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Sam Hess, mechanic "A" leader, played paparazzo and captured a pack of coyote pups frolicking near the Division 4 vehicle maintenance area. Photos by Sam Hess

Wild Kingdom: Coyote Family Offers Daily Show for Division 4 Workers

BY Ned Racine, Editor

(June 25, 2008) We all have beastly work days now and then, but how often do we have wild animals entertain and amaze us at work?

For two weeks, a pack of coyote pups frolicked, wrestled, lounged, watched and hid, entertaining and amazing Non-Revenue Division 4 workers and offering them a view of the wildlife within Los Angeles County.



The coyotes took up residence in bushes on Metro property bordering the Los Angeles River. That put them approximately 75 to 100 yards from the mechanics servicing Division 4's non-revenue vehicles.

When Jesus Soltero, mechanic "A", asked Sam Hess if he had seen the coyote pups, Hess' reaction was, naturally, "What?"

Intrigued, Hess, a mechanic "A" leader, took photos of the pups from the maintenance building roof. The mechanics weren't the only group watching. For two weeks, a variety of workers checked in on the pups and their mother.



"[The coyotes] had a nice little audience there for a little bit," Hess said. "Everyone was curious to see the coyotes playing like regular pets."

Although these were not pets, the coyote (*Canis latrans*) is a close relative of the domestic dog and wolf, according to the Humane Society of the United States.

To observe the coyotes, however, took some discipline. Hess cautioned the mechanics not to stand at the fence. When the coyotes saw any movement there, they would hide.



Hess, who has three dogs of his own, estimated the pups were three months old. And, from what he could see, they were healthy.

Coyotes, of course, are not always welcome in Los Angeles County, as they were at Division 4, where the pups were a source of wonder.

"People here really fell for those pups. I don't think anyone that saw them would think badly of coyotes after seeing these pups," Hess said.

About two weeks ago, Metro maintenance cut back the weeds where the pups were playing. They haven't been seen since. Hess believes they went back down the river where they came from.

"It was really interesting to have something amazing like that so close," Hess said with awe.