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SOLUTIONS 2005!
Welcome from President - Jeanne Hall

My name is Jeanne Hall, I am the President of Phoenix Exotic and would like to brief you on what to expect in our monthly newsletters. The newsletter is for our members who do not have convenient access to our website. We want to reach out and make Phoenix Exotic accessible, including in our newsletter information from our e-list for members who are currently not online. Enjoy!

The stated purpose of Phoenix per the articles of incorporation:

“…for charitable educational and scientific purposes; to educate the public in the necessary safety precautions and procedures for dealing with exotic wildlife; and to provide emergency assistance to exotic wildlife in need of care or relocation.”

“Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, Inc. is based in the UNITED STATES of AMERICA and addresses concerns within the USA and internationally. Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association is incorporated in the state of Washington as a non-profit corporation.”

“Phoenix is dedicated to the legal and ethical ownership of exotic animals by private persons with an emphasis on education and safety. Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association Inc. is an organization of active members working to protect and maintain the rights of private ownership through responsible behavior.”

Phoenix Exotics E-List contained many posts in March. We are limited in the print medium to select only a few items. You can join the e-list at http://phoenixexotics.org/ then click on the link for E-groups email list.

Please note: Please visit the archive section of the Yahoo E-list for many more articles, posts and replies.

Letter From Editor - Rhonda Kiker

WELCOME!

This newsletter is a derivative of the articles and posts from the Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, Inc. E-List. (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Phoenix_Exotics/) Many thanks to the members for their contributions. Any published submissions have been granted prior permission for publication. Should you feel that your views have not been properly represented, please email, General@PhoenixExotics.Org or President@PhoenixExotics.Org, or you may write a letter to the address below. Please be descriptive as to which article and please reference “Volume Number” and “Issue Number”, located on the front of the newsletter. If you wish to see any of our past copies of the newsletters, you may go to website, http://www.PhoenixExotics.org/

Our thanks goes to the “Associated Press” for granting a non-exclusive license to reprint materials online for the purpose of this newsletter. Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, Inc., membership fee is only $10.00/annually. A check or money order can be mailed along with any inquiries you may have.

Member & Membership Renewal Form

Name(s)_________________________ Phone_________________ Dues _______ x $10 _______
Mailing Address_____________________________ Total enclosed: _______
E-Mail Address_____________________________

I would like to join and support the Phoenix Wildlife Association. I understand that dues are for membership only and non-refundable.

Signature_________________________ Second Signature_________________________

Please enclose check or money order.

Mail to Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, PO Box 1132 Chehalis, WA 98532
Phoenix Exotics is proud to present the second in a series of books on Responsible Ownership of Exotic Animals. This book is 144 pages long with photos and illustrations. Presenting real life tales of Monkeys and their dedicated owners, heartwarming, yet unafraid to inform prospective owners about the potential for hard times, as well as good, in such deeply held relationships.

Real life owners with real Monkeys in their families, including published authors, Board members, politicians, medical and mental health professionals and owners who have been involved with Monkeys for many years, have created a must read. Now, in their own words, exotic owners speak out.

This book gives them voice:

**LISTEN!**

2005 Phoenix Exotic Annual Meeting DVD and/or VHS

I would like to announce that the long awaited DVD master copy has arrived of the 2005 Phoenix Exotic Annual Meeting that was held at the Bonnie Springs, Blue Diamond, Nevada. The meeting is available in DVD or VHS format. This has turned out terrific and is 9 hours long! The DVD and VHS case is beautifully done with the Phoenix Exotic Logo, the theme of the meeting is "SOLUTIONS" and where the meeting was held, nicely done!! A “Wanna get this” for sure!! For all those that want to order a DVD (2 discs) or VHS (2 tapes for better quality) we have tried to keep the cost to a minimal and as close to cost as possible. We are only sending in orders of 10 or more at a time in order to help keep the cost down.

To order:

- DVD's: $19.95 + $4.95 for shipping and handling
- VHS : $25.95 + $4.95 shipping and handling

(check or money order)

Payment can be made to:
Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association
P O Box 1132
Chehalis, WA 98532

Please include:
Name and address
Number of copies
Amount sent
E-mail address or telephone number in the event we need to get in touch with you.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at cathspohrer@metrocast.net
Cathy Freeman-Spohrer
Secretary, Phoenix Exotics

PLEASE NOTE!!!

