

Wild Kingdom

WOW... WHAT AN EXCITING DAY!!! A bunch of my EXCELLENT theatre friends and I took the short (?) road trip to Port Clinton to the [African Wildlife Safari Park](#). It was a very fun place to visit as you drove through a trail on which not only do you see a variety of African wildlife, but you also ENCOUNTER them. Elk (baby as well as adult), zebras, monkeys, giraffe, gazelle, longhorn steer, and don't forget the buffalo, and LUDO who was a friend of the friends I traveled with. I am told that Ludo had gotten along in years since their visit last year and was not nearly as active. Along the trail, most of the animals come to your vehicle to check out who was trespassing on their turf and to perhaps snatch a quick snack (of carrots or whatever was in the cups that were purchased at the starting gate. Quite an interesting experience having a buffalo stick his head in your car and leave his calling card of drool and stench.

I made two journeys through the safari. On the first, I sat in the back of the van with no operating windows. In order to get the full impact, a brave woman and I ventured out alone to brave the wild beast. Armed with the remaining four bags of carrots that I had purchased at Wal-Mart earlier that day, we circled the perimeter once again. I was really waiting for the hairy beast of buffalo to sneeze inside the car; thankfully, this did not happen. Carol and I seemed to have taken longer going through the tour the second time (still not as long as it took our companions in the other vehicle the first time). At times, a multitude of baby elk seemed to be congregating right in the middle of the road, blocking oncoming traffic. Our solution, blare the horn and make a speedy dash through a small pond. Maybe that was the strange feeling encountered later concerning the van's "pick up." Near the end, the giraffe decided to be more sociable and ventured to the stream of cars. The presence of carrot

vendors along the path may have had something to do with that.

Following our hair-raising excursion through the faux African wilderness, we rejoined our companions at a show featuring a few of the other animals at the park: a cockatiel named Sydney, a chinchilla, a hedgehog, a Vietnamese pot-bellied pig, and a boa constrictor. Following the show, a few of our brave troop had a photo op with the snake. For a great time apart from the ordinary trip to the zoo, take your family (we had a 5 week old along with us and the next oldest who is nearly 2 seemed to enjoy herself visiting the animals) for an African safari.

In my next post, I will continue on our fun-filled extravaganza.