

# The RASCAL Register

Summer 2018

Issue 48

## *An African Safari without the Long Airplane Ride*

©Ray Rychnovsky

I've known about Safari West, a 400 acre wild animal park near Santa Rosa, for many years but hadn't gone until I went to an Outdoor Writer's Conference there in early May. Our group was assigned to a Safari vehicle with guide Alex – we soon found that he knew almost everything about all the animals. I was able to get a seat on the top of the vehicle for great views and a vantage point for photos. There are no windows in the vehicle – it is just you, air and the animals wherever you sit. The Indiana Jones-like open vehicle and a knowledgeable guide who was also the driver put us in the mood of a safari.



Visitors watch a herd of mixed species of antelope in front of tent cabins on the side of the hill



Our Safari Vehicle

As we drove up to the first gate we saw three giraffe just on the other side of the fence. Alex said, "We have to wait a minute until they move away from the gate." He explained the difference between the two species of giraffe they have and identified the different antelope in this section.



An adult and two juvenile giraffe graze in front of a tent cabin that accommodates overnight visitors.



A giraffe chews on grass, using its tongue to move it around in its mouth.



An Addax antelope is one of many species of antelope at Safari West.

It was like an African Safari where we drove through several areas to view different animals including wildebeest, zebras, cape buffalo, two white rhinoceros and dozens of different antelope species, including one that is larger than a horse. Two cheetahs, our fastest land animals, are in enclosures. There are no elephants, tigers or lions but they had so many major animals that my mind was already on overload.



Wildebeest are one of the most abundant animals here.



Zebra have a variety of black and white markings.

They also have an aviary with nearly 100 species of exotic birds from around the world that provides great viewing before or after your safari. Large, deluxe tents on hardwood floors with electricity, running water and large comfortable bathrooms for overnight stays are strategically located next to some of the wildlife.



A Roseate Spoonbill is one of many Safari West birds from around the world.

Their primary mission is for public enrichment and education, but breeding wildlife, particularly endangered species, is an important secondary goal. They were moving some wildebeest calves that were born here to a zoo the morning I was there -- locally bred animals are much more successful than captured wild animals in zoos.

The fire at Santa Rosa devastated this area in 2017. Safari West owners, Peter and Nancy Lang, lost their home but Peter, aided by some of his staff, stayed with the animals and

fought the fire. Only one juvenile animal and a few buildings were lost and Peter Lang was awarded the 2018 US Red Cross Animal Rescue Hero's Award. They were closed about two months when they got it all back together and reopened for business in December 2017.

Sheila and I both rated this a "10". Soon after we returned home, the Valley Times newspaper ranked this as one of the top 5 spots for animal lovers in California including the San Diego and Oakland Zoos – pretty good company.

I send emails with photos like the ones here to about 200 people. Common responses were: "I was there and loved it", "I didn't know it existed but can't wait to go" or, "It would be perfect to take my grandchildren." Stoneridge Creek retirement community staff where we live were impressed enough to plan a day trip there in a bus this fall.

It is close enough to the Livermore area for a day trip but an overnight trip (a night in the deluxe tent on the grounds is more expensive than a local motel) makes it seem like a real safari. All-inclusive entry fee for a non-summer weekday costs about \$90 per person; weekends or peak summer days are more. This includes a guided trip through the enclosed animals and aviary but is highlighted by the two hour safari vehicle trip through all of the animal compounds. Add a tip for your guide. If you want to go – it is a great way to connect with grandchildren -- contact Safari West on the internet or email me at [rayrych@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rayrych@sbcglobal.net) for general information or details on my trip.



### *Mark Your Calendar*

**Holiday Luncheon**

**Thursday, December 6, 2018  
Elk's Lodge  
Livermore, CA**



*RASCAL Picnic*

June 19, 2018  
Retzlaff Winery



Hal & Jeri Norris



Martha & Rich Campiotti,  
Connie & Bill Ormond



Wanda Finn, Jane Everett,  
Gail Bryan



John Smugeresky, Jack  
Swearngen



Rosemary Tootle, Dick Jones,  
Stephanie Ball



Glenda Ross, John Tootle



Sharron Norris, Lee Ann Hubbs



Emily Joiner



Alice Johnson & Jim Bartel



Bill & Lynda Ballard



John & Suzanne Didlake



Jolene & David Abrahams



Graham Thomas, John Tootle,  
John & Suzanne Didlake



Stephanie Ball & John  
Smugeresky



Delores & Bruce Nevin



Jim Muir



Roger Everett, Bruce Nevin,  
Dick Finn



Jim Berry & Dennis Beyer

**Recent Deaths:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>
Clifford Schafer	05-14-18
John Michael Stephenson	05-16-18
George Rafal	05-22-18
Robert Graham	05-31-18
William Byroads	06-05-18
Valla Cowen	08-02-18
Leon Seibel	08-20-18
Karl Livingstone	05-24-18
June Winter	06-11-18
Don Veca	06-27-18
Elmer Smith	08-23-18



*For Information and to Contact  
Sandia Health, Benefits, and  
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HBE Customer Service Phone:  
(800) 417-2634, ext. 844-4237 or 505-844-  
HBES(4237)

HBE Customer Service Web Site:  
<http://hbe.sandia.gov>

OneExchange:  
1-888-598-7809  
<https://medicare.oneexchange.com/sandia>

*Retirees Association of Sandia*

If you know of a Sandia retiree who is not a RASCAL, please encourage them to join. They should send their name, email address, and \$5.00 yearly dues (\$50.00 lifetime dues) to Retirees Association of Sandia/CAL, (RASCAL), P.O. Box 18, Livermore, CA 94551.

*Thank You*

We want to thank all of you who have contributed articles and photos on your vacations, hobbies, moves to new locations, and other informative subjects. We really appreciate your excellent contributions to the Newsletter. Keep them coming!

Also, thanks to Jim & Glenda Muir, picnic photos.

**RASCAL Board Members:**

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	Glenda Muir
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