

July 2005

## Dogs Vs Cats

It is the Way Of Things that dogs chase cats. Always have, always will. But there are cats - and then there are cats! And recently at the Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary



the cats have been turning the tables in the chasing department. As you know, Livestock Guarding Dogs Harrison and pup Cheyenne have the important job of guarding the premises at night. With keeper assistance, they take a shortcut from the pasture, through the gate behind monkey Claudia's exhibit, and into the zoo grounds. Where they guard! Naturally, they accompany keepers doing closing time rounds. The tigers hunker down and "chase" the dogs as they

pass by. Ditto the mountain lions.

Perhaps the unkindest aggression by a zoo cat was when young Cheyenne, inexperienced in the ways of the world, took a right turn instead of a left on her way back to the pasture in the morning and ended up on the keeper deck behind the bobcats. Now, even though Cheyenne, occasionally overflowing with puppy enthusiasm, has been known to chase chickens, and pigs Templeton and Wilber, and chivvy horse Gus, she bears a grudge toward no animal, including bobcat Ono, who was bristled up to three time's normal size when a big dog galoot appeared on his deck.

Whoa! said keeper Lynn Dowling, as she sped to Cheyenne's rescue. Cheyenne came to Lynn when called, but just as she passed by the spot where Ono was crouched, he reached out his much longer-than-expected spotted arm and took a swipe at the rear of the departing dog. There was a little snap! as claws connected with a few fast moving dog hairs. Made Ono's day, and probably taught Cheyenne not much!

## Elephant Nose

The summer Zoo Camp kids do Good Things for the animals. Approximately 15 kids, ranging in age from 1st to 3rd grade, 4th to 6th, and 6th to 8th attend six, week-long sessions of Zoo Day Camp from 10am to 3pm. They learn what zookeepers do: preparing food, cleaning exhibits, making toys. And much more.



Recent Zoo Campers put together a lot of exceptionally interesting behavioral enrichment toys, which included some 4-foot long, strong cardboard tubes. The nice thing about these tubes was that they were just the size of the snout of young wolf Yucca. After a keeper delivered the toys to the pack, each wolf engaged in rolling on the perfume scented samples from magazines (a favorite with canines) and digging in boxes and bags for stuff.

But for the pups, the tubes were the thing. Yucca discovered

that if he held the big tube down with his feet, he could, starting at the top, unroll the cardboard. By then he had opened up the tip of the tube just enough for his teeth to get a grip and jammed his head inside. Apparently it didn't concern Yucca that his eyes were completely covered. He spent some quality time swinging his head from side to side whacking pack mates and then headed in the general direction of the pool. He clearly knew where he was, because as he mounted the rocks surrounding the pool, Yucca paused, stuck his right leg out into space - and stepped off. The next day, keepers had some quality time removing soggy wolf toys from the pool!

### More Zootoys

Scouts of Cameron Park Troop 866 had a good time making Behavioral Enrichment goodies. The big metal tubs filled with home-grown veggies, dirt and all, created by Anna & Megan resulted in lots of piggy joy: Senior sow Charlotte was so thrilled with the soft, rich earth she left the veggies until later. Nicole & Savannah made tubes with good things inside which caused a lot of excitement in the squirrel monkey exhibit, and Katie & Becky fabricated the enormous burlap satchel filled with chunks of tree and attached to a strong PVC pipe, (with a spring that several humans pulling hard could scarcely budge). This was suspended in the tiger cage. Since tigers Misty and Pouncer are considerably stronger than a whole bunch of humans, they made short work of the bag, and had great fun doing it! Thanks Good Scouts!

### Light As Air

A bird's breathing system isn't like ours. It uses "flow-through ventilation," relying on a set of nine flexible air sacs that act like bellows to move air through the almost completely rigid lungs. While these air sacs don't take part in the actual oxygen exchange, they do enhance efficiency and allow for the high metabolic rates found in birds. Air sacs also keep the volume of air in the lung nearly constant, a prerequisite for maintaining a level flight path. A portion of the air sacs actually integrate with the skeleton, forming air pockets in otherwise dense bone. This system may have come about to lighten the bone structure, allowing birds to do one of the things most of them do best - fly.



