

# KEEPING TRACK . FOLSOM CITY ZOO SANCTUARY

November, December, 2012

## Piggy

With the rain and all, this is a good time of year to scatter grass seed in various **Zoo Sanctuary** enclosures. First on the list was the pasture home of pigs **Wilber & Templeton**, both of whom (for obvious reasons) were locked up. With the pasture sown, seed was scattered in adjoining exhibits. Sheep **Maggie** and daughter **Princess** were clearly of the opinion that mini grass seeds aren't worth the effort. Big ram **Truffles** agreed, but was interested in the scattering process, which could mean, with a little rain, he could sprout grass on his wooly back. On the other hand, several days later one of the pigs was spotted, snout to wet earth, long pink tongue reaching out the side of his mouth licking up grass seed.

## Picky Eater

Preparing animal meals is no mystery - you follow the frequently-up-dated very specific diet cards posted in the kitchen. Wholesome squirrel monkey meals are a case in point: fresh greens, chopped veggies, Rainbow Giant\* mealworms (currently 10 large) mixed nuts and depending on the weather, cooked meals like oatmeal, pasta, rice and tofu. But being primates like the rest of us, they have their own little food idiosyncrasies. On a sunny day female **Monita** was spotted holding her cooked sweet potato under the outdoor exhibit water bottle and mashing her snack carefully with her cute long-fingered little hands.

## \*The Irresistible Rainbow Giant Website

The Zoo recently ordered the usual 6,000 Rainbow Giant mealworms by phone. The site is quite exotic:

What They Say:

*"Giant Mealworms are also known as King Mealworms. Our founder **Fred Rhyme** discovered the secret to growing the Giant Mealworms in the 1950's and we are very proud of that! These Giants are 5 times the size of ordinary mealworms measuring, 1 ½ inches. They're perfect for reptiles that want a worm larger than our standard Mealworms, but not as big as our Superworms."*

There is a back story too. Years ago big brown bats named **Stella** and **Bella** lived at the Zoo. So the Zoo purchased – yes - Super Mealworms. Staff learned yet another Life Lesson. Super Mealworms bite.

## Echo & Rio

Young mountain lion **Echo** is sort of a smart aleck. Twelve-year old **Rio** is a responsible adult. One sunny afternoon there they were, Rio walking regally through the exhibit with Echo hopping back and forth and showing off. More than once naughty Echo flopped down and rolled over, feet up, right in Rio's path. Rio was Not Amused, but stoically stalked on, ignoring the four or five or ten play opportunities offered by pushy Echo.

## Spicy Jalepena #1

You may recall that mini-donkey **Jalepena** spent a long time at **Loomis Equine Medical Center** because of a seriously infected, very painful right front hoof. Since these donkeys have always been emotionally attached at the hip, **Rosarita** went along to keep her buddy calm and safe and healing. Now back home, they're both in a small fenced pasture area so Jalepena can continue recovery. In the future Zoo Staff is hoping to improve donkey psyches by periodically separating Rosy and Jallie a little bit at a time.

## Spicy Jalepena #2

The human Learning Curve continues. During the **Christmas Party for the Animals** Docents thoughtfully haltered and walked donkey Rosie out to meet & greet with visitors. Left *alone* in the enclosure, Jallie was hitting the fence and in general having a major snit, so upon reflection it was decided that she could join her friend walking gently in the Zoo and meeting visitors.

## Spicy Jalepena #3

Loomis vet **Dr. De La Cruz** has come up with a revolutionary new use of premie baby diapers which are the perfect size to slip over the hoof of an ailing mini-donkey and strapping it with duct tape to the leg. With the diaper keepers can create a sugar poultice to draw out infection, (who knew) or apply medication. Stylish. Effective. Inexpensive.

## The Big Blue Sheet

Enquiring minds wanted to know why there was big blue sheet hanging in the access way between the two golden eagle exhibit areas. The reason? That day each eagle's food contained medications to protect these mighty birds

from parasites. The sheet assured that the right bird got the intended food and meds.

