

Media Release

Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

Contact:

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Presidential Celebrities Arriving at Happy Hollow Park & Zoo No Secret Service Required

San José, CA – On Thursday, December 9, Happy Hollow Park & Zoo will become the home of a couple of high-profile Washington elite; two tom turkeys from the flock raised by Foster Farms for the National Thanksgiving Turkey Pardoning Ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Happy Hollow was contacted by Foster Farms in their efforts to find “forever homes” for the remaining flock, “ We’re excited to have the turkeys join the Zoo as it gives us the opportunity to showcase a unique breed originating from the Americas,” says Valerie Riegel, Curator. “They’ll live on the Double “H” Ranch, part of the new Happy Hollow that represents San Jose’s old Ranchos, and be a part of the contact area allowing guests a closer experience to these 45 lbs. birds.”

While these birds were ultimately not chosen to meet the President (their brothers Apple and Cider had the honor the day prior to Thanksgiving), these two toms (male turkeys) still hold the honor of being a part of the Presidential flock. The birds have had a unique upbringing; they are two of the twenty-five birds selected from a flock of 20,000 turkeys raised specially by Foster Farms on one of the family-owned company’s historic ranches. The turkeys were given special training to be more comfortable with people and exposed to more sounds and sights than most turkeys; this makes them good candidates for Happy Hollow’s animal contact area. The turkeys are Nicholas Strain birds, a breed which originated in California’s Sonoma Valley, prized for their thick, white, smooth plumage and brightly colored heads.

The turkeys have not been given names yet and Happy Hollow Park & Zoo invites

the public to visit their website (www.hhpz.org) to add their turkey name suggestions to an online database. A Zoo committee will whittle the list down and the turkeys will be picking their own names in January – more details to follow on how the turkeys will be involved.

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Photo Opportunity:

The two toms will arrive on Thursday, December 9, between 10:30 – 11:00 am. They are being delivered to Happy Hollow Park & Zoo by Foster Farms grower, Ira Brister. The press is invited to witness their arrival and speak with Mr. Brister and Zoo Curator, Valerie Riegel. The birds will then be put into 30-day quarantine, as is procedure for all new animal arrivals at the Zoo.

About the National Turkey

The National Turkey is presented to the President of the United States in a tradition with the National Turkey Federation dating back to 1947. The Presidential Turkey is hand-selected by Yubert Envia, the National Turkey Federation Chairman and Vice President of Foster Farms' Turkey Division, from a carefully hatched and grown flock of 25 tom turkeys raised on historic Wellsford Ranch in Modesto by expert Foster Farms growers. The chosen turkey is pardoned in a ceremony typically held in the White House Rose Garden. Following the pardon, this year's birds retired to Mount Vernon, George Washington's historic estate, where they will live out the rest of their days.

About Happy Hollow Park & Zoo

Hollow Park & Zoo in San Jose has been a part of Bay Area families since it opened its gates in 1961. It's a unique combination of family rides, amusements, a Puppet Theater, play areas and an accredited Zoo with over 150 animals, from endangered lemurs to miniature horses. Year round classes are offered for ages 12 months to adults as well as special events for all seasons. Happy Hollow Park & Zoo is the first Gold LEED certified Amusement Park & Zoo in the United States. More information can be found on their website at www.hhpz.org or by calling 408-794-6400.

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