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PIFF Takes Park By Storm Film Fest Fever Infects Inhabitants

MAMMALIAN DAILY
ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

After 11 months of rabid anticipation leading up to this year's 21 film screenings, 4 free concerts, 2 charity auctions, 12 parties, 15 different Top 10 lists (selected by and published in as many different Park newspapers), 5 days of celebrity sightings, 10 prizes, and enough flashbulbs snapped to keep The Park alight through the next Winter, the 5th annual Park Interspecial Film Festival (PIFF) officially closed just after 3:00 a.m. on 6 Felis.

"It's a wrap," declared award-winning director, G.D. Zebra, as he and his entourage posed for one last picture before leaving The Park.

"How are you spelling that?" quipped S.L. Pomfret, a.k.a. Fish Rap, who hosted the first of four free concerts at The Park's open-air theatre on 2 Felis.

The crowd of film fanatics ate up every moment and vowed to return next year in even greater numbers. As of today, that seems likely: according to PIFF organizers, the Festival has become such a popular Park event that it could, conceivably, become a week-long affair.

Archons change date of key Park celebration

MAMMALIAN DAILY

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS REPORTER

Bowing to pressure from The Park's hibernating communities, the 27 AZ Archons voted unanimously in their first session to change the date of The Park's most solemn celebration.

In a statement issued on 15 Proto, the Archons declared that the anniversary of the birth of Jor would "henceforth, be recognized and celebrated" on 29 Barnabus.

The change in date, which will come into effect in 28 AZ, means the birth of The Park's first leader will be celebrated 16 days later than in the past and a full 10 days after the official end of hibernation.

Tens of thousands of Animals attended the films at this year's Festival, which ran the gamut from the controversial opening oeuvre, **Stuffed Dogs Don't Shed**, to the poignant, **Down Under tale, Joining Joey**, which closed the event. In between, Animals were treated to some humour (**Mum and Pup Shop, Willoughby Wallaby**), some tragedy (**Horse with No Mane**), a bit of animation (**Peter Popinjay**), and some fantastic footage (best-documentary winner, **Stag Nation**).

In all, 21 films were introduced at the Festival, but, by no means, were they the only draw: the celebrity-studded parties brought fans out in droves and had photographers snapping pictures until the wee hours of the morning. The most notable (and outrageous) of these, of course, was the "InFESTation," hosted at The Battering Ram Café by the producers of **Fleas Ticked Off**. That party is likely to be the talk of The Park for some time to come.

On the evening of 5 Felis, as the Festival drew to a close, PIFF



Left to right: Director G.D. Zebra, Actress Adelina Cebra, Actor I.S. Chow, Starlet Bisbee Bichon, Producer Fabien Warthog

organizers dealt with their last order of business: handing out the much-anticipated awards. As is usual for these events, the decisions were controversial, but well-received, particularly in the case of the Golden Cougar, the

Festival's highest honour, which was awarded to **Hyenic Verses**. The full list of winners appears on our web site at: www.mammaliandaily.com/Content/newsarts.html. For more PIFF coverage, please see page 4.

CPAP to investigate "shady" referral services

MAMMALIAN DAILY
CONSUMER AFFAIRS REPORTER

The Consumer Protection Agency of The Park (CPAP) confirmed today that it will launch an investigation into a number of "shady" referral services that have popped up in The Park in the past few months.

In an interview, CPAP head, Ursula M. Björn, said that, in the past few months, her agency has received an unusual number of complaints about shoddy referring by fly-by-night services in The Park.

"Every year, we receive complaints about referrals, but these are usually resolved by the client and the service provider before we have to step in. This year there are far more complaints and these [complaints] are of a more serious nature. I believe it is due to the sheer number of pop-up services that have appeared in The Park

this year," she said.

For the last couple of years, The Park's Finance Office has strongly supported "pop-up retail." Humboldt Salvanius, a spokesanimal for The Park's Finance Office, said that such establishments are believed to be effective "seasonal stimulants" of the economy.