Prices have not changed if you purchase directly from Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association. Bulk rates remain the same. This is a great deal for the price. Definitely take advantage of the savings so you can share this treasure with friends and colleagues!

NOW AVAILABLE ON AMAZON!!!!

Now available online at http://www.Amazon.com with a beautiful glossy, color soft cover!

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**Monkey Moments**

**Living with Monkeys**

Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association
Responsible Ownership Series #2
Solutions Start at Home - By Kat Mills

A Friend of mine and I were talking about despair after this past election, and she told me a little thing. She said, “A friend of mine talks about one mile circles being the only way we can truly influence the world. We can live as good people in our one mile circle. Protect each other and the earth in our one mile circle. Then we must trust that others are out there living the best they can in their one mile circles and we can act to interface our one mile circles as best we can.” It made me pause, this simple truth. It’s something to live by in a time when many of us doubt our lawmakers, doubt our representatives, and even doubt our neighbors.

Responsible people are becoming targets for biased, knee-jerk uneducated blanket legislation, rather than justly prosecuting those who will not do what is necessary to be a responsible owner. We begin to feel besieged and persecuted, and oftentimes it is by the very people from whom we most deserve cooperation; sanctuaries. Responsible private owners are not the ones who owned the animals in sanctuaries, unless there was litigation involved. Responsible owners aren’t the problem, exotics aren’t the problem, dogs aren’t the problem. Irresponsible owners and an uneducated public are the problem. Ban laws are punitive against a wide section of society who are not law breakers. We need to protect the animals by prosecuting those who do them harm, or who break the applicable laws, not make it illegal to responsibly own animals. If there’s already a law making it illegal to steal, we don’t need to protect the animals by prosecuting those who do them harm, or who break the applicable laws, not make it illegal to responsibly own animals. If there’s already a law making it illegal to steal, we don’t need another law making it illegal to steal color TVs.

Sometimes our own Governmental agencies seem to assist irresponsibility by allowing too many people to slip through the cracks. As an example, the IRS has thus far seen fit to allow people like Rae Ott of NAWA infamy to keep their 501(3)(c) status, despite being given irrefutable proof of misappropriation of funds. As a matter of fact, even after the survivors of the Conroe Concentration Camp were rescued from Rae Ott’s neglect, she is opening up another so-called “Wolf Rescue”, with the same IRS tax ID. She has already procured more animals that she can exploit. Over 50% of the wolfdogs that Rae Ott purposely misidentified as “wolves” in order to scavenge more money from the public died of treatable diseases such as distemper and hookworm. They died in horrible filthy, conditions, and many died in agony as a direct result of her neglect. Yet, she is still able to procure public funding, and is still offering dead animals for “adoption”.

And Rae Ott isn’t the lone stranger, either. Look at the recent happening at Wolf Haven, in Tenino, WA. This is an organization that has worked hand-in-hand with organizations such as Animal Protection Institute (API) and Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) to strip responsible private owners of their rights to own animals, because, they claim, private owners cannot care for them correctly. Yet they allowed Akela to suffer diagnosed complete kidney failure and the debilitating pain that kidney failure causes for nearly a month and a half before finally being forced to put him out of his misery. They let that poor suffering wolf lay in the freezing mud for six days, barely able to move after two Vets had advised that he was suffering, and in terrible pain, and needed to be euthanized. For what purpose? How could they allow this? This organization has repeatedly been at the forefront of legislation calling for owner-bans. How can they tell us that we cannot take care of our own? I would never let any animal suffer like they forced Akela to suffer, and neither would any of the responsible owners I see here.

We have seen Wild Animal Orphanage, another facility dedicated to stripping private owners of their rights, have numerous escapes and containment issues. Issues that, were they a private owner, would have been harshly criticized, but because they are an AZA accredited facility, basic requirements that a private owner must adhere to seem to be disregarded.

