

TIMES SENIOR

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FEATURING



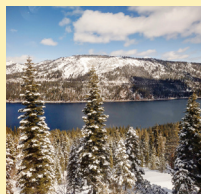
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Senior Times is now available at



BLACKLICK SENIOR CARES FOR APES

“All my life I wanted a monkey!”

by Mary Anne White

Too many people want an exotic animal as a cute, unique pet; but they discover too late that the pet requires more time, costs, and extra care than they realized. Pam and Don White founded a non-profit sanctuary for monkey and ape primates in 2002.

Eight white-handed gibbons currently live at The American Primate Education Sanctuary (A.P.E.S.) located on Kennedy Road in Blacklick, Ohio. Its purpose is to educate people about the responsibilities, time, and costs involved in caring for primates whose life spans can be 30 to 40 years.

White told Senior Times, “Many of our primates were rescued from private owners who no longer wanted them or who could no longer care for them. The sanctuary provides a place where they are loved and cared for, rather than being euthanized or sold to research facilities.”

Don passed away in 2022, but Pam maintains the sanctuary. She is licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as

a Class C Exhibitor under the Animal Welfare Act. She also has a USDA permit for the sanctuary as a wildlife shelter; and she is a member of the Dangerous Wild Animal Emergency Response Commission and the Dangerous & Restricted Animal Advisory Board.

White said, “All my life I wanted a monkey. When I was in ninth grade, I met Don. His father had a pet capuchin monkey; but Don thought of the monkey as his pet, since he was the one who took care of and spent time with it.”

After graduating from high school, the couple married and had two daughters. Don became a police officer and helicopter pilot, while Pam worked as a private flight attendant out of Columbus for 12 years. Following that career, she began a janitorial and aircraft cleaning business in which she worked and managed over 40 personnel for 20 years.

In 1992, White fulfilled her years-long desire to have a monkey. She became “mommy” to almost-newborn Nikko—a three-week-



Pam White with the gibbons family tree



These are the gibbons currently living at the sanctuary.

old capuchin. Capuchins are small and intelligent monkeys with long tails. Wild capuchins are native to Central and South America, live in trees, and most of their day is spent searching for food. After adopting Nikko she learned “When a primate is taken away from its mother too early, it will suck its thumb.”

An acquaintance decided

to get a capuchin monkey named Dudley around the same time that Nikko came to live with the Whites. Not long after, the owner decided she was unable to care for Dudley, so White adopted him. She shared that “Primates don’t have tear ducts like humans—they don’t produce emotional tears; but they do

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The gibbons enclosure at A.P.E.S. In Blacklick.

A.P.E.S. Open House and visitation

Open House dates are planned for June 8th - 9th and June 22nd - 23rd from Noon to 4 p.m. If you can’t make it to an Open House, but would like to visit with the apes or fish in the pond on the property, call or text Pam White at 614-657-8944 to make an appointment. Donations of grocery store gift cards, contributions to the A.P.E.S. GoFundMe fundraiser, and any financial or non-monetary donations one might care to make are appreciated and used solely for the care and health of the gibbons and maintenance of their enclosures.