

Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary

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NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2010

AMERICORP WORKS WITH SPIRIT OF THE HILLS

The most newsworthy item since our last newsletter is that ten AmeriCorps (NCCC – National Civilian Community Corps) workers arrived on May 1 for six weeks of work at the Sanctuary. They assisted with construction of new animal shelters, development of hiking trails, removal of noxious weeds, pond cleanup, butchering carcasses for animal food, painting murals on animal enclosures, and touring the student groups which visit the Sanctuary each spring on their field trips. All of them wrote Mike about their experience before they left. (Almost all of them commented on how unforgettable it was to walk horses five miles through snow and cold to the barn) Here is a sample of their comments:

“I have a lot of respect and admiration for you, Mike.... You have reminded me that simplicity is achievable, and not just a far off idea.... The way you have created the Sanctuary, it’s not just a home for animals, it’s a home for spirits. The people who come here, whether they realize it or not, come for their spirits. It rejuvenates and refreshes.”

“The mark that this community of Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary has left on me is incredible. For the Sanctuary to survive ten years simply on volunteer support is amazing. The commitment that these people feel to the animals, and to you, Mike, is simply inspiring.”

“I don’t know exactly why this place, you, and the animals make me so happy but you all do. The sense of community here is also awe-inspiring. It feels like home here and that’s because of you and the community of Spearfish.... I will for sure be back to visit.... More people should have the Sanctuary touch their lives like it’s touched mine.”

“I just want you to know how life-changing this project has been, in large part because of you: your attitude towards life, other people, and animals has been truly insightful.... You have a unique way of looking at the world, and your positivity is something I admire. The animals and purpose of the Sanctuary have touched me in a very unexpected way.... It is amazing to come away from something like the Sanctuary after only a few weeks here, and I know I am going to miss this place and the people as much as I do my “home.” I truly love the Sanctuary and the purpose behind it.”

Many of you are not surprised to hear these comments, because you have seen the Sanctuary for yourself and chosen to support it. We hope to grow our list of “Friends of the Sanctuary” and send out e-news to these people on a regular basis



photo courtesy of Shari Cosel

STUDENT VISITATIONS

More than 2,600 elementary, middle school, and high school students from South Dakota and Wyoming toured the Sanctuary this spring. Also touring were students sponsored by the International Children's Fund.



Photo courtesy of Shari Cosel

FUNDRAISERS RECENT AND FUTURE

The BHSU Marketing class has taken us on as their client for the year and is very enthusiastic in coming up with ideas to raise awareness of the Sanctuary. Students have suggested many ideas for fundraising, including a music event at the Amphitheater in Spearfish and a raffle at the Matthews Opera House. We are now working on the venue and date to raffle off a car to be donated by Prestige Auto and a trike to be donated by Lehman Trikes.

Sonia Royer took pet pictures at her Photography Studio for a donation of \$25 apiece to the Sanctuary, which brought us sufficient money to purchase a second night vision light for our webcam program. Perkins sponsored a "Spirit of the Hills Family Night" on April 12, donating 10% of the proceeds from all sales. Dr. Clay Runyan held a Fundraiser at his Clinic, offering all chiropractic services for a \$25 donation. Jennifer Runyan, coordinator between the BHSU Marketing class and the Sanctuary, will look into an "Adopt a Dog" show, as well as a talent show.

EDUCATION CENTER UPDATE

Progress on the building of the new Education and Discovery Center building is slow due to the economy, but part of the underground water system is in place. The Education Advisory Board and Program Coordinator decided that rather than waiting for the building to be completed, we would begin the educational part of our plan. With help from Bryan Lessly and Grant Welford of Western Sky Media, we installed a day/night camera system to study the tigers, Willow and Aspen, 24 hours a day. With help from Dr. Holly Downing, Dean of Arts and Sciences at BHSU, the webcam study program began in April 2010, with her student Jennifer Adams the first to utilize the webcam in research. This is the first time anyone at the Sanctuary has been able to monitor what the tigers do at night. This was also the first time in the ten years of the Sanctuary that a student has researched the activity of animals. Jennifer has submitted her work to Dr. Downing, and we will share the results with you in the next newsletter. The results were very educational for the staff and Dr. David Elsom, DVM. We are pleased and proud that our first step into the future has been successful. We are now planning to transmit programs to local and area schools via the internet very soon.

Marla Elsom, Director of Education, reports that work groups within the Education Advisory Board are tackling various projects. One group is working on a scavenger-type hunt to use at the Sanctuary, another devising activity boxes for classroom enrichment that coordinate the class's Sanctuary visit with state education standards. Another is developing forms for scheduling visits to the Sanctuary and letters which will outline for schools and parents what to expect from a visit.

GUIDED TOURS

Sanctuary tours are offered June 1 – Sept. 30, Tuesdays through Sundays, at 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. (closed Mondays). Friday evening tours are offered June through August. The tour guides relate the stories of each animal, tell how it came to live at the Sanctuary, and give information about the function and importance of its species in the wild. They outline the dangers and risks of owning exotic pets and tell of ways to help children understand why only domestic animals make good lifelong pets

WHAT WOULD WE DO WITHOUT.....?

Our Volunteers: Kevin Wormstad, Mike Post, Carol Lundberg, Lauren and Don Balyeat, Angie Bellamy, David Langer, Curt Nulle, Russ Bonsell, Reggie Hunt, Judy Branen, Janet Higbee, Mark and Terri Weber, Audrey Anderson, Russ Luedens, Jayme Hunt, Laurie and Doug Jacobs, Ken and Carolyn Reinert, Jennifer Bailey, Josh Geffree, LDS Missionaries, Devon Pincock, Steven Gazda, Hannah Goodwin, Vickie Schott, Andrea Milano, Margie Husemann, Chandra and Nathan Prillwitz, Deb Jones, and Susie Pratt.

New Volunteers: Velvet Ketelson and sons, Nate Cross, Earl Zoll and daughter, John Magnussen, and Mike Auer.

Business contributors for 2010:

Ken Reinert of Spearfish Excavating, Dan Engesser of Prestige Auto, Matt Simpson of Ziggy's Hardward, Wayne Klein, Dr. David Elsom of Spearfish Animal Hospital, Tom Jones of Wal-Mart, Andrea Milano of Sierra Design, Roger Huck of The Butcher Shop, Dyck Johnson, Brian Lessly and Grant Wellford of Western Sky Media, Katrina Tresscott, Rod Olson of Noxbox Photography.

Animal sponsors, Board members, and all Friends of the Sanctuary: You mean the world to us and the animals. Thank you again and again for your support and your generosity.

Newspaper editors: Carol Panerio, Shelly Scarborough, and Johanna Meier

DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED!

Please complete and return the following form with your tax deductible donation. You may also donate to the Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary at:

<http://www.spiritofthehillssanctuary.org/donations.htm>

Yes! I want to participate in this Tax deductible effort to help abandoned animals.

_____individual(\$25) _____founder(\$100 and up) _____gift for: Name:_____

_____family (\$50) _____pledge per month Address:_____

Please make checks payable to: *Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary*
500 Tinton Road, Spearfish, SD 57783

Name(please print)_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Phone_____email_____



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