

A Night For Harpy Eagles

Since Jungle Training is very much a part of the British Army Base (BATSUB) profile at the Price Barracks in Ladyville, it only seemed fitting that "JUNGLE NIGHT" would occur with a jungle bird in mind.



The Harpy Eagle enclosures at The Belize Zoo stood and shook during Hurricane Richard, and, fortunately for the harpies, remained standing! But it was clear to all that improvements to these important harpy homes had to happen. The caring people at BATSUB designed a JUNGLE NIGHT aimed at bringing in much needed funds, so that necessary repairs at the Zoo could happen as quickly as possible. What a night! It was hard to recognize familiar faces. People became animal characters and were fitting in well amidst the converted lounge-to-jungle- scene. Palm leaves disguised cement, sawdust gave the floor a bit of a tropical forest feel, and Scarlet Macaws, monkeys, tiger cats, a giant lizard, and even a sea turtle, cavorted around the re-invented jungle lounge.

Funds were raised by an auction of delights. There were overnight stays at fine Belize lodges, books written by Zoo Director Sharon Matola, and our beloved local brew, Belikin beer, was a highly sought-after prize. The audience was enthusiastically urged on by BFBS station manager, Neil Skinner. Neil showed everyone that he is not just a four star broadcaster, but a top-notch auctioneer, as well! Good news! Fixing up the two enclosures currently housing "Da Queen", the female Harpy Eagle, and our famous "Panama", her Harpy Eagle companion, is not the only project to benefit from the success of JUNGLE NIGHT.



BATSUB resident with Special Guest "Balboa" the Boa

Zoo officials are using the opportunity to link "Harpy-ville" into a new lookout platform, too. Thanks to JUNGLE NIGHT, visitors will soon be viewing our fabulous Harpy Eagles and then, walking high above the zoo pathway, to have a fun look at Harpy Eagle prey, too! The Kinkajou, or "nightwalker", is a much sought-after food item for a Harpy Eagle living in our Belizean forests. The Zoo's innovative approach to wildlife education will burst forward with this impressive new addition. JUNGLE NIGHT, and the efforts expressed by the kind people of BATSUB, not just shows how much the spirit of The Belize Zoo touches the spirit of our caring public, but especially, during this time of the year, expresses the fine human spirit of providing joy and giving unselfishly. This is the very true spirit of the Holiday Season, and will radiate a happy start into the coming New Year. JUNGLE NIGHT we applaud you!

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