I am pleased to see that Wildlife Waystation, in California, has resolved its’ long-standing containment problems, but I wonder how much leniency a private owner would have been accorded. We already know to what lengths Shambala will go to for publicity, at the expense of an animals’ safety and health. We, as a community, have seen people exploit the animals we love so dearly as replaceable commodities, and tear-jerker fodder for websites begging for donations. We have seen too many people make a killing off the killing off of our companions, and the stripping away of responsible citizens’ rights.

Passing laws banning the private ownership of selected animals will never solve the problem of people who will exploit animals. It will simply destroy families, and in many cases, cause the unnecessary relocation or death of the animal. It will also stress the already-stretched-thin capacity of sanctuaries, shelters, and animal control. Ban laws have inherently high court costs, specialist fees as well as being an administrative nightmare in identification.

Those facilities who are so actively pursuing private ownership bans need to take a closer look at their own glass houses, their own containment and escape issues, and their own neglect of the animals they have “rescued”. In fact, in several targeted species, of the 23 listed bite incidents in 2003, 21 of them occurred at zoos, sanctuaries or circuses, not private owners. And once again, the solution for this problem lies within our hands as well. Before you donate any money to any facility, do your research. Don’t take the word of a website as...
Gospel. Be responsible in your support, as well as in your life. Make sure the organization you support does not support making your companions illegal to own.

Because of this bombardment of legislation, responsible owners can wind up feeling torn between acting proactively, or reacting protectively. And I can tell you that personally, it’s difficult to balance being positive, and being mad as hell. And I am mad as hell, as I’m not going to take it anymore. I’m sick and tired of ignorant people claiming that my canines are inherently dangerous when they’ve never even met them. Wolfdogs still get lumped into this gray place, between exotic animal laws, and dangerous dog laws. I’m sick and tired of feeling like a fringe citizen. When breed specific legislation and species bans are suggested as the answer to questions of general public safety, the face of the person directly affected is my face. And I intend to make sure that the folks who are responsible for making those laws, or influencing lawmakers know it.

So what can a responsible private owner do to change things? I have to admit to you, face to face, that the definitive answer eludes me. Some of the answers I have found are so stunningly obvious, that I was stumped for weeks, in a blocked nightmare, writing this speech. But heck, I have a few minutes left on the clock, so why not.

Almost every community has community meetings that are regularly posted in a local newspaper. It seems very apparent to me that many of our legislators are getting their information from unreliable, misinformed sources, or sources with an agenda. It is also becoming apparent that laying low and waiting for the storm to blow over is not an effective tactic. We obviously need to stop being silently suffering. Become a person in your legislator’s eyes, not just a Voter I.D. number. Get to know your representatives and legislature. These are the people we elect to represent us in these manners. Check your local area for “Meet and Greets”, and introduce yourself. Send them thank you notes for any support they may have given to private ownership rights. When they come up for election, support them, and send them a note telling them you are voting for them, and one reason why is because of their pro-responsible private ownership support. If you are able, make a small contribution to their campaign, if they have represented you wisely and well.

If your representative is against responsible private ownership, be proactive about that as well. Write them, call them, let them know that you are a constituent and their position directly threatens your constitutionally guaranteed right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and that you are watching and putting your vote where your heart is. There is innate responsibility, however, in becoming an individual in your legislator’s eyes. In each contact we all make as individuals, we are making it at the same time as representatives of the whole of exotic ownership. So be polite.

It is our responsibility to pay attention to what they are voting on, and make our opinions known, even if it’s in a shaky, nervous “Citizen Jane” voice. Get involved, and don’t expect that someone else is going to represent your views. We all need to express those views to our policy makers. We all need to continue being proactive with legislation, and our legislators. Let them know that you are a registered Voter, (and dang it, if you’re not a registered voter, get registered!) and that you are watching.

