthday January 2, 2013)

December 23 to January 20, 1999

## Frost

In years past icy grounds kept the **Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary** closed for several days at a time. During the most recent cold snap there was only one icy patch near the aviaries and signs warned visitors to beware of slippery spots. While the following is not scientific proof of serious cold, in the pasture area there was a two-foot long icicle hanging from a dripping hose.

## Full House

In winter the **Zoo Classroom** is never empty. There was **Thanksgiving Break Camp** and ditto December **Holiday Camp**. In addition to the Classroom area and kid's restroom, there are two staff offices filled with essential stuff. With the advent of cold weather classroom tables were shoved together and chairs stacked to make room for multiple animal cages aligned around the walls.

The attraction is that the Classroom can be kept consistently warm. Elderly Green Amazon **Andy** and African Gray Parrot **Mesa** came in out of the cold. Some are animals that are inside on a regular basis: ferrets **August & Cinnamon**, demanding prairie dog **Holly** and opossum **Orchid**. One of the offices temporarily contained a large cage for ailing feral cat **Hannah** and unwell blind skunk **Gizmo** moved into Zoo Supervisor **Jocelyn Smeltzer's** office. At one point turtles **Lily & Donatello** and their big flat black tubs and heat lamps were arrayed on table tops. (They've since moved to the warm trailer where the snakes currently hang out.)

## Irresistible

If you are working in one of the Classroom offices it is almost impossible not to respond to **Mesa's** ongoing conversations. She's master of a whole repertoire of whistles and songs, and lots of words which sound exactly

like the voice of the human she is mimicking. This is why two **Docents**, each in separate rooms of the Classroom, spent quite a lot of time responding to one of Mesa's whistles only to discover that they were responding to each other. Mesa had other things to do.

## Tortoise Issues

To the untrained eye, tortoises **Lily** and **Donatello** look pretty much alike. However, newcomer Lily and male Donatello are not destined to be friends, since Lily seems dedicated to biting Donatello. (As a Ninja Turtle one would think that he could deal with this.) Other living arrangements have been made.

## Wild Prey #1

As you know, the Zoo purchases frozen mice and rats which, when defrosted, are mostly offered to small carnivores like coyote **Maggie**, so when cleaning her exhibit it was no surprise to find buried formerly frozen mice. It was a surprise to uncover the carcass of a wild rat, not once but twice. Apparently wild game is not to Maggie's taste.

## Wild Prey #2

Wolf dog hybrids **Lincoln & Kya** caught and killed yet another skunk. Kya had cuts and scratches on her face so she may have been the main predator. Her wounds were gently cleaned by a zookeeper and both hybrids were given rabies booster shots by Folsom Animal Control Officer **Cindy Walden**. A few skunk parts went to **UC Davis** where it was ascertained that the skunk was not rabid. Despite this good news, only Zoo personnel with a titer for rabies will care for Lincoln and Kya for thirty days.

Rabies is a fatal disease of the central nervous system. It is contagious to all mammals, including humans. Rabies is

widely distributed throughout the world, with only a few countries being free of the disease. Skunk, raccoon, fox and bat rabies remain prevalent in parts of the **United States**. Because of widespread vaccination programs in the U S, transmission from dogs to people is very rare. (Wash any animal bite with soap and water and check with a medical professional.)

**Attendance:** January of 2013 brought icy weather – and lots of stalwart visitors: 7,275.

### **Medicating Sequoia**

Big black bear **Sequoia** has arthritis and like many humans his doctor has prescribed pain medication. And, like many humans, he isn't always willing to take his meds. While no one at the **Zoo Sanctuary** would ever suggest that we can outsmart any of the animal residents, sometimes the invention of an amazing long flexible metal pole designed to hold the small ice cream cone that contains – say – peanut butter mixed with bear meds does the trick. This works quite well unless Sequoia's roommate, feisty little female bear **Tahoe** establishes a barricade (bear-a-cade?) to intercept the meds. Ultimately keepers prevail, but it takes a little longer.

### **Rare Event**

On occasion visitors will nervously report that members of the peafowl flock are hanging out in one of the three bear exhibits. The Zoo's unsatisfactory reply is that the bears "most often" leave the birds alone. Until they don't. Recently bears **Woody & Marty** captured a peacock resulting in a billion feathers scattered to the wind. There is no explanation why bears ignore visiting peafowl, sometimes for years, and then one day decide to hunt them for a snack.

### **Bad Dog**

**Annabelle** is an Anatolian Shepherd dog and her Zoo job is to teach visitors that **Livestock Guarding Dogs** protect sheep and goats from predation by wolves, or in modern times, your neighbor's free-roaming domestic dogs. She shares the Zoo Pasture with young male **Marcus**, a good-looking exotic Akbash. Information about LGD's suggests that these amenable, user-friendly animals "appear to be doing not much at all" until their domestic animals are in danger. Although they rarely attack a predator, their formidable size (100 pounds and up,) loud barking and fierce behavior convince the interloper that it's time to move on.

Annabelle & Marcus share the pasture with big, black feral pigs **Templeton & Wilber**. Templeton was settling down to enjoy his melon when *zap* Annabelle snatched the

melon and ran off across the pasture. The Zookeeper tracked her down, retrieved the melon and returned it to Templeton. Knowing Annabelle's natural proclivities, the keeper escorted Templeton to the farthest corner of the pasture with Annabelle stalking along behind.

### **Meant To Be**

Having traveled from Wisconsin, grown children of **Evelyn and Edward Gridler** were trying to decide what kind of tree they could donate to the **Zoo Sanctuary** in memory of their parents. A Zoo staffer suggested an orange tree. The site was perfect and Zoo animals would enjoy the fruit for years to come. A good suggestion: more than forty years ago their father planted an orange tree "his favorite tree" at their home. The plaque with the parents names reads "with love from Wisconsin."

### **A Regional Treasure**

The **California Park & Recreation Society** has designated the **Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary** as a Regional Treasure. Founded in 1948 CPRS is a nonprofit, professional and public interest organization with more than 4,000 members who work together to provide recreational experiences to individuals, families and communities. The Zoo Sanctuary is honored.

### **Thanks!**

The animals are grateful to the new **Fresh Market** on Douglas Boulevard in Roseville. They're donating \$500 of fresh produce several times a week for animal diets which is why you may see gourmet fruit & veggies & more in animal bowls. **Folsom Whole Foods Market** sets aside a sizable amount of produce monthly as well.

### **Crash Landing**

Visitors come running to the golden eagle exhibit attracted by the all the noise that occurs when one of the big birds launches off a stationary perch to execute what sounds like (and possibly is) a crash landing on another, lower, fixed perch. Take a guess about what one of these formidable birds weighs. Since a 30 pound Thanksgiving turkey is not unusual, people are surprised when they discover that **Pinyon** and **Sierra** weigh in at approximately 12 pounds complete with their astonishing six-foot wing spans. Plans are being made to provide swings for the eagles and next door neighbor red-tailed hawk **Sedona**.

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