

From: Lucy Spelman
To: Becky Yates; Belinda Reser; Benjamin Beck; Donald Nichols; Janine Brown; Leigh Clayton; Marie Galloway; Michael Morgan; Richard Montali; Robert Hoage; Sanchez, Carlos
Date: 9/18/00 7:23AM
Subject: Fwd: Update

This is good news. However, human health issues are still a concern as well as the health of the rest of the EH inhabitants. But we have far fewer concerns that we would have if it had been the human form.

I would like to get together with relevant curators, keepers, Nichols and Montali, and vets - **next week after AAZV** - to discuss plans/policies for elephant house.

With respect to the BBC film crew, please keep things simple and explain that our restrictions surrounding visitors and close contact with our elephants are safety precautions that were increased somewhat when the group dynamics changed with the loss of the African elephant.

Our policy right now is that only NZP staff have free-contact access to the elephants.

I have felt for some time that we have been a bit too relaxed with elephant visitors and film crews (and I have certainly been "guilty" of this), regardless of the m. bovis issue. So we should look at updating guidelines. Maybe even having a set of written guidelines with explanations that can be given to film crews or others expecting close behind-the-scenes access.

At this time, I do not see the need to discuss the m. bovis issue with the BBC crew unless asked directly. They should be able to get good footage from the pagoda, or from the floor just in front if necessary.

If they or others ask what was wrong with Nancy, the answer should be "multiple problems, including osteomyelitis and severe arthritis, fairly sudden severe weight loss...but we are still waiting for final necropsy results"..

If asked a pointed question (elephants are commonly found to have TB at necropsy, did she have it...?) then of course be truthful, explaining that preliminary results show m. bovis (cow form) in her lungs, probably an old "quiet" infection that became active as a result of her immune suppressive drugs. Yes we are screening the rest of the elephants, yes it can spread to other animals and even people if their immune systems are poor, yes we can treat. However, the medicine can make the animals ill and we have no way of testing living elephants with 100% accuracy for this disease.

If they have more questions, please defer to a phone conversation with me. If they really want to go deeper, we can get Montali involved.

Keep in mind, until we get the final path report we really do not know what her main problem was.

-Lucy

CC: McKinley Hudson