Critter Corner

Barnyard Updates – Spring 2023

By: Rachael Komulainen

Spring is here! After a very wet winter, filled with extensive rain damage, throughout the park, we are grateful for the sunny days ahead! The Barnyard and the bison enclosure both took big hits, from all the rain damage. The entire Upper Bison Platform, for feeding & viewing (located off of La Loma Road), went down in a landslide, after the first major storm. Then, with the impact of all of the following storms, the Lower Bison Pen area suffered massive ruts throughout the entire area – some as deep as four feet! The heavy equipment, as of this time, has not been able to go in and do repairs yet. We must wait until the water quits running down from the hills, and everything dries out somewhat. Needless to say, it is a huge mess! All of the animals are fine, though. They don’t seem to mind the rain, nor the subsequent rain damage – although, Half Pint (female donkey) definitely does not like getting wet! After the first major storm, the local LDS church volunteered a Saturday morning, with 40 people and equipment, to help repair the rain damage in the horse corral. They did an outstanding job! Unfortunately, though, we had a series of follow up storms, which created new rain damage. So, we are definitely seeking volunteers to help clean up the park and repair rain damaged areas. If you are interested in helping out, please contact me/Rachael, the Park Animal Keeper. I can be emailed at: [rkomulainen@parks.lacounty.gov](mailto:rkomulainen@parks.lacounty.gov)

Other updates: We received a few new exhibit animals, over the winter. In December, we took in another donkey (a male, named “Mr. Fred”), 2 llamas (females, named “Sandy” & “Mandy”), and an emu (male, named “Edward”). These animals came from a ranch, where the owner had passed away and her family placed them with us. She had been an animal trainer for entertainment (i.e. TV & film). Then, on January 30th, we took in an additional critter from her estate – a Goffin’s cockatoo. It is a male, and we named him “Casper.” Come check out all of our new -- and old -- critters! And, a big WELCOME to William S. Hart Park’s new Park Superintendent, Chris Mowry!