Several years ago male eagle **Pinyon** was found down by a construction crew near **Latrobe Road**. X-rays showed an arthritic left wing from an old injury. He was transferred to a falconer at the **California Foundation for Birds of Prey** and moved to the **Zoo Sanctuary** in late 2011. Female **Sierra** was rescued by **Tahoe Wildlife Care**. They discovered that while she can fly she chooses not to. When Pinyon arrived, the interaction between the two birds was carefully monitored. Both animals are clearly thoughtful about their relationship. They sit side by side with little apparent reaction, although several times big Sierra has been seen sideling up to Pinyon and sort of accidentally whacking him with her wing. Stunning golden eagles are the rarest raptor (bird of prey) in the **United States**. Golden eagles are native to our valley and foothill areas and are substantially bigger than the white-wigged bald eagles, *balde* being an old word for white.

Attendance: In November 3903 visitors braved rain and cold and cold December = 8955.

#### **Andrea**

Sadly, during early morning rounds a Zookeeper discovered that beautiful eight-foot-long red-tailed boa **Andrea** had passed away during the night. There had been no indications that she was unwell, but a necropsy at the **U. C. Davis Veterinary Hospital** identified Inclusion Body Virus which is specific to constrictor snakes in the Boidae family – pythons and boas. While some snakes may live for quite a while without apparent symptoms, IBV is considered to be fatal. Boas are one of the most exploited snake species. It's likely that Andrea acquired IBV at the pet shop before she was released in the Napa Valley. Andrea became a beloved member of the Zoo family in January, 2010.

#### **Interloping**

Animal tenants have moved into their homes in the new exhibit next to **Barnyard Fowl**. Gentle and extremely handsome brown rabbit **Kevin** is next door to squirrels **Helen** and **Nessee**. In the past, the squirrels lived in adjoining areas but they've moved in together without consequences – or maybe just one consequence. As you know, vision impaired Helen is named after the admirable **Helen Keller**, who, though blind lived an exemplary life as does squirrel Helen. In 2006 Eastern

gray squirrel **Nessee** and her siblings were illegally brought to California from Tennessee and Nessee found a forever home at the **Folsom Zoo Sanctuary**.

Squirrel boxes and climbing limbs, etc. were moved as were the small wire cages where the squirrel meals are placed (a hassle-free way to catch up a squirrel if you need one) and life is good. Except. **Docents** who were carefully observing squirrel behavior noted that almost immediately upon introduction, Nessee climbed swiftly up the cage wire and multiple times hauled out llama wool that Helen had carefully added to her torn newspaper strip nest materials.

#### **Ouch!**

Should you have a little wound at the **Zoo Sanctuary** it might be comforting to know that there's at least one small box of colorful **Wild Animal Bandages** in a First Aid box. Choices include bear, tiger, seal, etc.

#### **Thanks Intel!**

The Zoo is grateful to **Intel** for funding the spiffy rodent-proof and temperature appropriate storage shed for Zoo dry foods which for several years have been crowded into cold room storage areas. In color and design it is consistent with the nearby **Zoo Ops** building.

#### **Wild Nights! Holiday Lights!**

Kudos to tree decorators and the amazing and mysterious **Parks & Rec** experts who put lights up – and take them down and deal with stubborn light strings that consistently short out due to weather or just orneriness. Watching this process is appreciating a miracle in action. Each batch of lights comes out of a numbered storage box and each gate in the Zoo is designated to be open for keeper access or closed because of lighting strings.

Despite cold temperatures and the cloudy skies that provided intermittent rainy evenings (For Which All Californians Are Grateful But Would Like To Pick The Time And Day) more than 5200 **Holiday Nights** revelers came to visit the festive animals, **Santa Claus** and **Santa Paws**, enjoy music, hot drinks and goodies, to ride the Polar Express train, and view the most stunning display of colored holiday lights anywhere ever.

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