

News from the Sanctuary



Sharon St. Joan with one of the ravens in rehabilitation

Birds-Eye View

A new home-tweet-home for Feathered Friends

By Fina Bruce

Feathered Friends is migrating. With more birds coming to the sanctuary and more activity around their old home near the Welcome Center, the birds have been in need of a little more seclusion and a lot more space.

Their new home is gradually taking shape not far from the Bunny House, starting with the new Bird House – a converted new mobile home, with a beautiful view of the White Cliffs of Angel Canyon.

“Birds, especially wild birds, need a peaceful, serene atmosphere, where they are surrounded by trees and other birds,” says Sharon St. Joan, director of Feathered Friends. “They need a nice view, too,” she adds. “Birds can see very well. And they love views.”

The Bird House has three main areas: domestic bird care, wild bird rehabilitation, and humane education.

The domestic area includes cockatiels, parrots, finches, and lovebirds from situations of abuse or abandonment.

The rehabilitation area, which is not open to visitors,

takes care of wild birds – orphaned babies and injured adults – who are being rehabilitated for release back into the wild. This is a principal emphasis of Feathered Friends, explains Sharon, who is a licensed wild bird rehabilitator. (Special state and federal permits are required for working with the wild birds.)

A big new aviary behind the bird house will soon welcome two of the latest additions to the educational team, Nevermore and Forever – two ravens with wing problems.

The humane education area specializes in education for young people. “School children, who come from several states, and from elementary school through veterinary college, have an opportunity to see and learn about all different kinds of birds and their special needs,” says Sharon.

Educating people, especially children, about wild birds is a vital part of the program.

If you’re visiting Best Friends, be sure to stop by and see your Feathered Friends in their new house. You might even find Carrera on your shoulder. “She’s a rescued Nanday Conure who loves sitting on people’s shoulders and saying, ‘Come for a ride.’” 🐾



Ten boys and two adults from Montezuma Creek, Utah, on the Navajo Nation reservation, volunteered for a few days to build the large aviary behind the new Bird House. The trip was organized by education director Nathania Gartman, and a grant from the Memton Foundation provided transportation and accommodations for the youngsters and supplies to build the aviary.

The students are in a “service learning” class at White Horse High School, in which they have hands-on involvement in community projects.

The boys also experienced some things they don’t often do, like traveling off the reservation, staying in a motel, and eating in restaurants.

“The visit was a great success,” said Nathania. “I hope the boys will be back to help construct some things to help the older dogs.”