

KEEPING TRACK . FOLSOM CITY ZOO SANCTUARY

April – May, 2014

FEBRUARY, 2004 Noses & Toes: “Young Black bears **Woody** and **Marty** are trying out the two new sections of the incredibly fine **Black Bear Exhibit**. During shake-out time, the bears were on exhibit only if keepers were nearby or if the **Official Bear Watchers** were on hand. All bears are adept at testing human ingenuity. This being the case, it’s wise to have some human oversight while the bears test locks, minutely review exhibit design features, safety configurations, etc. Watchers reported that 2 year-old Woody and 6 year-old Marty were equal to the task. They pushed. They pulled. Grass growth was surveyed, trees were climbed, swimming pool depths were plumbed. They played among themselves, and aware of the protective exhibit wire between them, they were quite snippy with Big Bad Bear **Sequoia** next door. Multiple rainy days have provided a surplus of mud which curious young bears – watching the watchers – have utilized to make some very nice nose-prints and toe-prints on the double strength glass windows of the visitor observation deck.”

Woody & Marty All Grown Up

With **Woody** now age 13 and **Marty** in his 18th year these handsome bears have entered into Cool Middle Age. Apparently not too much bothers them, with the possible exception of smart-alecky 4-year old black bear **Henry** next door when they occasionally visit in person.

Back in the Day Marty’s first tree effort dismayed Zoo Staff. Yikes! What if he can’t get down? What if he falls? What if he gets stuck in the tree? Etc. With a stressed Zoo Staff watching, Marty, when he was good and ready, backed down the tree like a pro. Yes, he still climbs trees. Staff is more circumspect.

You may recall **Woody** was orphaned when his wild mother was killed. Too small to survive own his own, Woody was placed under the care of the **California Department of Fish & Game** (now **Fish & Wildlife**) where he met an older bear named Marty. Marty was a wild orphan too. His mother broke into a tent near **Zephyr Cove**. She was tracked and treed by dogs. Sadly the mother was already a “problem bear” and was euthanized. Six-months old cub Marty was still a little guy, weighing in at 55 pounds.

Perseverance I

For several years a brave little band of sparrow - types have constructed a very big, very untidy nest atop one of the Zoo’s loudspeaker systems. As

chunks of the nest fell to the **Zoo Ops** deck the birds would rebuild. It’s likely that despite difficulties some chicks grew into robust adulthood since the flock continues to increase nicely. This year the family put together an excellent nesting area in nearby trees which after an appropriate time filled with chirpy youngsters.

Perseverance II

The blackbird clan that nested in a large bush next to Blue and Gold macaws **Bingo & Rocky** moved elsewhere but brought their fledged youngsters to the **Zoo** for hunting lessons. Apparently it’s Not So Easy Being Fledged. The soon-to-be-self sufficient young blackbirds spent several discouraging days begging for food from unsympathetic parents.

Perseverance III

Flowering honeysuckle grows up on the wire in front of the golden eagle exhibit. At the very top is a big wild bird nest several feet across and more or less intertwined with the honeysuckle vine. Visitors watch as the spunky sparrows fly in and out. It hasn’t been determined whether occasional flights by eagles **Pinyon** and **Sierra** involve just stretching out their six-foot wings or an outright move on the apparently oblivious sparrows who remain temptingly just out of reach of beak or talon. Sadly one of the fledglings from this nest took an unfortunate flight downwind from home and landed in the wolf-dog exhibit where **Lincoln** and **Kya** had a snack.

Ernie & Issac

Good looking Zebu **Ernie** and **Issac** are a natural breed of mini cattle. They came to the **Zoo Sanctuary** in 2006, on loan from a loving family that rescued them from a difficult situation. Their unique appearance and pleasant ways were a hit with everyone and they moved permanently to the Zoo.

Recently during the morning keeper "animal check" Issac was found down, cold and shivering. Possibly thunder storms the night before frightened him into a difficult situation and the keeper immediately called for assistance. Zoo staff came running. Issac's blood pressure was low and he was not very responsive. **Loomis Equine Veterinary Hospital** was called. While waiting, keepers worked to get Issac warm and dry using blankets, towels and hot water bottles. With the arrival of the veterinarian, fluids and dextrose were administered. Efforts continued to get Issac on his feet. Sadly, nothing more that could be done and Issac was euthanized. All who knew him are deeply saddened. Ernie remains with big friendly horse **Gus** as a companion.

Attendance: Docents (as usual) have been putting in lots of worthwhile hours for several months. The Zoo has truly been jammed with flocks of elementary school kids and their adults. April's official visitor number is 10,405.

Andy & Rooster

Having spent the cool winter weather in the warm climates of Zoo buildings, African Grey Parrot **Mesa**, Blue Fronted Amazon **Luther**, Double Yellow Fronted Amazon **Larry Bird** and Mealy Amazon **Andy** are hopefully enjoying warm Folsom weather. This is certainly true for Andy who has reunited with his own personal Red Rooster Companion. RC sits outside the cage near his old friend, who hunkers down against the wire and discusses life and times in parrot.

Rattlesnake!

So far the Zoo has experienced the normal spring snake visitors. One unidentified big hatch of

newbies seemed to be brothers & sisters who quickly slithered off to safer places.

Again this year multiple rattlesnakes have been captured and turned loose in safer locales. One particularly touchy snake event involved a possibly three-foot long rattlesnake (no, we did not measure it) that had tucked itself behind a moveable wooden night house in one of the cool, quiet mountain lion dens.

Fearless zookeepers 1) moved out the mountain lion, 2) pulled out the wooden den house exposing the big snake against the wall. 3) a Zookeeper went in wisely armed with the blue snake bucket (yes, this is a specialty item) and a snake hook (also invented for snake extraction). The snake was hooked and gently placed in the bucket with the extremely safe white screw-down snake bucket lid and then transported to one of the wild places that surround the Zoo where we hope it is living happily ever after.

The best advice, naturalists and public health experts say, is for people to leave a rattlesnake alone unless it's in a place where it can't be avoided. Research showed that many victims are bitten in the hand or arm, indicating that the people either intentionally reached for a snake or reached into rocks, weeds or brush without taking precautions. Statistics also show that many rattlesnake bite victims are young men who were drinking alcohol and were "just showing off".

Saturday Evening September 6, 2014

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