



Photos by Rachel Parks, Sentinel Leisure Editor

A peacock observes his surroundings from a bench at the zoo. Groups of peacocks and other flightless birds roam the zoo grounds.



A pygmy goat in the petting corral heads to the fence to get some treats from zoo visitors.

Zoo: From common to exotic, there's something for all animal-lovers here

Continued from B1

visitors.

Other groups of animals at the zoo lived in dire conditions most of their lives. In the mid-1990s, the zoo welcomed a large group of the Capuchin monkeys that had been used in an animal study at a laboratory in Oregon. The monkeys had been kept in small cages and administered psychotropic drugs. Researchers then studied the effects the tranquilizers and hallucinogens had on the primates.

While many of the animals in

that group have since passed away due to old age or the effects of the animal testing, five monkeys from the group are still at the zoo. King said the animals in their keep are given the best life possible and cared for by the staff members with dignity until the end of their days.

The staff at the zoo is passionate about their work and always willing to answer questions about the animals. Several upgrades to the zoo are planned for the near future, including a new run for the wolves and a primate enclosure with central heating and cooling.

If animals aren't enough for you, the zoo has some extra features that round out the package. It's certainly an affordable way to spend an afternoon. The approximate cost of admission for a military family of four is slightly more than \$20. The last time I was at a zoo in a major metropolitan area, the cost of admission for two adults and one child was almost double that price. There is a short train ride around the zoo and a small gift shop where visitors can purchase plush toys or books about animals. The zoo also has a large picnic area under a grove of shady trees, so families can purchase snacks from the concession stand or bring their lunches and watch the peacocks strut around.

The zoo has a quiet warmth and charm that I found enjoyable. For families looking for a low-key summer morning with their kids, it's a nearby destination that's also affordable. And for those of us who are animal lovers – what could be better than seeing animals rescued from dire situations, rehabilitated and available to help educate the public? The Austin Zoo and Animal Sanctuary is an exotic oasis that's close to home and sure to delight visitors of any age.



Austin Zoo and Animal Sanctuary was originally a private ranch. The organization now rescues animals, rehabilitates them and displays them in an effort to educate the public.

MORE INFORMATION

Phone: (512) 288-1490
Open daily 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (No entry after 5 p.m.)

Admission:
Children (ages 2-12).....\$5
Adults\$8
Students, military and seniors (with ID).....\$6
Member guest.....\$5
Animal food (goats, sheep and deer).....\$1

www.austinzoo.org

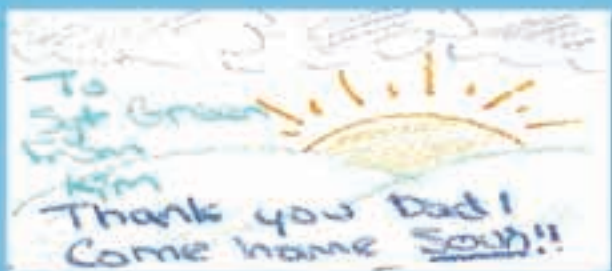
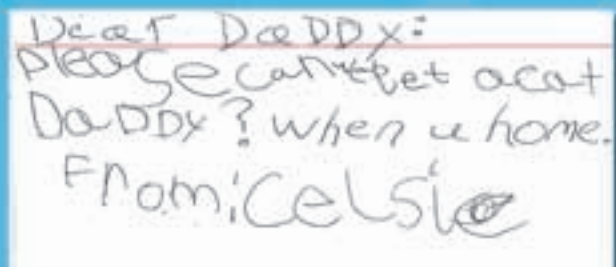


General Dentistry for Kids and Parents

Thank you!

If your child would like to write a letter to someone special in the military, please have your child write the letter on a 3" x 5" note card and drop it off at our office:

1100 Lowes Blvd, Suite 100 Killeen TX, 76542 Phone: 254.449.8174



We proudly accept United Concordia's TRICARE, most insurance, Texas Medicaid, CHIP, Texas Star Dent, as well as cash, credit cards and CareCredit. Dentistry of Brownsville, PC, Drs. Train, West. Services provided by General Dentists.