We can even be proactive without leaving our own homes, too. Many of us are on the Internet now, and there are quite a few folks who track legislation. When they send an alert, we need to start taking it seriously. We all need to be more proactive in our local politics. Make phone calls, and if you get a secretary, put yourself on record, in as clear and concise a manner as possible. Our opposition is well established, well funded, and misinformed, at best. It’s up to us to prove them wrong, within our one-mile radius, to prove that responsible ownership is the norm, not the exception, that the exceptions are the problem, that we already have a layer of appropriate laws, and that effective law-making gives teeth to the laws we have, doesn’t create new laws with less teeth and less definition. Another place we can really make a difference is in our local animal control. I don’t think it’s just my own towns that are beleaguered by a lack of funding, and the unfortunate position of always seeing the dark side. Animal control officers just rarely get to see or meet responsible owners. It’s their job to deal with the cast-offs, the unwanteds, the extraneous, the lost, the frightened, the abused, and the inconvenient. Just like police, being constantly bombarded by the worst that humanity has to offer doesn’t do much to endear humanity to the officer. It is….. understandable to view animal control as “the enemy”, since they have the power to separate us from our loved ones. But it is not logical to do so. We need to remember that, as a general rule, the individuals who do this job are habitually underpaid, and chose the career because they love animals. These people are our potential advocates, as long as they can be shown that we are the good guys. It is a huge leap of faith on both sides, to trust one another. But if you live in a legal area, I would whole-heartedly suggest that we all make an effort to outreach to these people. They are on our side. Again, like us, I truly believe the norm is not being represented.

So, how about an influx of volunteers from the exotics and the wolfdog community?

(continued page 6)
How about a donation of extra toys? Blankets? Bones? Time? Most progressive shelters and animal control people welcome volunteers. It can really make a difference for the animals there, too. In some shelters, trainers volunteer to train the adoptable animals in basic obedience, making them even more adoptable. Be available so if they do need advice, they have a source that’s actually knowledgeable, and isn’t looking it up on the PETA website. We also need to support other beleaguered animal advocates. In your one mile radius, if you see a pitbull ban suggested, as an example, stand up and fight it as the unconstitutional bad unable-to-implement policy it is. Even if you don’t own a pitbull, we all have to stop dividing ourselves up. Every piece of banning legislature is one more brick in the wall, and we cannot accept that wall getting any higher. Not by one brick.

I’ve had people ask me why I have my animals. What is their job? I’ve been asked. Their job is to be happy, and to make me happy. My job is to be happy, and to make them happy. My responsibility is to provide a safe, healthy life for the animals I take responsibility for. It starts in my backyard, in my town, and in my one-mile radius. I hope you will allow it to begin in yours, too.

~END

Phoenix The Snake
Submitted by (Boagirl65) Fri Mar 4, 2005

This is to all who allowed me to share with you about my beloved Phoenix. When I got home from the meeting, he had developed skin tears and his skin was sensitive from past malnutrition and having IBD (Inclusion Body Disease/snake aids) for such a long time. I could have given him more antibiotics, but with the sensitivity of his skin, no more injections. Why help him improve as only to suffer more and have him go through more needles and handling? It just didn’t seem fair to the poor guy. Phoenix has brought so much to my life and I would not have had it any other way. He will still educate with me and always be in my heart, but I felt it best to put him down so he could rest. I was able to give him 10 months of quality care, love and life. At least I hope I did. I surely did my best with my whole heart. Phoenix is now with Gravedigger in pet heaven! I really miss him, he was gentle as a snake comes!

Jackie

Announcements
Submitted by (Bigcats10) Wed Mar 2, 2005

I’d like to start off by saying the Phoenix Meeting was grand. All of our speakers really did a superb job, every one of them! Phoenix would like to introduce our new Public Relations Director - Kat Mills. She inspired so many of us at the meeting with a unique fervor, so we decided to ask her to consider the position. She agreed. She is articulate, sincere, and most of all down to earth. Welcome aboard Kat! We also have Ann Newman, President of the Simian Society, in charge of distributing the Phoenix books to book chains, libraries, etc. She is firstclass and motivated to get the job done. Welcome Ann! Phoenix is fortunate to have both of these ladies come on board. Vicki, Phoenix establishment Secretary

Photos publicly displayed of children and exotics
Submitted by (Ben Willis) Tue Mar 8, 2005

