

The Story of Ruby— The Elephant



Photos courtesy of the Phoenix Zoo

- Shipped from Thailand at seven months old.
- Brought to Phoenix Zoo.
- Darling of the zoo.
- Grew to be 6,000lbs!
- At first Ruby was the only elephant in the Phoenix Zoo.



When she arrived in Phoenix, Ruby's first roommate was a goat named "Pearl."

Elephant FYI:

- They are social animals and do best with other elephants.
- Isolation is hard on such a small elephant.
- Elephants need to stay busy with physical activities while in captivity.
- Need to have a life and not be kept.

Ruby Started to Develop Problem Behaviors!

What Do You Do With an Elephant With These Behaviors?

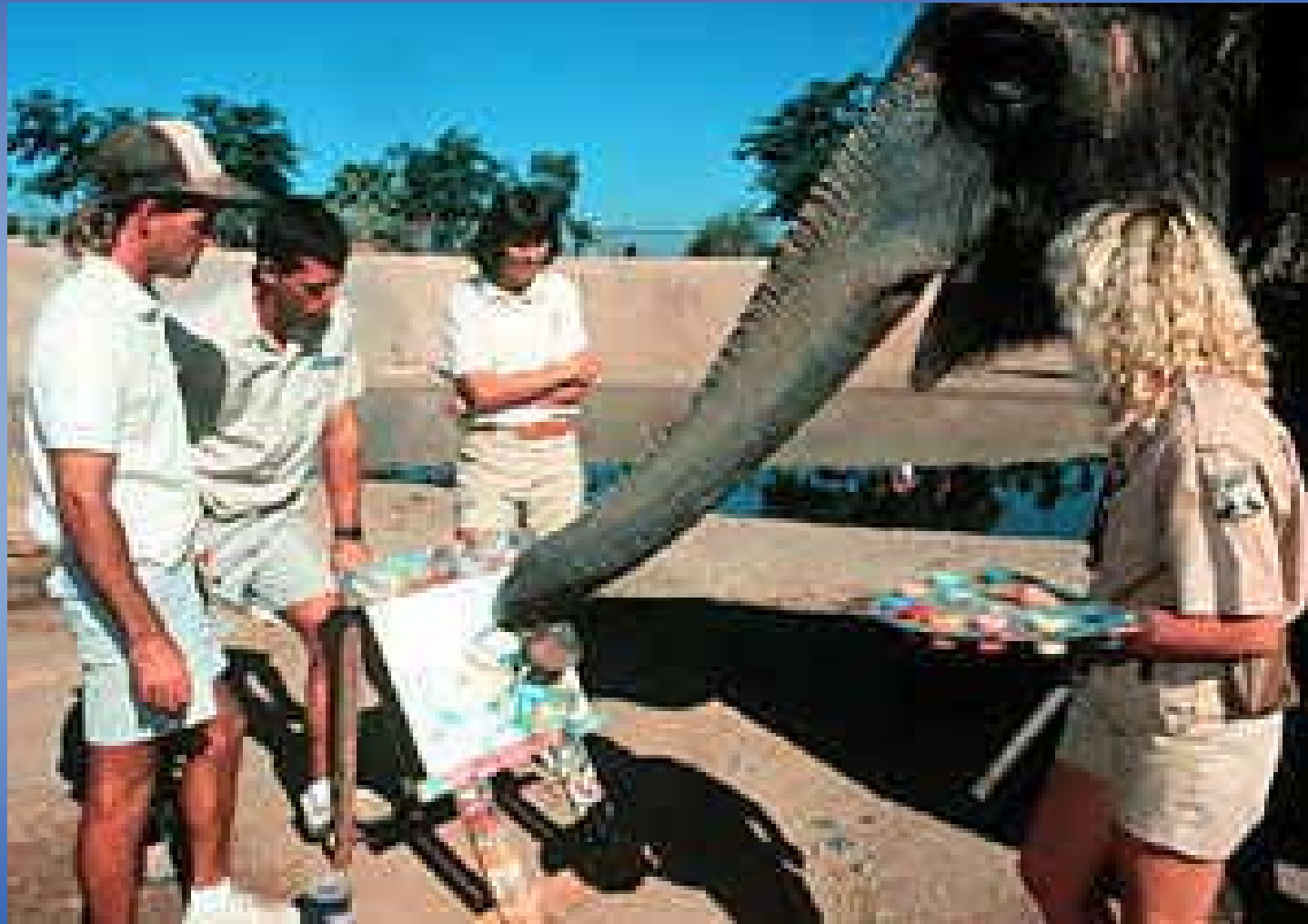
Change Ruby's Environment!

- Phoenix Zoo acquired other elephants for companionship.
- Assigned new caregivers with *caring* attitude.
- New enclosure with more space.

Problem Behaviors Disappeared

- Ruby started to thrive
- Caregivers made the startling discovery that . . .

Ruby Loved to Paint!



Ruby's Paintings

- Compared to other modern artists.
- Paintings showcased in galleries and museums.
- Profits go to Phoenix Zoo Conservation Fund.

**Ruby made this painting minutes after meeting
Katie Richardson in her new Christmas sweater.**







Lessons Learned

- Ruby's problem behaviors were a result of her physical and psychosocial environment.
- Caregivers reorganized their approach to meet *her* needs.
- Problems went away and Ruby was able to grow and flourish far beyond anyone's imagination.
- Our challenge is to look at our care environments with Ruby's lesson in mind.

Lessons Learned (continued)

- Eden Alternative-Treatment vs. *Caring*.
- What does it mean to provide *care*?
- Three chronic issues in the long-term care environment (Eden Alternative):
 - Helplessness
 - Hopelessness
 - Boredom

Photos Courtesy of:

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Text Materials:

From: *Ruby, The Painting Pachyderm of the Phoenix Zoo.*

By: Dick George, 1995
Delacorte Press, NY, NY



Lunchtime!!