"Their operating costs are much lower than other businesses because they are only open when there is a significant need for their services. This makes them more profitable overall, which puts more Ptoo into the general economy of The Park and fuels production in other areas," he said.

According to the Finance Office, more pop-up establishments opened during this year's Groundhog Day holiday season than at any other point in The Park's history. While this is seen in a positive light in terms of retail activity, some permanent retailers

fear that the ephemeral nature of these businesses puts them [the pop-up businesses] in a perfect position to "fleece" The Park's consumers.

Wellington Whistlepig, founder and current president of the Park Association of Shops and Services (PASS), believes that it is time for the Archons and the Finance Office to take control of pop-up retail.

"[Some of them] are acting irresponsibly and this puts us [permanent retailers] in a precarious position. All retail establishments are associated together in the consumer's mind. If one retailer does a bad job of referring, for example, it's possible that all Park grooming houses will come to be considered unprincipled by consumers and that would, in turn, lead to a significant loss of business," he said.

Other Park shopkeepers agree

continued on page 2

piff. the park interspecial film festival

The Park Interspecial Film Festival would like to thank our sponsors for their continuing support:



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Vox Animalorum Vox Mundi

THE WOLVES AT OUR DOOR

Two pieces of news came to our attention this week: the Archons intend to debate The Park's open immigration policy and Humans have declared open season on the Wolves roaming lands outside the Park.

It is as easy to see the connection between the two as it is to see the likelihood of tragedy as a consequence of both.

Here, in The Park, our policy of open immigration has suffered some damage to its reputation, of late. The withering economy, population growth, food shortages – all these things, and more, have caused some Park Animals to call for a re-thinking of our policy. Why extend to strangers what we worked so hard for, their reasoning goes. Why not keep the good thing that we have to ourselves, and let others fend for themselves?

Why, indeed.

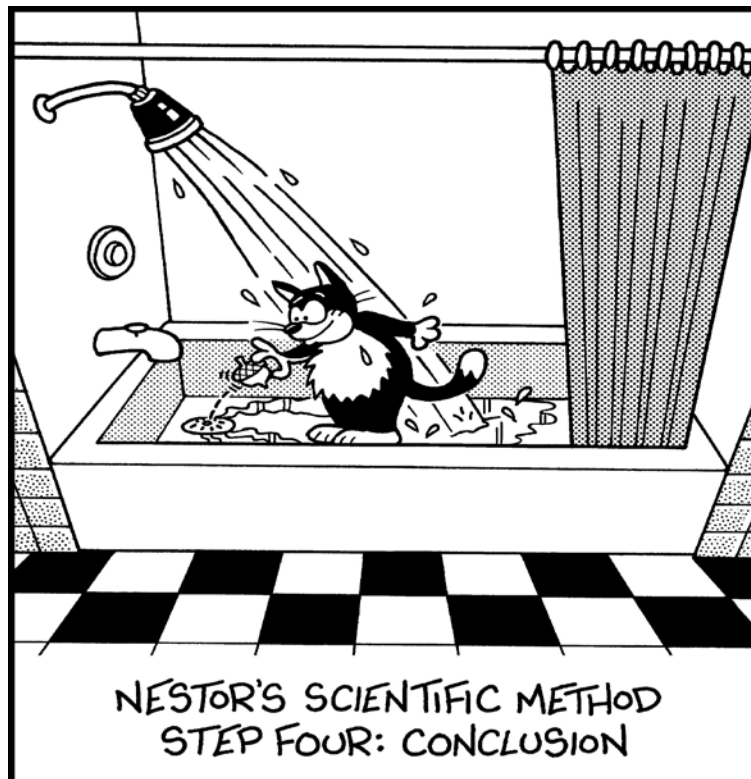
In these difficult times, it is insufficient to respond with the usual arguments: that more Animals from different places make for a richer Park, both culturally and economically, or that The Park has always been a refuge for the unwanted, the hunted, the wounded, the poverty-stricken, the starving, and the scared.

