

Story Book Farm

PRIMATE SANCTUARY



Giving Thanks – Fall 2021 Newsletter

Dear Friend,

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving surrounded by family and friends. At this time of year we like to give thanks for all the support we get throughout the year for the work we do and the difference we are able to make - with your help - in the lives of the monkeys and lemurs in our care.


As I write this newsletter every few months, there are always happy moments to share interspersed with sad moments. That is life at a sanctuary: we work hard daily to improve the lives of our monkeys and lemurs but realise that they will, unfortunately, also die here.

Our Dear Cheeko

Our most recent devastating loss is Cheeko, a Black Tufted capuchin who lived most of his life in a bird cage. He was kept in a cage as an attraction at a garden nursery for the first 30 or so years of his life.

He arrived at the sanctuary in 2010 and we discovered he had a mouthful of rotten teeth and infected gums due to an inappropriate diet of bacon, boiled eggs and baby food. Once we were able to have many of his teeth removed, Cheeko's appetite improved, his hair grew thicker and he became much more vocal and more active. He was no longer in pain.

We miss Cheeko's happy chirps as he interacted with his caregivers and welcomed visitors to the sanctuary. We noticed that Cheeko was not eating well and we quickly discovered he had kidney disease. As he became even more disinterested in eating or drinking we were not able to administer the meds necessary to alleviate his discomfort. We sadly decided to compassionately release him from his suffering. We are thankful that we were able to give him a better life in an environment where he could interact with other monkeys and could

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choose to be indoors or out and oversee all that was going on at the sanctuary. We miss him every day.

Meet Mishaa

We endeavour, as much as possible, to create families with the monkeys and lemurs we take in at the sanctuary but it doesn't always work out as planned. A couple of months ago we welcomed Mishaa, a two-year old Japanese macaque, who was surrendered by a zoo after her mother died of complications in childbirth. Consequently, she was not accepted into the troop of monkeys by the alpha male who also physically harmed her.

Health procedures require that all new primates coming to the sanctuary need to be in quarantine for 30-60 days before they can be introduced to our residents. Over these past two months Mishaa melted our hearts. She is a friendly, confident, resilient little girl despite the mistreatment she had received.

Our hope was to introduce her to our newly-created macaque family of Darwin, Lexy and Maximus, particularly since Lexy had given birth while she was a pet and had the baby taken away from her and now spends much of her time grooming baby dolls. However, it was not to be. Our initial introductions did not go well – Lexy seemed disinterested and Max became aggressive. So, on to Plan B.

Bella and Samson, also Japanese macaques, came to us from a zoo a couple of years ago after they were seized by Humane Society International because of their abuse and neglect at the zoo. We don't know much about Samson and Bella's history – they didn't even have names when they arrived. However, we have learned that they have gentle personalities. Samson suffers from severe arthritis which we are treating with pain meds and joint supplements and Bella is protective and compassionate towards Samson. We decided to see how they would react to Mishaa.

This time the initial introductions went well. Bella couldn't wait to groom Mishaa and Samson looked on quietly from a distance. Over time, they were allowed physical access to each other and could be found all grooming each other as a happy family. At first, Mishaa followed Bella around constantly like a little shadow which Bella didn't always appreciate but Mishaa is very smart and is learning her boundaries. The key thing is that there is no food aggression among them – Mishaa knows her place in the family order.

We are thrilled to see them together and to be able to successfully group monkeys together when they don't have a familial bond. We are so happy that sweet Mishaa finally has a family to belong to.

Another New Addition

We have another newcomer – a Black lemur. He too came without a name despite being a pet all his life. He was seized by Animal Welfare Services (AWS) and they gave him the name Maverick. During his life as a pet he was fed just bananas and table scraps and, as a result, his coat was patchy and sparse. Since his arrival he has learned to love bell peppers and cauliflower among the fresh fruit and vegetables he is now offered. After just a few weeks, his coat is already showing signs of improvement.

As we got to know him, we decided to call him Ricky – an acknowledgement of what AWS did to save and protect him.

The need for the sanctuary and the dedicated work that we do continues. Again there is a monkey waiting for a new home. We are working on providing a safe loving home for a blind baboon who has been kept alone as a pet in a small enclosure in a barn in the dark all her life.

A few years ago we introduced a fund-raising campaign called *Story Book: The Next Chapter* to enable us to construct a new building to accommodate more monkeys and lemurs. We were quite successful and managed to raise \$200,000 although still far from the goal of \$1 million.

We had to spend some of the funds to create (along with Humane Society International) a home for (and save the lives of) 4 monkeys (including Bella and Samson) and 5 lemurs. I called them the Group of Nine. Also, much-needed renovations to the original 20-year-old structure continue as we improve the environment for our primates and make space for more.

At the sanctuary we often shed tears – sometimes tears of joy, often tears of sadness. We cried tears of happiness when Mishaa was finally accepted as part of a family. We were overjoyed to see Ricky scent-mark his new enclosure from top to bottom to communicate to everyone that this was his place. On the other hand, it is hard to say goodbye to a monkey like Cheeko after so many years of being adorable and being loved by all who met him.

I hope you can help us continue to improve the lives of our monkeys and lemurs and help us to prepare for more who need an appropriate new home. As I've said before, we never know when the next primate is going to need refuge. I'm glad we were able to help Mishaa and Ricky. I hope we can help more.

Just a couple of weeks ago we got a call from someone who wanted to know if we would euthanise a healthy 10-year-old macaque. They didn't say why – only that it was a house pet. I can only assume that the monkey had become too aggressive and too big to be kept in a house. Of course, we would **never** euthanise a healthy animal. I asked them to consider

surrendering it to the sanctuary. They said they would call back but never did. I wonder if that monkey is still alive.

At the moment we are pretty much at capacity. After we complete the current renovations we will have room for the baboon but space will be limited after that. It seems as if it is time again to think about the long-term future of the sanctuary – The Next Chapter – so that we can help even more primates in need.

It is a huge job planning, designing and constructing a building and outdoor enclosures that are fit for primates. It is also expensive. We were able to do it for the 'Group of Nine' a couple of years ago so let's try to do it again. The goal is \$1 million. Of course, our daily expenses to look after the monkeys continue. Please help us however you can.

Because of COVID-19 we have still been unable to hold our monthly Open Days. I know many of you support us by being part of our Foster Program and would love to come and visit the monkeys but that will now have to wait until next year. Hopefully we will be able to welcome you then.

Thank you for your continued support. Thank you for being part of our Story Book family.

Wishing you all a warm and cosy fall.



Daina Liepa
Executive Director

P.S. We know times are tough for many Canadians. And so we are particularly grateful for your ongoing generosity and compassion, for the animals who are in our care. Without people like you and without sanctuaries like Story Book, these animals would have no alternative to their unhappy and unjust situations. Working together, you and I, we give them a better life.