

WAI offers home for exotic animals

By TERESA ROACH

Imagine spending Saturday afternoon in Africa. . . well, almost Africa.

Take a walk through Wild Animals International, eat lunch at the new restaurant and visit the monkeys on Chimp Island.

Wild Animals International, (WAI) an exotic 68-acre animal compound along FM 2818 will open for the second time Saturday, April 1.

Our special attraction for opening day will be our Large South American parrots, each costing \$135, and approximately 1,000 other exotic animals and birds," said Richard LaBlue, owner and manager of WAI.

Some of the animals include Demetroie, the 5-month-old jaguar cub and Freddy, the 15-foot giraffe. Demetroie was taken away from his parents and bottle fed when he was one week old, LaBlue said. Now he freely runs around the compound, teasing the other animals and seeking attention. His parents also live at WAI, but they are wild and are used for breeding.

There are also many endangered animals that are being bred at the \$750,000 compound. These include monkeys like the stump-tail macaque, the gibbon and the chimpanzee.

"I spend about 60 percent of my time on the road buying and selling these animals for the compound,"

Texas school group 'hears' foreign students

United Press International

BEEVILLE, Texas — Iranian students earlier this month accused of disrupting classes at Bee County Junior College in Beeville began individual hearings by a school committee Tuesday.

Over 90 students were arrested for disorderly conduct after they were allegedly asked to stop a demonstration against the Shah of Iran on March 9.

College President Grady Hogue said Monday if the committee finds individuals did interrupt classes by refusing to leave, the committee could recommend school officials take action such as dismissals.

At a Dallas news conference Monday, a spokesman for a group formed to defend the Beeville students, Bijan Khezri, protested the college's move to hold the hearings. Khezri said the college was acting as judge and jury by taking the students before the student-faculty discipline committee before they have been convicted of violating the law.

LaBlue said. "It's a very demanding business, but I really enjoy it. I have dealers all over the country. I go to places such as South Africa, Indonesia, and Singapore.

He said that 90 percent of his birds come from foreign countries and that most of his hoof-stock animals, such as zebras and antelope come from other countries.

"We have trained and bottle fed animals for movies and commercials in the past," LaBlue said. "Pattycake, a female Bengal tiger, and a cerval cat from the petting zoo were in the science-fiction movie 'The Island of Doctor Moreau.' Just recently, one of our young tigers was used in a Lamar Carpeting commercial, but usually we try to stay away from commercials.

"We are now planning a 30-to-60-minute educational program geared toward showing children conservation in zoos. The program will have jaguars that were born at WAI, some of our endangered animals, and chimps."

A pet store is also planned for the future. Some birds such as cockatoos and parrots will be offered for sale.

The College of Veterinary Medicine often uses the exotic animal compound for research, LaBlue said.

Dr. C. D. Brown teaches an exotic animal course at the College of Veterinary Medicine and takes his students to the compound on Friday afternoons.

"I assign the students special projects such as testing the nutrition of hooved animals and checking the animals for parasites," Brown said.

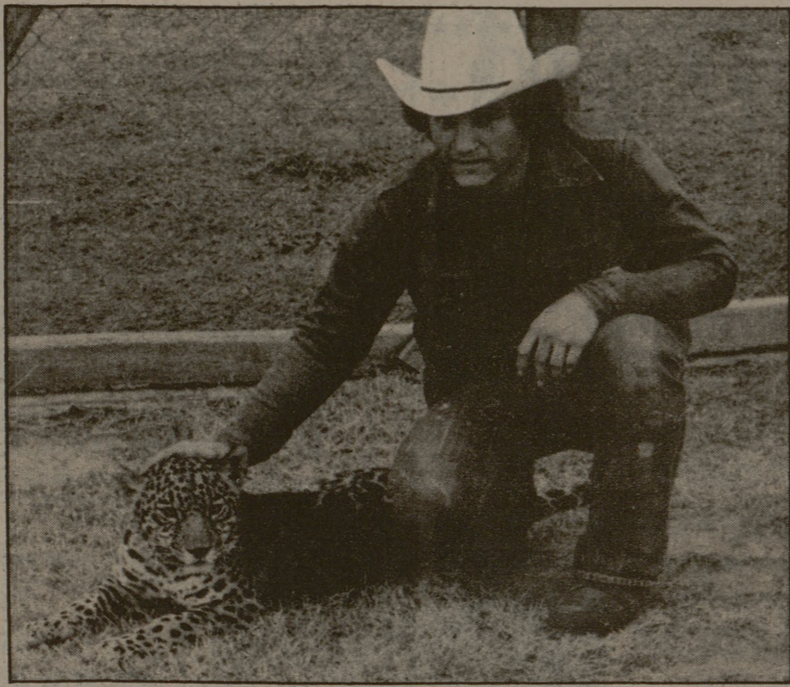
"The students often have to decide what would be the best medication for an animal or decide if the medication should be given to the animal orally or be put into its food. Sometimes it's more of a strain on the wild animals to do anything. They sometimes get too nervous."

Each year the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians give a \$200 scholarship to the one student who has the best project, Brown said.

LaBlue said besides the veterinary students, other special groups have visited WAI such as children from day care centers, groups of elementary children, schools for the mentally retarded and senior citizens.

"It makes people happy to watch animals and we feel that by providing WAI, we are providing a very needed service," he said.

LaBlue said that WAI will be opened from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday and will be closed on Mondays. Admission will be \$2 for adults, \$1.50 for students and \$1 for children.



Battalion photo by Teresa Roach

Nice kitty . . .

Animal keeper Bill Calfee knows how to get along with temperamental friends — very carefully. Demetroie, a 5-month-old jaguar is at home at Wild Animals International, which is located a mile and a half out of Bryan on FM 2818.

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Another 'udder' victory wanted in Neb. elections

United Press International
OMAHA, Neb. — Stan Juelfs of Kimball says his victory last weekend in a cow milking contest was "a sign of things to come on May 9," the date of the primary election.

governor.
The event was among those sponsored by the Midlands chapter of the National Agri-Marketing Association to promote better understanding between the consumer and the farmer.
Juelfs' award was inscribed, "I Beat the Udder Guys."

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