



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

Freeway Goats: "World famous" herd



goats have passed from old age or were killed by cougars, but amazingly none have been injured by traffic. For their safety, cameras and a watchman monitor their property.

Today, tourists and locals count seven goats on the rocky hillside surrounding the pit. They were originally named according to their birth location: Dozer, Black Betty, 3Quarter, Aggie, Drillbit, Nitro, and Landslide. When a new kid was born the drivers and crew put names into a hard hat and drew a winner.

The last twins were named after 728 people (employees, town's folks, and I-5 truck drivers) responded to Facebook's What's Going On in Cottage Grove with 428 different name suggestions (300 names were duplicates). Several fun suggestions: Boulder, Pebbles, Bam-Bam, Rocky, Driver, Trucky, Cliff, Hill-ary, Stoner and Dusty.

In 2017, Tina put out an internet goat questionnaire and received 512 responses from tourists!

Wanda in Nevada wrote, "My family and friends and I love those goats and we make them part of the tourist sites when visiting!" Maraca in Arizona said, "These goats are a cherished part of the community."

Have you ever been to a rock quarry? The noise of crushing rock, trucks, and machinery is deafening! What on earth do the goats think of all that noise and how do they interact with the crew and noise?

"All our current goats were born here. They do not mind

the noise because they are used to it," explains Tina. "Like any skilled construction worker, with safety on their minds, they know when to walk around us and stay away. My truck weighs 48,000 pounds, and they keep out of my way."

'Billy' our original goat was a clown. He rode in the cab of Lance's D8K bulldozer's pushing rock to the feeder/crusher. Billy also walked into the crusher's cab and stole the operator's lunch box. He had a hobby of begging and standing on our dump truck's steps. Even though he had access to a hillside of vegetation, pasture grass, and goat feed, he still preferred drivers sandwiches, garden veggies, apples, and the pears they brought him.

Billy was the best goat ever. I still tear up thinking of him, then I laugh remembering when the crew was busy doing equipment maintenance and he'd steal their tools, grease guns, towels, and one time a hard hat!"

TIPS

"Please drive safely and be careful near the rock pit!" advises Tina. "These goats are not pets, they are wild. Nobody owns them. We see that they are fed and receive medical care. They have a pond on the property and running water. When the animals pass away, we bury them on the hill."

Tell us your fun/amazing/crazing pet tips and tales: angelscribe@msn.com

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When we moved to Cottage Grove, our daughter, Ariel, was two years old. Our family's favorite past time was driving up Interstate 5, four miles north of Cottage Grove looking east up the steep hillside for "the quarry goats" and excitedly counting them. Then driving home, we'd repeat the count. Thirty years later, Ariel is teaching her children the "family tradition".

Apparently, we were not the only family that the goats are important to! Friends Maryann and Leo said, "Our family and now our grandchildren count the freeway goats. We consider them good luck charms affirming that we will have a good trip." Carla added, "Everyone I

know instinctively counts those goats'."

Tina Fornoff owns and operates a dump truck and has been hauling rock for the busy Sears Pit that the goats have called home for 15 years.

The rock quarry's first goat, Billy, showed up out of the blue in 1985. Neither Billy nor any of the subsequent goats are mountain goats. The ones you see today are Alpines. Someone who understood that goats are herd animals brought him a bride, Nanny. Billy lived to be 25 years old and died in 2007 and Nanny in 2008.

Over the years, for those on "goat watch" you will have noticed different sizes and colors. Four of the original donated

Parent from A1

the ruling would clear me of all charges, it is nice to have the official letter in hand," Parent told The Sentinel. "I have now been cleared twice of misconduct charges, once through the independent investigation last June and now by the state's licensing agency this April. The facts have remained the same throughout this situation despite inaccurate judgements of some."

The complaint, filed by Cottage Grove resident Jennifer Holloman, centered on a

personal relationship between Parent and a school district employee. The school board approved a third-party to investigate the original complaint which found Parent did not violate state law or school policy since the district did not have an anti-fraternization policy in place.

In August of last year, an anonymous letter supporting Parent was given to the school board. While the board did not act on the letter or take it into account, Holloman obtained the letter through an open records request and submitted it for a handwriting analysis. The analysis found that Parent

may have written the letter.

At the time, Parent released a statement denying she wrote the letter.

According to TSPC the district and Holloman were made aware of the dismissal.

"I received a letter clearing her of misconduct related to her misuse of time," Holloman said. "She was also cleared of the same misconduct by the Hungerfords," she concluded, referring to the independent investigation solicited by the school district in June.

Parent is set to retire on June 30.

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