

# Red Hats avoid red hot temps, stay cool at farm

Postponed trip 'worth it' to see the animals

By Richard Freedman

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All the animals at Loma Vista Farm were seeing red Thursday. Well, except for Keebler and Oreo the cows. Bovines have exceptional panoramic vision, sure, but they don't see red.

No matter. Seemed like the cows, sheep, goats, chickens, pigs, bunnies and horses at the north Vallejo sanctuary welcomed the ladies from the Red Hat Society during an early afternoon critter campus excursion.

Seven women from the Napa chapter of the Red Hats were led around grounds by "Farmer" Rita LeRoy, Loma Vista's historian and familiar face to humans and animals.

Grown-up groups only reserve a tour a few times a year, LeRoy said, tickled by the attentive red-and-purple clad ladies.

"They are doing a real good job," LeRoy said 15 minutes into the tour. "They're staying together and (smile) they're not causing any trouble. They're on their best behavior and they're really good listeners. They asked really good questions."

The chapter's "queen," Joyce Willson, said the Red Hats planned a visit to Loma Vista Farm because "it looked interesting and we're always looking for some place new and interesting."

Though it was the group's first-time visit, barn animals are hardly new to the 83-year-old Cordelia resident.

"I was brought up on a ranch in Sonoma County," said Willson. "Lots of horses and cows."

The tour was delayed a few minutes because of street construction as Willson planted herself on the corner directing her colleagues. No big deal.

"We're prepared for just about anything," Willson said, smiling. "and when you get to my age, there are a lot of detours."

Well worth it, said Red Hatter Jackie Soria of Napa, with her 11-year-old grandson, Tristan, joining the fun.

"This is beautiful," Soria said amazed of the farm. "I'm really amazed how much the community put in to make it so nice with the



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Veronica Hale, of Fairfield, talks to Rockstar the pig as the Napa Red Hat Society visits Loma Vista Farm on Thursday.

sidewalks and fences. I've been to zoos that haven't had as nice of materials."

A Red Hatter for nine years, Soria said it's all for the friendships "and being able to go out and to different things that I wouldn't do by myself."

A six-year Red Hatter, Veronica Hale of Fairfield, said it's all about "just hanging out with

like-minded people. We like to go and have drinks and lunch and with this group — I belong to two groups — they have one luncheon and one activity and this is our activity."

It was a welcomed relief strolling the five-acre farm in 65-degree weather Thursday afternoon after the Red Hats postponed the original June 17 date

that would have had them dragging in 106 degrees.

Red Hatter Jackie Soria of Napa said she was "disappointed" with the postponement, "but I was worried it would be too hot."

"What a difference a month makes," said LeRoy, minutes before taking the seven "Red Hat-