

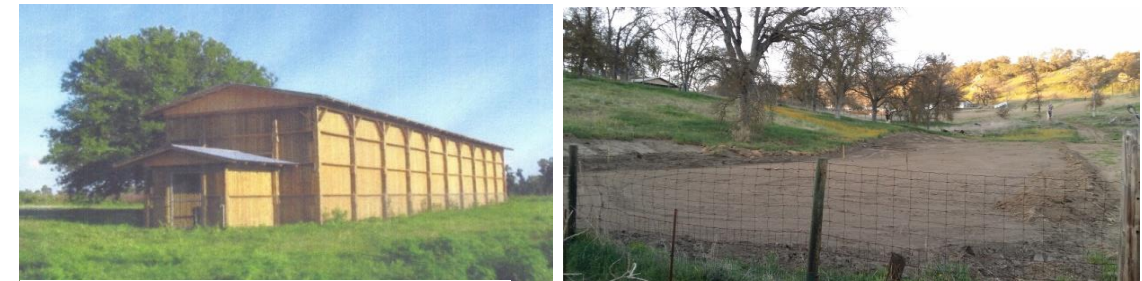
NEXT OPEN HOUSE WILL HOPEFULLY BE IN SEPTEMBER

Critter Creek Wildlife Station is still unable to hold an Open House. Given the accelerated time line for getting vaccines available to everyone, we are hoping by September to be able to open up for our Fall Open House. We will announce the Saturday date as soon as we know.

100' Flight Cage on Hold Due to Covid Pandemic

Last spring we had an article in our newsletter about starting a new 100' flight cage. We received half of the funding to start the project from the Glide Foundation. We spent the monies on materials. The rest of the funding dried up with the onslaught of the Covid pandemic. Our volunteers no longer had the time or resources to get the project underway. This project has been years in the making. The falcons need so much room to practice and recondition their wings to perform the aerobatics necessary for their hunting

techniques. In the next few months, we are hoping to begin anew. We have most of the materials and as volunteers get vaccinated, they seem willing to get to work on the construction.



An Artist's Rendition

CIRCLE OF SUPPORTERS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Membership Categories	Annual Dues
Student	\$ 15
Senior	\$ 15
Individual.....	\$ 25
Family	\$ 50
Sponsor	\$ 100
Patron	\$ 250
Corporate or Life	\$ 1000

Members receive our quarterly newsletter
 Visit CritterCreek.org to see back issues of the Chronicle

Make checks payable to:
 Animals for Education

Mail to:
 Critter Creek Wildlife Station
 36710 Sand Creek Road
 Squaw Valley, CA 93675



Prairie Falcon



Peregrine Falcon

Wood Worker Extraordinaire



John Chedotte, an Open House icon, died in February at 92. He was a master toy maker and wood worker. He traveled all the way from Torrance to help with Open Houses. You would often see him in front of the gift shop demonstrating his tops, whirligigs, puzzles, and Jacob's Ladders. After a brief inventory, he would head home to build the replacement spinners, wooden cars, trucks, and toys in preparation for the next Open House. All the proceeds from his toy sales went to Critter Creek.



He built the Eagle and Great Horned Owl figures that preside over our eagle flight cage and Great Horned owl flight cage.

He was a personal friend as well. At night we would share a glass of wine often while watching his favorite show Jeopardy. We were crossword puzzlers. We would work on the Sunday crossword puzzle communally while Dan made blueberry and banana pancakes for him. We made sure there were always extras so he could take some home with him.

Family meant a great deal to him. We wish his daughter, Margaret and his son, Joe, our heartfelt condolences. He is missed and that empty space can never be filled.

Reptiles Ready for Spring

One of our early signs that spring is quickly approaching is when our reptiles start to get active again. Tick Tock and Alberta, our alligators, have moved out of their small pool in the reptile house and are back in their outdoor pool and enclosure. And they are starting to get hungry!



Our carpet python, Sydney, just shed. He is ready to eat as well.

All six of the desert tortoises are back to eating and are very annoyed with having to stay in their tanks in the reptile house. The night time temperatures at Critter Creek continue to hover near freezing most nights, so it's a bit too early to keep them out for the entire day.

Golf Cart Genius

For those of you who have been to Critter Creek, you know that the ten-acre facility seems even larger when you have to walk it. When working at the facility our golf carts are invaluable for moving equipment, animals, and volunteers around. They are reconditioned carts and so are often in need of repair. At times, we may only have one or two functioning. Enter Carlos Ruiz.



He is a new volunteer who is a fantastic mechanic. He has taken three broken down golf carts and has produced two well-running golf carts. We now have a "fleet" of four golf carts at our disposal. This is especially helpful on days

when we have three or four volunteers who need to be socially distancing. They can work in wide-spread areas with a cart of their own.

We have an old cart that sits six people and more if they are children. We have dubbed it our Disney tram. It is a hopeless mess requiring a total overhaul. Carlos is willing to try to work on it. Perhaps by September we will be able to give people rides on it. It won't be able to go everywhere but could be fun none the less.

Spring Maintenance

Tick Tock and Alberta are already out swimming and sunning themselves in their pond. The influx of ducks and geese and water birds will need their creek and pond ready in a few weeks. What most visitors don't grasp is how much of a bio-load water birds and alligators add to their ponds. To give them clean enough water for their habitats requires pumping water from their pond into their bio filters, a body of water almost as large as each of their ponds. Dirty water from the ponds is pumped down to the bottom of their biofilters where the water is slowed and spread out then filtered up through milk crates full of lava rock. We grow plants in the top layer where their roots consume the organic material as does other helpers like fish, crawdads, and snails. This process causes the water to lose oxygen so we pump the water over a water fall back into the pond in order to aerate the water. Natural biofilters have been called the kidneys of the earth.

