

CATSKILL GAME FARM AUCTION RESCUES 7 YEARS LATER



Max passed away January 1, 2013.

Wildlife Watch, with the financial support of so many caring donors, and generous grants from **Animal Welfare Trust** and **United Animal Nations**, was able to rescue seven large cats from the Catskill Game Farm auction. Max was among them. Fortunately, they all went to **The Wildcat Sanctuary** in Sandstone, MN. Since December 2006, Max lived there with the other cougars, Mia and Matty. They were called the "3 M's."

Their keeper, Trista Campbell, wrote: "He provided his girls with the best thing he could, a connection to one another. One they can continue to build as he did for them. And to us humans, he left great memories and yet another cat to deeply miss. Please come back often, Max, and observe those in Cougar Cove from your favorite resting spot, beneath the dogwood bush."

For Max's complete obituary, please visit:

http://www.wildcatsanctuary.org/max_cougar_memorial

For the history of his rescue, please visit:

<http://wildwatch.org/Binocular/bino09/binocular02.07.pdf>

and

<http://wildwatch.org/Binocular/bino08/binocular11-06.pdf>

[Note: The original article talks about two cougars, Mia and Matty, but Max was included in the rescue at the last minute as they were all departing NY for their trip to Minnesota!]

IN MEMORY OF BOOM BOOM: 1971- March 22, 2012

A DEEP CONNECTION

BY JOANNE CRONAN-HAMOY OF
SPRING FARM CARES



On October 18, 2006, the day of the cruel auction that preceded the permanent closing of the Catskill Game Farm (a private zoo in NY), animal protectors came from across the country, as did many more animal exploiters looking for cost-effective purchases of animals to be used for human food, snake food, canned hunt trophies, zoos, breeding, animal products, and so on. Emotions ran like a roller coaster. Okay one minute, sick in the stomach the next. Worried, angered, depressed and tearful was how my day panned out.

While I was there, I had some unusual personal encounters. One intense moment came when I quietly walked over to the rhino enclosure. I wept, looking at how dismal their enclosures were. Wet, muddy, rusty, old and neglected. I could see the misery in their eyes. "Boom Boom" and "Jack" had lived there for a long time and had become accustomed to the routine, but I felt they suspected this day was going to be different.

Boom Boom wandered over to see what I was doing. I talked to him quietly and wondered what would be his fate. I will never forget the look on his face as he stared at me. I swear he knew I was concerned. That moment is etched in my memory forever.

As the day went on, the bidding continued. Noisy crowds led by barking auctioneers moved past enclosures with animals who had lived there for years. Each time an animal protector won, I breathed a sigh of relief. They weren't measuring the worth of the animal by how much their body parts would bring in. When the rhino bids ended, Boom Boom's made me sick inside. I remember the guy who "won" Boom Boom like it was yesterday. I remember his gray baseball cap with something embroidered on it that gave me the creeps. I heard him talking about what Boom Boom was in for. Then I heard haggling, someone on the other end trying to work out a deal to get Boom Boom.

The cost of this creature went up significantly, as did the trailer that went with him.

Within minutes word went out that Mark Ecko, the clothing designer, was the one who bought Boom Boom from the auction winner who was a canned hunt operator from Texas. If not, Boom Boom would have become a prized trophy for someone's wall. I thank Mr. Ecko for saving this gentle giant. That was the last I heard for awhile, but the memory of Boom Boom continued to haunt me. I couldn't forget him and always wondered what happened and where he was. I knew that Jack, the other rhino, had gone to a place called Wildlife Safari, in Winston, Oregon. He would be safe.



As the months went by, I went about my usual business and scheduled my vacation with a friend. We planned to fly to Phoenix, rent a car, and explore. The route we were drawn to went through a place called Camp Verde, outside of Sedona. Unbeknown to us, that was exactly where Boom Boom had been moved to. I learned this just days before I was flying out. I managed to get ahold of "Out of Africa Wildlife Park," and explained what had happened over the last few months. They thought it would be awesome for me to have a reunion with Boom Boom, and I was thrilled. I felt that the bond we had was timeless, unconditional and emotionally deep, and that it was no accident that I was to travel there.