These arguments will not work on Animals who have turned away from The Park's fundamental principles. We must invoke stronger arguments, lest the pressure on the Archons to enact changes become too much for them to bear.

Fellow citizens, we need only look outside The Park to see the consequences of exclusionary policies. The Human world is built of countries, cities, towns, and villages that would refuse us succour. Is this the model that we wish to emulate?

Hope, decency, concern for our fellow Animal – these are the qualities that separate us from Humans, the qualities that make us distinct. Why should we demean ourselves by hoarding instead of sharing, by shutting our doors, instead of welcoming newcomers, by limiting the numbers of those who might prosper here, unfettered and unafraid?

When the Wolves come knocking on our door this Winter, this is the question we must ask ourselves: Are we Mice or are we Men?



Our Readers Respond ...

Re: Park Issues Travel Advisory (Spring 26 AZ)

My advice to Park Animals is simple: stay home.

There's very little outside The Park that's worth risking your life to see or get.

Bahman Lynx, The Park

I used to be very skeptical about travel advisories. There is no safe place in the world, and I think Animals should make their own decisions about comings and goings based on that very fact. But, this time, I think you may be right to warn us. Things seem to have really gotten out of hand this past year and I, personally, have heard of no fewer than three forced domestications. We Cats seem particularly susceptible to such things, though I do not know why.

I suggest that, in addition to the helplines, the Archons establish some sort of brigade to retrieve these lost Animals before we lose a substantial portion of our population to the whims of the outside world.

Kalliopi Cat, The Park

There's nothing new, here. Animals have been at risk for years and, dare I say, it's not just Humans who perpetrate these crimes, either. If we were honest with ourselves, we'd realize that, sometimes, we're our own worst enemies.

Alberto Tiburón, The Park

Re: Park's Economic stimulus plan draws criticism from hibernators (Spring 26 AZ)

When is Park administration going to stop pandering to the hibernators? Between hibernation and estivation, The Park is already asleep half the year, so how can we ever compete effectively? This is a competitive world – we'd all better wake up, before it's too late.

C.B.L.W. Panda, The Park

Frankly, I don't understand the hibernators' point of view. Do they expect us to stop in our tracks, just because they're hibernating? We who do not hibernate or estivate continue to live our lives as usual during those periods, so why should we not be able to do business, as well? Is it not for the benefit of all if we manage to make a little Ftoo? Extra-hortulanial trade and more Ftoo can only help to improve things in The Park, so that when these complainers wake up, it will be to a much improved situation.

Ruth M. Pullet, The Park

Some of my closest friends are hibernators and, on their behalf, I take offence to the implication that their way of life is responsible for any economic problems here in The Park. That's just ridiculous.

The Park's economy is very complicated and it is very much affected by the outside world. While I see no problem in encouraging extra-hortulanial trade, I don't believe that we should see that as a quick fix to all our problems. The truth is that running a modern Park is very complicated and expensive and, whether we like it or not, it's about time we all started contributing our fair share. Yes, fellow Animals, I am talking about a tax. Isn't it time that we, at least, discussed it?

Lincoln Popinjay, The Park

CPAP Investigates

continued from page 1

that the unscrupulous practices of a few pop-up businesses have put their reputations in jeopardy.

Tallulah Boxer of Tallulah's Toilettage says she has nothing against the principle of pop-up, but she thinks that consumers should be very careful about whose establishments they patronize.

"I studied [toilettage and re-fur-ring] for years, then I apprenticed. It was a long time before I opened my own shop. My prices are higher because I have education and experience. My customers should understand that. If you only do toilettage for a couple of weeks a year, you aren't going to develop the kind of know-how that I have and you aren't going to be able to deal with things when they go wrong. Some businesses, I think, are better suited to pop-up than others. I don't think that grooming is one of them," she said.

According to Bjørn, CPAP intends to fast-track its investigation and hopes to be able to report back to Park consumers and retailers by the end of the year.

That prospect pleases Boxer.

