

Living in a Hawaiian Zoo

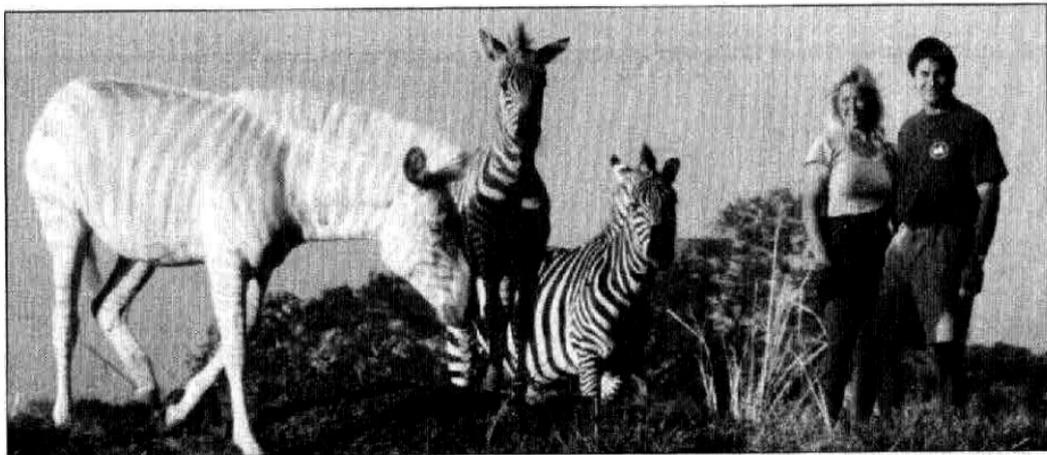
Most would consider living in Hawaii an exotic experience, but Norm Goody, M.D., '89, and his wife Ann have taken it to an entirely new level. The couple has created at their five-acre home in Kailua-Kona an exotic animal sanctuary that is licensed as a zoo by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Goody, who said he has always loved animals and had a parrot during medical school, admits that creating an animal sanctuary was not exactly what they had planned. "My wife has worked with animals most of her life, and when we married she told me she had always wanted a zebra," he recalled. "There was a wildlife park on the island of Molokai that was closing and needed a place for some of the

animals. Ann's experience with animals qualified us to take some of the animals and create the sanctuary."

That was no easy feat, however. According to Goody, it took more than a year to obtain the permits necessary to have exotic animals on their property. It involved a tremendous amount of persistence, but the Goodys were finally granted the permits, and in 1998 they founded The Three Ring Ranch, now a non-profit sanctuary. Currently, the Ranch is home to more than three types of endangered species, including an African crowned crane, a Hawaiian owl called a Pueo, and Hawaiian geese

(Continued on page 4)



What started as a joke to acquire one zebra has turned the Hawaiian home of Ann and Norm Goody, M.D., '89, into a certified zoo.

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called Nene, which are also the state bird. Other animals include llamas, flamingos, oryx (a sub-Saharan antelope), exotic birds, and of course, zebras. The Goodys also have domestic animals that range from sheep and cows, to dogs and a cockatoo.

"We're not insane, and we're not fanatical animal rights activists," Goody said laughingly. "We just want to provide a safe, nurturing environment for animals who don't have anywhere else to go. For us, it is really amazing to be able to see and interact with these beautiful creatures."

Living in Hawaii has also opened new worlds for Goody professionally. He serves as Chief of Anesthesia at Kona Community Hospital, which, he said, is a far cry from the big-city hospitals where he worked previously. Goody did his anesthesiology residency at Baylor, then worked at Brockton Hospital in Massachusetts and Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Goody said his decision to move to the Big Island of Hawaii in 1996 resembled the children's story about Goldilocks and the Three Bears: Houston was too hot, the East Coast was too cold, but Hawaii's climate was just right.

Accustomed to the resources and specialists found in urban hospitals, Goody said he has had to adjust to a rural environment where the 55-bed hospital doesn't have luxuries such as its own blood bank or specialists such as neurosurgeons on staff. "I've had to become more of a generalist who can handle a variety of situations," said Goody. "There are times when it's up to me to fix something or it doesn't get fixed. I draw on my Baylor education and training every day, but it's those types of situations when I am particularly grateful for experience in hospitals such as Ben Taub. I found that after working at Ben Taub, there is almost nothing that shocks me or that I can't handle. That degree of self-sufficiency is critical in the type of practice I have here."

Since the hospital only has four anesthesiologists on staff, Goody can be found there on most days. That doesn't leave him as much time as he would like to help care for the animals at home, but he knows they are in the best of hands with his wife, and he helps when he can with those animals that need some extra care. Between Ann's experience with animals and Norm's medical training, the couple can handle most of the animals' care themselves. When they need additional advice, they have found many willing experts who often provide assistance through the Internet.

Since their Ranch is the only sanctuary in the islands, many residents have never seen these animals. Therefore, the Goodys are creating a teaching program to help educate local children in the classroom and bring them to the Ranch to see the animals up close. "We can only make a small impact ourselves, but we can make a real difference if we can influence the way the next generation thinks about and behaves toward animals," said Goody.

The Goodys said the only drawback to living in Hawaii is that they miss their friends on the mainland. So if you find yourself in Kona, they said to be sure and stop by . . . especially at feeding time! But Goody—referring to an old medical school joke—warns his fellow alumni that when you're at the Three Ring Ranch, "when you hear hoof beats, think zebras, not horses." ❧

Editor's Note: To learn more about the Three Ring Ranch, visit the Goodys' website at www.threeringranch.org