

Ed Stewart shows visitors the tiger compound during an exclusive tour.



More large felines will be in San Andreas before too long, as five African lions – three males and two females – sit today in quarantine in Bolivia waiting for clearance to retire from a circus there. Officials with Animal Defenders International waged a years-long battle to have circuses that used animals banned in the South American country and prevailed last year. The group has housed the lions and will pay to transport them to California. The group is also funding the construction of the lions' new home at ARK 2000 and has promised to pay their expenses for life.

"The night quarters and feeding pens alone will provide the animals with more space than they have ever enjoyed," says ad-international.org. "However the real treat is the massive natural enclosure attached to them."

Last year, ADI presented Derby and Stewart with its Lord Houghton Award, one of the United Kingdom's most prestigious animal protection honors that is only presented once every four years for outstanding worldwide contributions made to animal welfare.

#### Going to see the elephants

The Gold Rush expression "going to see the elephant" takes on a new meaning today and guests have the chance to visit ARK 2000 several times a year. The Seeing the Elephant program allows small groups of visitors access to the sanctuary, where Derby and Stewart serve as guides on a tour of the facility. A two-day package – including a stay at a bed and breakfast inn – includes a visit to the Galt facility, too, and goes for \$750 per person. A one-day visit to ARK 2000 is available for a \$200 donation.

Other contributions come to PAWS via Costco, which sends thousands of pounds of produce to the sanctuary each week and San Andreas schoolchildren collect acorns during the fall for the elephants. Residents with certain tree species on their properties also truck their trimmings to the facility and Safeway in Jackson donates



## Here are a few of the events coming up at PAWS sanctuaries:

#### ARK 200 Open House

When: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 8  
 Cost: \$40 adults; \$20 seniors (62 and over); \$20 children (12 and under)  
 Pre-paid reservations are required.  
 Call 745-2606 (that's a Galt number)

#### Galt Open House

Simmerhorn Road, Galt  
 When: 12 to 3 p.m. Saturday, May 15  
 Cost: \$15 adults; \$10 seniors, \$10 children  
 No reservations taken; purchase tickets at the gate.

#### Seeing the Elephant

ARK 2000, San Andreas and Galt  
 Saturday May 29 and Sunday, May 30  
 To make reservations, call Kim Gardner at (916) 488-3991 or e-mail to [kgardner@pawsweb.org](mailto:kgardner@pawsweb.org).

old bread and produce.

"Elephants don't mind an overripe banana," Derby joked.

The sanctuary employs about 33 people and is staffed around the clock. Volunteers come out of the Mother Lode woodwork to help whenever a special event brings visitors from all over the world, too.

"We've had people from Africa, India, Denmark, Japan and Norway," she said, when asked where guests come from.

The care and feeding of individual animals can be supported via the Adopt an Animal program (no, you can't have an elephant!) and a dona-

tion wish list is also posted at [pawsweb.org](http://pawsweb.org), where Web cameras and complete information on all of PAWS' activities can be found.

Derby said the amount of support that has sprouted in the Mother Lode as ARK 2000 has grown has been incredible. Even area wineries have gotten into the act, as each year's October "Afternoon in TUSKany" fundraiser finds pachyderms snacking on Calaveras wine grapes.

"You can't live here and not appreciate it," Derby said of her Calaveras County home. She added that ARK 200 has gone "beyond our wildest dreams. It has been an incredibly positive experience for us."

As a kind of joke on the sanctuary grounds, elephant dung – which is used by an area apple orchard – is referred to as "Calaveras Gold" for its fertilizing benefits for crops. Derby said life here "truly lives up to the name Gold Country."

Video of Maggie's arrival at ARK 2000 can be viewed at [calaverasenterprise.com](http://calaverasenterprise.com). Contact Mike Taylor at [mtaylor@calaverasenterprise.com](mailto:mtaylor@calaverasenterprise.com).

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