As much as we all enjoy these type photos, it would not be wise to trivialize exotic animal ownership. Exotic cats of all types require special handling, and the affection they show in these images demonstrate that they are capable of this behavior, not that it naturally occurs. To some viewers these images suggest that wild species may be treated in the same fashion as common domestics, which we know isn’t true and may be very misleading. I've always believed a better approach concerning exotic ownership would be to concede that wild species are in fact potentially hazardous unless handled properly. Photos displayed on the Internet depicting these cats with children and in typical household settings suggests that owners have taken a casual approach rather than all the necessary precautions needed. In any case, this isn’t meant to criticize photos themselves, and I have certainly taken and displayed my own share of the same. I have found that the layman response to several of my own photos was not the same as I would have wanted . Ben Willis
Meeting Reviews  
Submitted by (Tim@lionlamb.us) Tue Mar 1, 2005

This was a meeting not to miss! The slate of speakers was the finest ever! The conference opened with Carol and Cindy. It was very hard to discern exactly what they were trying to communicate to us. Basically, they presented their analysis of the problem. They claim that everyone from the AZA on down is breeding big cats uncontrollably, and filling up sanctuaries with unwanted cats. Their solution to the problem is an across-the-board moratorium on breeding at any level-- even the AZA zoos. They want this moratorium to last until 'the problem is under control', but could not answer why states were passing permanent ban laws. They would like to see private 'pet' owners go away simply to eliminate the market for breeders. They also would like to see populations of cats remain in place rather than being taken to their place. They did not see a need for conservation breeding and consider this to be a myth. They said that there will always be plenty of big cats even with their ban. Cindy and Carol stayed for lunch and some of us did get a chance to talk to them.

Dr. Robert Gibbens and Lori Gage, of USDA, as usual put on a fine presentation, and answered lots of questions. They were followed by three speakers from the NRA. Oddly enough, their presentation had a lot to do with how to work through local government, both for change and compliance. The best paper given in the conference (In my opinion) was by Kat Mills of Oregon. Her presentation on how to fight the fight was utter excellence!

I followed her with my presentation on animal spirituality. I had lots of interesting questions and experiences shared with me! Ann Newman gave a good paper on primate ownership. George Stoecklin, D.V.M. gave a presentation on vaccination schedules. He had intended to talk about primates, but ended up talking about a lot of different animals. Kat Mills gave an update on the status of the Phoenix Peer Accreditation Program. The program is beginning to bear fruit, with more good to come! Dr. Gary Pusillo, of Aperon, gave his usual highly entertaining and very interesting talk on nutrition.

That evening, we had a presentation on baboon training by BowWow Productions. This featured three baboons, and was very interesting. In addition to the live baboons, we learned about adventures training other animals, as well.

Saturday opened up with a really good paper on wolfdogs by Jerry Mills. Jerry exploded most of the wolfdog myths and stereotypes in a very convincing manner. Vernon Weir then did his presentation, which ended up being quite lengthy due to another speaker not making it. He told us that placements this year from the class C USDA exhibitors had finally started to drop. The proper place of sanctuaries was also extensively discussed.

The afternoon had just one program, by Brent Andrus. He outlined a series of not-so-nice events affecting bird owners here in Nevada, and how the bird people responded to the challenge. They ended up following the Fish and Game folks around until they had no choice but to deal with the issue. It was resolved in the bird-owners favor. From there Brent went on to talk about the whole owner/guardian thing. He explained how this was a sinister plot by the AR folks to rob us of our animals, and strip us of our rights.

The evening was a really nice presentation by the Fercos brother, complete with a white tiger. They explained how their training worked, and how much time they devote to their cats (most of it!). This was truly a special time, as these magicians are just one step short of Siegfried and Roy, and I suspect will surpass even them in the years to come! (Their show will open in 'Vegas sometime this summer!)

Bonnie Springs also has a petting zoo, that many of us visited. Despite the 'rustic' setting, most people want to go back there next year. I am one of them!  

Tim Stoffel
Highlighted In This Issue:

- Meeting reviews!
- Speech delivered by Kat Mills
- Photos of exotics and kids

Coming next month!!!

- Get your animal stories in to us.
- Feature article on Phoenix the Snake

TO: