SUBSCRIBE! | Our Other Publications: | Active Years | Beyond the Fold | Pueblo West View
Place an Ad

Chieftain.com
The Pueblo Chieftain ■ Your print and online news source for Southern Colorado

GUMMY BEAR

Veterinary dentists donate services at Pueblo Zoo

Tweet 4
+1 0
Like
Share 0

Posted: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 12:00 am | Updated: 10:02 pm, Mon Mar 5, 2012.

By ANTHONY A. MESTAS | anthonym@chieftain.com |

It took a few people and some anesthesia to get Barney to lay on an oral operation table.

Like most adults his age, he didn't like the idea of visiting the dentist, even though he never had been to one before.

On Sunday, Barney, a 23-year-old, 227-pound sun bear, and other animals at the Pueblo Zoo received dental procedures by eight dental professionals from the Peter Emily International Veterinary Dental Foundation.

The foundation, which is based in Lakewood, provides advanced veterinary dental services for the benefit of captive exotic animals in facilities across the U.S. and abroad.

Working on two animals at a time for much of the day, the dentists brought their advanced veterinary dental services and veterinary dental education to the zoo.

"They brought an X-ray machine and an extra anesthesia machine to help with the dental work," said Gloria Madrill, spokeswoman for the Pueblo Zoo.

"Basically, they checked the animals' teeth, pulled some teeth and fixed anything they could. They donated their time and everything else, so we are very grateful."

Madrill said this is the first year the foundation's dentists have come to Pueblo.

"I hope we can do this again. It's really a great project," Madrill said.

Kathy Wolyn, a veterinarian at the zoo, said everything ran smoothly.

Wolyn said after getting X-rays, Barney had a few loose teeth pulled.

"The good news is that his teeth were pretty good. The teeth they pulled were minor and very little," Wolyn said.

By Sunday afternoon, Suzy, a lar gibbon, had two root canals and Rose, a pygmy goat, had some teeth pulled.

Copper, a meerkat, and Thor, a river otter, also had dental work done.

"This is a super, neat thing that is something we have not been able to do. We have seen animals in the past with dental problems that are just not acting right," Wolyn said.

"These specialists are finding problems that we would never know about by just looking at them, so I think the animals are going to feel a lot better."

Follow Anthony A. Mestas on Twitter: http://twitter.com/mestas3517