

KEEPING TRACK. FOLSOM CITY ZOO SANCTUARY

September, 2009

A Deer Goes A Long Way

With apologies to resident deer, and deer in general, various **Folsom Zoo Sanctuary** carnivores chowed down on a roadkilled member of the clan. Most deceased deer are brought to the zoo by Animal Control and frozen for approximately a month to get rid of parasites. Then the animal is defrosted and cut into appropriate-sized pieces.

Recently, senior black bear **Fisher** made the most of a deer torso. The new, 8-month old mountain lion (called **Flash** for now) got a mid-thigh piece of deer which she hung on to for a bit, then dropped on the floor of the holding pen, flipped it over several times – and attempted to bury it in the concrete. (Wild mountain lions cache food by pawing leaves over it.)

More deer parts were parceled out to cougars **Alder**, young male **Rio** and **Ventura**. Only clean white bones and a swarm of ants remained the next morning.

Bear Footing

It's possible that black bears have games that humans don't ordinarily see. Keeper **Lynn Dowling** paused to watch snippy little female bear **Tahoe** lounging in the pool with just her pretty head and dainty forelimbs exposed. Lynn tossed a stick through the fence. Tahoe retrieved it, smelled it – and tossed it over her shoulder. Yet another stick was thrown but it sank to the bottom. Lynn could see Tahoe delicately patting around on the bottom of the pool with her back feet. Locating the stick, she maneuvered it up, sniffed it – and tossed it over her shoulder. Big male bear **Sequoia** had a similar experience when a Behavioral Enrichment container filled with kibble sank to the bottom of the pool. Again, he bear-footed it to the surface.

Over the years, zoo sanctuary bears have been seen standing in a pool clutching a piece of deer hide in their teeth and flapping it back and forth behind their heads before flinging it away over their shoulders. Do they do this in the wild? Must they stand in water to do this? Opportunities for research papers abound.

More Research

The zoo recently received a call from **Adeline Yee** at **KOVR Channel 13** to set up a time for Consumer Investigative Reporter **Kurtis Ming** and videographer **Dennis Lopez** to field test a product that is intended to mask substances that don't smell good. The research involved testing the spray on - *um* – substances provided by the zoo. Like what bears and foxes and tigers leave behind. Fresh bear and fox effluent was tastefully collected on sturdy paper cake plates, which, for the sake

of freshness, were covered with steel zoo bowls. Supervisor **Jill Lute** was tasked with explaining what was being tested, in family terms. Offerings by bears and foxes were sniff - checked before and after spraying. Jill and Kurtis agreed that there was great improvement.

The tiger test was a little different. Tigers, like all cats, scent mark with a pungent spray. And tigers, being bigger than a house cat, can target spray 15 feet distant, and it is very very– *um* - pungent. So clever are tigers **Misty** and **Pouncer** that they can mark a free-standing wooden post 6-feet outside their exhibit. Jill and Kurtis (handsomely attired in a sport jacket and nice shirt) and Dennis holding a \$\$\$\$ video camera, were standing on the deck behind the post. Because Jill had explained in graphic detail the ways of tigers, Kurtis and Dennis were understandably watchful as Pouncer moved close to exhibit wire to see what was going on. Very very watchful. When Pouncer turned her back, everyone shifted. (Behind each other if necessary.)

Ultimately, the spray, called *What Odeur?* was sprayed and deemed efficient. Pouncer flopped down on her hammock for a nap and the humans departed unscathed.

Check out *Call Kurtis*, November 1, Sunday night 10 O'clock News.

Repairing The Animals

As it is with us humans, wild animal bodies need periodic tune-ups to maintain good health or to fix something gone awry. Hawks **Redford**, **Sedona** and **Phoenix** had beaks and talons trimmed, Amazon parrot **Larry Bird's** cracked feet were checked and treated, Livestock Guarding Dog **Harrison** had some lumps biopsied (OK) and surgery to remove his spleen. LGD **Cheyenne's** sun damaged nose was biopsied. Ferret **Missy** was vet checked for Things Ferrets are Prone To, and boa **Cleo** is being evaluated for a possible illness. To show how carefully animals are watched, hair loss on squirrel **Helen's** knees (yes, squirrels have knees) brought a suggestion that the door to her nest box be enlarged.

They're Baaaack!

