**Barnyard Lights Tour & Gift Store – Book Store Report From Dec. 2021**

by Becki Basham, Gift Store Mgr., Vice-President, and Roger Basham, Book Store

Merry belated Christmas from both of the FOHP stores! We closed out last year with a very successful evening event hosted by the staff and volunteers of Hart Park and participated in by Store volunteers.

Hundreds of people arrived with their children and grandchildren to view the most unique alpaca-reindeers arrive (fitted out with antlers) in the company of Santa Claus (staff member, Ty, with a tummy that shook like a bowl full of jelly, and a never-ending amount of Ho, Ho, Ho’s!). Good job, Ty!

The event started at 4pm and was still going strong at 8pm when it was scheduled to close. We weren’t sure how many people would show up due to the cold weather, but before we knew it the Park was full of visitors and parking was at a premium. It has been a long time since so many families have come to Hart Park at one time, and by 6pm there were several hundred people around the barnyard laughing and visiting, viewing the animals (who were most interested in all the gawkers), taking pictures with Santa or at one of the special photo locations designed by the Park staff, admiring the new duck pond, and shopping in the Trading Post Gift Store. Christmas shoppers pushed our Store sales to a record high!

The Natural History Museum employees Dawn and Maggie were passing out oak tree starter kits (plastic cup, mulch, and several acorns). Many “thanks” to Dawn and Maggie who braved the cold and darkness and hard chairs.

Drinks and popcorn were available and candy canes were being passed out freely. A photographer from the Signal was taking pictures and several other individuals were making a video production of the event.

FOHP Board Members Jeff Wheat and Bill West were at the Park, with Jeff helping Roger with the Book Store and Bill taking photographs during the Barnyard Light Tour. Thanks to both for putting in the time to help us at the event!

The Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation staff, administration, and volunteers are to be commended for their hard work and the creation of what will surely become a new annual tradition at Hart Park. Old Bill Hart has to be up there looking down with a big smile on his face and sending the thought out, “Well Done! Just like I stipulated in my will!”

Click on the image below to view more pictures.