"Out of Africa Wildlife Park" arranged for an interview with Channel 3 in Phoenix and a few local newspapers. I showed up, met the owners, Dean and Prayeri Harrison who gave me a VIP personal tour of the entire park, and a special pewter rhino key chain that bore the name of Boom Boom, which I will always treasure. The place was beautiful and full of dry, honey colored hills drenched in sunshine. It was spacious, made with a lot of love, and people who cared about this guy like he was a son! As they announced we were getting closer to Boom Boom's place, I was nervous and excited. It was huge and elaborate. This rhino made the long journey to Arizona from New York just months earlier.



As we turned around the bend, I got off the tram car. I waited until they could get Boom Boom out of his enclosure. In front of TV cameras, I kind of gently collapsed and in a heavy emotional toll that finally caught up with me, I cried as I watched this white rhino named Boom Boom come out like a little kid busting out of a candy store. He was so happy. His old bones were now warm and dry, his entire being was totally different. He

was living a new life full of doting people who adored him. He was finally so spoiled he had several mud holes to rest in on dozens of acres.

After the interview, I got up close and personal. I brushed him and stroked his massive horn, rubbed around his eyes and gave him handfuls of sweet hay. This was a day I would remember forever. His long journey would finally bring tired Boom Boom "home" to spend the best part of his life in this new adventure. His eyes lit up and you knew this rhino was content, happy, pampered and most importantly loved by his new family of friends.

I kept in contact with Out of Africa, and got their e-newsletters that told of Boom Boom's adventures. ... until this summer, I opened up their e-mail to read about a memorial statue for Boom Boom.



What? I didn't understand this at first and scrolled down to read about his passing as it stated: "Our famous Southern White Rhino, "Boom Boom", died on March 22nd at the age of forty-one after losing his battle with cancer."

Although the Catskill Game Farm Auction was a dreadful experience, many animals were able to get a second shot at having a safe and happy life. For all of us, our beloved Boom Boom will always be a great story of compassion.

I am aware that some people felt he should have been returned to his native habitat, but they don't understand the danger, or the fact that his habitat likely no longer exists. Boom Boom had his chance to enjoy the warmth and sunshine of the American Southwest for the past six years. He was safe and loved, appreciated and protected. He brought so much joy to everyone he met. He taught, he healed people, he connected to them, and he left a legacy. The Park has put up a permanent memorial in his honor.

He was a gentle giant and very lucky, as he died with his horn intact. THAT alone says a lot.

You can find the article about Boom Boom's memorial service at the web site:

<http://www.dcourier.com/main.asp?SectionID=74&SubSectionID=114&ArticleID=108309>

Joanne Cronan-Hamoy, Education Director - Spring Farm CARES Animal Sanctuary Clinton, New York

<http://www.springfarmcares.org/>

FOLLOW-UP OF SEVERAL OTHER CATSKILL GAME FARM RESCUES

BY LINDA BRINK

The lone Patagonian cavy went to NEEWS



http://www.fosterparrots.com/fosterparrots/New_England_Exotic_Wildlife_Sanctuary.html, but sadly recently passed away—an old boy. We found him a companion at the Vernon auction, Daisy—a real femme fatale, let me tell you—and for a few years, both cavyes lived the dream life.

We still have **Oliver the Goffin**—still so wild at heart. He has a companion, Mr. Ellie—a wild-caught Amazon. They chose each other, and live together quite happily. They have moved to NEEWS—Marc Johnson's and Karen Windsor's sanctuary in Rhode Island.

The **Moluccan cockatoo, Brandy**, did not thrive in the home of the rescuer who bought him at auction, and was eventually surrendered to **A Helping Wing**, <http://www.ahelpingwing.org/> a parrot adoption organization in Blairstown, NJ. He was there for about two years and then adopted to a home in Maryland, where he has another Moluccan companion. Things are much better for him now.

The porcupines are still at NEEWS.

Some of the **Pets Alive pot belly pigs** were from the CGF auction and later went to the **Tusk and Bristle**.

Linda Brink is Director of Sunnyskies Bird & Animal Sanctuary

<http://sunnyskiesbirdsantuary.org>

Wildlife Watch is providing websites so that you can make donations to these extraordinary sanctuaries and rescuers. Obviously, the financial burden of such operations is huge. As you can imagine, many sanctuaries are at capacity, so please do not be put off if they can not accept more animals. Your contributions will help them to maintain the facilities and animals who are there, and possibly expand their facilities in the future.