### Cirrus

One of the down-sides of a bird's excellent air system is a fungal lung ailment called

**ASPERGILLOSIS.** Spores of this fungus are all around us in soil and air, so birds are constantly exposed. If a bird's immune system is stressed, it may become sick after exposure. Some wild birds, like golden eagles, are especially prone to asper.



A recent check-up and x-rays at the Bird and Pet Clinic of Roseville showed a flare-up of chronic asper in golden eagle Cirrus' air sacs. At 34, she's a tough old bird and keepers watch her carefully. In years past, Cirrus has been treated, so there's an existing protocol in place at the zoo sanctuary.

Cirrus has been moved to the quiet of an off-exhibit cage. Daily, a keeper with a towel gently guides the eagle into a large animal crate where she breathes warm, medicated vapor for an hour. She spends the rest of the day outside, where she flaps from feeding perch to resting perch. Medication is injected into formerly frozen mice or quail which are part of her regular diet. (When you see a golden eagle and human side-by-side you realize just how big these birds really are!)

### What Do You Feed A Frog?

First of all, it isn't easy. The frogs living at the zoo sanctuary are White's tree frogs, and their wild relatives live in Australia.



Melbourne and Sydney (a.k.a. Jerome) share a large glass-sided aquarium in the temperature controlled zoo classroom animal place. While tree frogs eat bugs in general, and even such gourmet goodies as small mice, crickets are gustatory favorites. Frog info warns that these frogs "have a tendency to get overweight in captivity." True - Mel and Syd dine on "gut loaded" (very well fed) crickets, so that the frogs aren't eating empty calories. These weight watchers are offered two crickets every other day.

Since frogs are amphibians, and since most amphibians have delicate skin which absorbs water, along with the chemicals it contains, zoo frogs have special chemical-free water for drinking, soaking and for cleaning.

### Moved

Black bear Fisher seems to be a home-body. It took him a long time to adjust to his spiffy new digs at the black bear exhibit, despite the fact that it had all the mod cons: trees to climb, a big pool, a hammock and a roomy den and nice off-exhibit





accommodations. After a while, however, Fisher settled in. One of the special features of the completed Black Bear Exhibit was a design that let resident bears move easily from one exhibit to another. Each of the three exhibits has unique features, and roomies Tahoe and Sequoia and Woody and Marty appear to have fun investigating new stuff. Not Fisher! He recently moved next door to his original space. There's the spiffy den with the waterfall screening the entrance, and a very nice creek. But - at least for now - it just isn't home! One of the problems maybe is that Fisher may not believe that he is a bear. Recently, he was browsing around, minding his own business, when suddenly, from next door, Woody made a bluff attack, galloping down hill like an avalanche, startling Fisher into retreat, even though there is a bear-proof fence between them!

### **Folsom Zoo En Espanol**

The Invierno 2004-2005 edition of *Attentio Dossier*, the magazine of *la Defensa del Patrimonio Natural*, Barcelona, Spain contained a lengthy interview with Supervisor Jill Giel about the unique Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary. The animals in the collection? "Nuestra coleccion esta formada principalmente pro aves (birds) y mamiferos (mammals) de Norteamerican, pero tambien acogemos especies exoticas como primates, tigres y loros (parrots). (Spell check is not happy!)

The article contains some excellent color shots of zoo sanctuary exhibits, as well as a paragraph about Los Amigos de Folsom Zoo, which "ayuda a financiar los programas de enriquecimiento (behavioral enrichment) los exposiciones (exhibits), y otras necesidades de los animals para mejorar (improve) su calidad de vida (quality of life.)

Additionally, there's a full page interview with Lee Houts about behavioral enrichment programs as the Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary. Lee spent the last years of her life as a senior keeper at the zoo sanctuary and was an internationally known authority on behavioral enrichment for captive wild animals.

### **The Animals are Registered!**

The Folsom Zoo Sanctuary has several on-line and in-store registries. You know. Gift ideas for brides. Gift ideas for zoo animals. The usual.

<http://www.homedepot.com> Go to Gift Center. Then, On-line registry. Then Folsom Zoo Sanctuary (in the spot for "last name")

<http://www.target.com> Go to Gift Registries. Then Club Wedd. Then "Friends of" (in the spot for "first name") "Folsom Zoo Sanctuary" (in the spot for "last name")

<http://www.sanctuarysupplies.com> Go to Wish Lists. Then Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary.