

<http://www.newsreview.com/reno/content?oid=1158376>

Letters for August 27, 2009

Animal cracker

Re “Animal house” ([Arts&Culture, Aug. 20](#)):

<http://www.newsreview.com/reno/content?oid=1134791>

Lions and tigers and bears, oh my! The nonprofit Animal Ark is home to some of the world’s most exciting animals.” —Jessica Santana

It is sad to see this reporter couldn’t see right through the hypocrisy of the people at the donation-dependent Animal Ark: They can have the exotics, but we, the rest of the self-supporting, tax-paying, exotic-animal owners are being labeled as illegal smugglers of exotic wildlife?

Never mind that the vast majority of wildlife and parts smuggling is happening in the Third World countries, not in the United States. Get your facts straight, and stop reporting half truths.

Besides, what is wrong with legal, honest, for-profit exotic animal business? Isn’t that what America is founded on: free, self-supporting enterprise instead of money-sucking, donation-dependent leaches?

If it is OK for farmers to charge us for meat and eggs, or domestic animal breeders for domestic pets, why isn’t it OK for exotic animal breeders to charge for their animals?

Exotic is a concept animals don’t understand. What is exotic in the U.S., such as tiger, is not exotic in India, since tigers are native there.

Co-founder Aaron Hiibel admits that they started as pet owners, but they “quickly realized they weren’t meant to be kept as pets.” So if they realized it was wrong, why didn’t they just get out of owning exotic animals, instead of getting more and more animals? Didn’t they themselves learn by doing it as they went along?

I have been a responsible exotic animal owner for more than 20 years. Our animals are a mix of the animals we bought or re-homed, but we financially support this 100 percent ourselves.

We started the non-profit organization REXANO in Nevada, www.rexano.org (Responsible Exotic Animal Ownership), a free resource to educate the public about the truths and realities of exotic animal ownership and to dispel the myths perpetrated by hypocrites who think they should be the only ones keeping these magnificent animals.

Zuzana Kukol
President REXANO