"With hibernation season upon us, we all want to be able to make the best referral choices," she says.

EM recalls FeralNoMore™ over safety concerns

In an unprecedented move, The Park's Department of Well-Being and Safety (DWBS) has ordered retailers to halt sales of a popular scent-masking agent.

Enterprises Moufettes, S.A., the manufacturer of FeralNoMore™ says it is recalling ten thousand cans of the spray after several Animals reported suffering ill effects from the product. The DWBS reported that two Animals were so overcome that they required short-term hospitalization.

The product, which the DWBS recommended last Spring in its Travel Advisory, is used by Animals to mask their origin and species, so that they may travel more freely outside The Park. In the recent past, FeralNoMore™ and other scent-masking agents have been credited with preventing a number of crimes against Park Animals, including kidnapping and enforced domestication.

According to a spokesanimal for the DWBS, the most common conditions associated with FeralNoMore™ include pruritus (itching) and alopecia (hair loss). Both these effects are temporary, the spokesanimal said, and Animals can be treated either in the physician's office or at the Park Hospital. Reports of memory and identity loss are unsubstantiated, the spokesanimal said.

The spray product was a popular purchase at many shops in The Park, including the Reek-O-Rama and Footpad Heaven.

In a statement issued after the recall, Enterprises Moufettes said that it hopes to isolate the problem and return the product to market "as soon as possible."

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Popular Park restaurant shut down by health inspectors

MAMMALIAN DAILY
HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORTER

The popular Park restaurant, The Compost Heap, was shut down by health inspectors early last weekend after several of its patrons fell ill on Thursday.

Seven Animals, who describe themselves as "regulars" at the 24-hour eating establishment, reported feeling violently ill and were taken, separately, by the Elephant Emergency Brigade (EEB) to the Park Hospital. All were treated for gastrointestinal problems. Two Animals remain in hospital, while the other five have returned to



their abodes.

According to Inspector Konrad Eule, head of The Park's Commercial Food Safety Bureau (CFSB), the Animals fell ill several hours after ingesting food served at the restaurant. Inspector Eule said his bureau, which has close ties to The Park's Department of Well-Being and Safety, is treating the incident as a food safety issue unless it uncovers evidence of suspicious or criminal activity.

"We are currently investigating with regard to food preparation and storage, but we have sent samples to the laboratory for testing and we are on alert for signs of tampering," he said at a press conference held yesterday. He dismissed rumours that chemicals and bits of plastic were found in the food and criticized such statements as "inflammatory and, generally, unhelpful."

At the press conference, the restaurant's manager, Winifred D. Raccoon, reading from a prepared statement, said that the restaurant "values its clientele beyond measure" and intends to do everything in its power to ensure that its food is safe. The restaurant's owner, Gilbert Bartholomew Ratte, was not available for comment.

Asked whether the incident would affect The Park's upcoming food festivals and other celebrations, the Inspector said he did not believe there was any reason to delay any events "unless and until we receive results that would prompt such action." He warned, however, that even though most food establishments adhere to The Park's strict safety code, Animals should always be vigilant when eating away from home.



ASK A POODLE

Is Pink the new Black?

Dear Poodle,

I come from a long line of award-winning Poodles. Both my mother and father were champions – in fact, they met on the show circuit and have been together, ever since. My five littermates and I are all interested in following in our parents' footsteps, but we've been told that we have no chance of winning because we all have black coats. They say that black is out and pink is in. We are so disappointed. Should we dye our coats to suit this current trend or should we continue to compete, au naturel?

BLACK AND BLUE

Dear BLACK AND BLUE:

If I have only one life to live, let me live it as a pink Poodle? Seriously, folks, what has gotten into us? This whole "pink Poodle" thing smacks of an unmentionable sensibility (can you spell H-U-M-A-N?) and I don't understand why we've fallen for it.

Even though I abhor psychology, I do wonder why so many of us are not content with the selves that we are. While I've never been against a little dash of something here or there, just to enhance what is naturally wonderful, the idea of undergoing the sort of dye-job you mention sends shivers down my tail.

Now, I won't even address the obsessive need that we Poodles have to exhibit ourselves, but I will say this: no matter what anyone tells you, pink is NOT the new black. It is unnatural, unnerving and, more than anything else, it is untrue to who we are.

Let me humbly suggest that, instead of thinking about changing yourself to suit someone else's vision, you and your littermates might be better off pursuing a different – dare I say, more meaningful -- career. And one, perhaps, for which black is best.

Ask a Poodle (askapoodle@mammaliandaily.com) appears in every second issue of The Mammalian Daily and alternates with Dear Noreen (noreen@mammaliandaily.com). Please e-mail your questions to them or post them to The Mammalian Daily and mark the envelope "Ask a Poodle" or "Dear Noreen." We regret that neither the Poodle nor Noreen can send responses directly to you.

CURRENCY WATCH

Listed below are major currency equivalents posted at the close of business 29 Felis 27 AZ. All equivalents based on Ftoo (F)

Aardvark	2.3	Donkey	4.0	Ostrich	5.2
Ape	2.7	Giraffe	4.2	Pig	3.0
Bear, Brown	2.0	Goat	3.8	Porpoise	1.0
Bear, Polar	1.0	Groundhog	1.6	Salamander	5.5
Beaver	1.1	Hedgehog	3.0	Seal	1.0
Canary	5.3	Hyena	4.1	Walrus	1.1
Chicken	4.7	Kangaroo	4.7	Whale	1.0
Cow	3.3	Ladybug	7.6	Wolf	2.2
Dog	2.8	Lion	3.3	Yak	4.0
Dolphin	1.0	Mongoose	8.4	Zebra	3.8

Hard currency only

For up-to-date currency information, please refer to our currency converter, located at www.mammaliandaily.com. Point your mouse at "Daily Life in The Park" and click on the submenu, "Commerce."

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Archons announce new strategies for Park

MAMMALIAN DAILY
FINANCE REPORTER

At a news conference held yesterday, the 27 AZ Archons outlined some of the strategies they plan to employ at the end of their term to stabilize The Park's economy and to avert chaos and panic among The Park's citizens and residents.

These economic strategies, some of which have been acted upon already, include extending retail business hours, providing businesses with hiring incentives, and establishing an outreach programme for Park retail establishments that the Archons hope will stimulate trade with Animals (and, possibly, Humans) outside The Park. The Archons also plan to "keep in touch with the citizenry" via a weekly broadcast on Park radio and television.

At the end of the conference, which was held in the foyer of the Legislative Assembly Building, Balthasar Alouatta, press secretary to the Archons, fielded questions about the Archons' decision to change the date of the celebration of Jor's birthday.

Many in The Park believe the decision was taken in order to appease members of The Park's hibernating communities, who felt they had been blamed for the economic downturn. Alouatta assured the media that the decision was in no way an economic response to the hibernators' lobbying efforts. Rather, he said, it was taken "with a long view to harmonizing Park holidays with both business imperatives and the needs of our citizens to feel they are full participants in Park life."

Alouatta was also asked about recent rumours that the Archons plan to "shore up their financial base" by instituting a mandatory payment system to the government, also known as a tax. Alouatta said he had not been told about any plans for a tax and that such a drastic move would not and could not be made by the Archons without input from The Park's citizens. Since the establishment of Zoocracy, government funds, which support education, medical care, the law courts, Park programmes, and Park celebrations, have come from donations made by Park businesses and by private citizens. Park residents are under no legal obligation to contribute to the Archons' funds.

Museum funds "on hold" as Park economy faces difficulty

In one of their first acts, The Park's 35 incoming Archons put a "temporary" hold on funding for the new historical museum.

The museum, which will chronicle the social, cultural, political, and economic history of The Park was expected to open within five years. The provisional management board had expected to receive funding from a number of Park businesses, as well as from the Archons. Much of that funding has dried up, as well, according to Sukuta Rhinoceros, head of the provisional board and one of the museum's founders.