The fine rent-a-goats from **Goat Central** are hard at work clearing dry grass and blackberry from the **Wild Canine** area. This is a group of young Kiko goats, including goat **Pocket**, who apparently enjoys being walked on a leash. Numerous visitors have commented that Goat Central animals have been reducing fire loads in their neighborhoods and were greatly admired by everyone. There was excitement when a small white goat realized that the special goat fence was not "hot" due to a

short and jumped over to munch on greener pastures. Goat catching ensued, the fence was repaired and the goats lay down for an afternoon nap.

Dolche & Palino

The one **1-lama**, He's a priest,
The two **1-llama**, He's a beast,
And I will bet

A silk pajama,

There isn't any three **1-llama**.

(It has been pointed out that **Ogden Nash** may not have considered the *three-llama*, or 3-alarm fire.

Llamas, like goats, are good grazers and help prevent fires both big or small. Llamas **Dolche & Palino** are visiting the zoo for several months. Dolche was born in 1998 and Palino is a year younger. Recently, workers near the llama pasture were closely watched by Dolche, who hung his head over the fence and pursed his hairy-llama lips to make a *whoo* sound. Members of the camel family, llamas have been raised by Incas and other residents of the Andes mountains as pack animals and for food and fiber. Babies are called *cria*, and when a *cria* is born all the females circle around to protect the little one from male llamas and predators. Prey animals, babies are *precocial* and are up and running very quickly. Their binomial name is *Llama glama*, which according to Dolche and Palino means "*glamorous and exceptional*."

Attendance: September visitors numbered 6,787, with just a few braving a week or so of rainy, cold, gray weather.

Training

Docent **Carol Quayle** has been working with African Gray parrot **Mesa**. On this particular day, Carol was encouraging Mesa to play a game of catch. Carol had manufactured a lightweight ball of paper and, standing close, she would give the little ball to Mesa. Before too long Mesa took it in her beak most of the time. The logical expansion of the game was for Mesa to give the ball to Carol, which presented some obstacles for the human involved. With ball in beak, Mesa would wing it (no pun intended) so fast and so far that Carol didn't have a chance. Although Carol wasn't using a clicker which often accompanies zoo training efforts, Mesa would toss – and click, presumably using learned training techniques on her human.

Who's The Big, Bad Wolf?

You may recall that after alpha male **Granite** passed away, female **Redbud** made it clear to big, handsome, strapping 5-year-old males **Yucca** and **Joshua** that they had better show Respect and mind their manners when she was near. One recent morning the sound of sirens got the zoo howlers going, with a lot of noise coming from the wolf exhibit. In an excellent display of wolfy politics, there stood Yucca and Joshua, howling nose-to-nose for a very long time. Finally Joshua keeled over, belly up, feet waving with dominant Yucca still howling

in his face. An exciting sight. Knocked the socks off by-standing visitors. Impressive. Until skinny, bony, lanky 14-year-old female Redbud stalked up. She was standing tall, erect ears pulling her eyes into wolfy slits, lips back, teeth glistening. And she snarled. Right in Yucca's face. Then Joshua stood up, and Redbud snarled some more, sheer will pushing the young tough guys back several feet. Do the guys cut her some slack, or is she the Baddist wolf of all?

Out Of Control, Again

The **Giant Spider** has visited the zoo Bear Deck leaving behind – what else – a Giant Web. Thoughtfully, she left behind a bucket filled with lengths of web so humans could participate. Once again the web is moving up and out and may exceed last year's twenty-foot length.

❖ **Halloween Day At The Zoo**

Saturday, Oct. 31 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
Halloween Activities with Little Ones in Mind. Crafts. Treats. Stories. Wear a costume!

❖ **The Animal's Thanksgiving**

Thanksgiving Day. Starting at 11 a.m. watch zoo animals receive their Special Feasts. Zoo closes at 1 p.m. Regular Admission.

❖ **Holiday Zoo Camps**

Kids in Grades 1st - 3rd will learn fascinating facts about animals: songs, stories, crafts, writing, drawing and a chance to meet animals up close!

Our Feathered Friends

Nov. 23-25: M - W 9a - 12p.

Fee: \$112.

Birds! Facts about beaks, feet, nests, feathers, eggs, and more.

Animals Who Make Trees Their Home!

Dec. 28-30: M - W: 9a - 12p

Fee: \$112.

Learn all about furry, scaly, and feathered creatures who live in trees.

❖ **Holiday Party for the Animals!**

Party Animals receive festively wrapped gifts. Bring canned food for Twin Lakes Food Bank!. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. All this fun and FREE ADMISSION!

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