"Things were going swimmingly until this slump in the [Park's] economy," the Rhinoceros

said at a press conference recently. "It's sent us into a tailspin and I don't know when we'll be able to say with any certainty that our plans [for building] will go forward."

In the meantime, however, the Rhinoceros confirmed that the design competition for the museum building will go ahead.

"We're a few months late, but whenever we do start to build, we'll need a design, so there's no point in delaying plans for that," she said.

Guidelines for the design competition, as well as other information about the project can be found at the museum's web site, www.parkmuseum.info.

Stuffed Dogs Don't Shed: controversial film opens Park Interspecial Film Festival

MAMMALIAN DAILY ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Stuffed Dogs Don't Shed, the controversial new film by Varden I.W. Spaniel, opened the 5th annual Park Interspecial Film Festival (PIFF) on the 1st of Felis. The Festival premiere was attended by Spaniel, as well as by the film's stars, I.S. Chow and Bisbee Bichon.

The film is Spaniel's fourth release, but his first to be screened at PIFF. Stuffed Dogs is also the first Park-produced film to be adapted from another medium. Based on the hit song of the same name by Thisbe and the Barkettes, the film tells the story of a Dog who is "rescued" by a pair of Humans. The circumstances of the Dog's so-called adoption, as well as the difficulties that ensue when they try to adjust to interspecial life make for what some reviewers have called a "dark tale."

Produced by Torsten Münsterländer's Pointer Productions, the film features newcomer, Bisbee Bichon,

piff. the park interspecial film festival

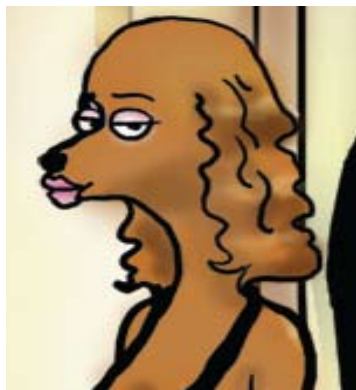
as the main character's new best friend, Delilah. All the Humans in the film were played by real-life Humans. Their names have never been released.

The film sparked controversy during shooting in The Park last year, when a group of Humans picketed the set in protest against what they considered to be an unfair and unflattering portrayal of their species.

Stuffed Dogs was originally scheduled to screen as part of the Hot Dogs section of the Festival, but organizers moved it to the Features section after it was nominated for the 26 AZ True Tails award. The film subsequently lost that award, but picked up two others from The Park's Directors' League: a Golden Cap for Spaniel, and a Golden Ruff for Bisbee Bichon.



I.S. Chow



Bisbee Bichon

The 5th annual Park Interspecial Film Festival ran this year from the 1st to the 5th of Felis.



Let's Talk Balls! *with Bailey*

Today's Ball is the CRICKET ball

The cricket ball has a long history with Dogs.

Originally employed in the Mediaeval period, cynologists (those who study Dogs) believe that the cricket ball was first employed by Dogs as a tool in the annual harvesting of the fields in Mediaeval Africa.

Scholars familiar with the period cite the drama of the time, commonly known as "Meerakle Plays," as evidence that the balls were regularly used for two purposes: the harvesting of cotton and, later, protecting the farm against thieving Meerkats in the area.

The balls, which were constructed of cork from the northern part of Africa, are believed to have been transported to the south for the purpose of harvesting cotton. This the Dogs did by rolling the balls over the cotton as it lay in mounds on the ground, after it had been picked off the bush. As the balls picked up the cotton, they grew larger and larger until they became impossible to roll. The farmers, then, collected the balls, removed the mass of cotton from the cork base, and tossed them back to the Dogs. This tossing action scared the Meerkats and the farm Dogs soon began to use this method to secure the fields. The Dogs tossed the balls, first with their paws and, later, with branches and twigs that they collected from nearby trees.

Centuries later, after cotton harvesting became automated and other methods were used to secure the farms, the tossing of the cricket ball remained a popular pastime among the farm Dogs.

Since that time, Dogs everywhere have enjoyed various forms of play with the cricket ball.

Sources: *MeerStories and Mediaeval Meerakle Plays; Farming in the Middle Ages; Domestic Chronicles of the Middle Ages, Volume 9, Farming; Farming and Manufacture from Their Beginnings Until Today, Volume 3, Balls; If Balls Could Talk; Ballieving; Follow the Bouncing Ball: How Dogs Introduced Balls to the Human World; various newspaper articles and reports.* bailey@mammaliandaily.com

Burrow Theatre voted best venue for underground entertainment

MAMMALIAN DAILY THEATRE REPORTER

According to a new poll, Park theatregoers believe the Burrow Theatre is The Park's best venue for underground entertainment.

The poll, which was conducted by The Rodent Commoner, was part of a larger survey of the entertainment habits of Park

citizens and residents. The survey revealed that 65 per cent of Park Animals attend theatre presentations and concerts on a "regular" basis. Of those, roughly 40 per cent frequent underground venues. That number is up from two years ago, when the Organization of Park Theatres (OPT) and the Organization of Underground Theatres (OUT) conducted their own survey. The OPT-OUT poll

found that roughly 48 per cent of Park Animals were regular attendees at Park cultural events and, of those, only 35 per cent were regular patrons of underground theatres.

Evaluation criteria used in the poll included location, comfort, convenience, ambience, and repertoire. The complete results of the poll may be viewed at the web site of The Rodent Commoner.

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Whelpings and Passings



JUMPING FOR JOEY!

Jessica and Lachlan Kangaroo announce the arrival of their beautiful Anastasia Clementine on 32 Azafran. Mother is well and baby is beginning to get her legs. Stop by and visit us!

POP GO THE WEASELS!

Natasha and Igor Weasel are thrilled to announce the arrival of their latest litter on 14 Azafran. New Park citizens and future POPS candidates are Brenda, Michelle, Sophie, Lauren, Nikolas, and Henry.

THE PERSIAN VERSION

The latest production by Daria and Akbar stars 4 new kittens, born on 17 Karpouzi, just in time to "share the hair" next Spring! Thank you to everyone for their good wishes.

DOUBLE THE TROUBLE, DOUBLE THE FUN!

To Quanshae and Wei-shan Panda: a girl and a boy, whelped 21 Karpos, in The Park. All are in good health and spirits. Thank you to Dr. Bourru, Hermione Hippo, and the staff of The Park Hospital.



Gander, Cesar Emilio. Suddenly and tragically on the afternoon of 15 Proto, as a result of a collision with a passenger aircraft. Cesar Emilio Gander, third generation Park citizen, loyal and loving mate, father, son, brother, uncle, cousin, and friend.

The son of Consuelo and Arnaldo Goose, Cesar Emilio was born, bred, and educated in The Park. While a student at the University of West Terrier, he founded GooseBook and, after graduation, he opened GanderMatch.com and CyBird Dating Services, two of the most successful mating services in The Park. An enthusiastic entrepreneur, Cesar was an ardent supporter of cross-border trade and a vocal advocate of interspecial harmony. Described as a "passionately patriotic Park citizen," Cesar strongly believed that Park talent should be fostered and encouraged to remain in The Park and, to that end, he founded The Park's first Avian mentoring programme, BirdBrains.

A true "Gander's Gander," Cesar leaves a flock of mourners, including his parents, his mate, Belinda Goose, goslings Sarah, George, Millie, Charles, Anthony, Gwendolyn, Henry, Antoinette, Marguerite, and Phoebe, his sisters Carmelita and 27 AZ Archon, Jacinta Goose, his brothers Manuel and Romero, and his many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Donations in his memory may be made to BirdBrains, to the Trauma Centre at the University of West Terrier Medical College, or to Goose & Gander Search and Rescue Association of The Park (GGSRAP).