



MARCH 2010

THE PLATY PRESS

FOR MEMBERS OF THE PLATYPUS SOCIETY

STIRRING UP SUPPORT

When a bartender hands you a perfectly mixed drink at the next Platypus Society event, thank Michele Lesperance. As the owner of Bottoms-Up Bartending in Milwaukee, Lesperance has been making drinks for Platypus Society members for nearly 20 years. In 1990, Lesperance started the bartending service and introduced herself to the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM). Since then, Bottoms-Up has become the vendor of choice for events put on by the Platypus Society, ZSM's highest-level donor-member recognition group. In 2004, Bottoms-Up became an in-kind Platypus Society member in recognition of the many hours of bartending services it had donated to the group.

Lesperance is a longtime fan of the Milwaukee County Zoo. "I have enjoyed the Zoo all of my adult life, and I always volunteered on my three now-adult children's field trips to the Zoo," she says. These days, she enjoys staffing the Platypus Society's VIP premieres of Zoo special summer exhibits. This is a chance to see exhibits before the general public and to meet fellow Platypus Society members, Lesperance says. "I enjoy hearing speeches that Zoological Society CEO Dr. Robert Davis and Zoo Director Chuck Wikenhauser prepare for these events," she explains. "I have come to know many Platypus members. Their favorite drinks pop into my head as soon as I see them!" (The next Platypus premiere is the May 27 sneak peek at the Zoo's special summer exhibit Adventure Dinosaur!, sponsored by Lowe's, which will feature life-size, robotic dino replicas.)

Lesperance also supports the non-profit ZSM at other events. For many years she has donated an in-home margarita party as an auction prize for Zoo Ball, the ZSM's biggest annual fund-raiser in June. She pays for two bartenders to work at the Platypus Society's annual family picnic in the summer. And she gives the ZSM discounts on services provided at events such as cocktail parties to recruit new Platypus Society members.

One of her favorite Platypus Society perks is free Zoo admission for family members and business associates. Lesperance often takes her five grandchildren, ages 4 years to 4 months, to the Zoo. "This is one of the truly affordable things people with children can do in Milwaukee," Lesperance says. She also takes her grandchildren to the ZSM's Conservation Education classes and camps (Platypus members can register early and receive discounts on these programs).



Photo by Dale Gray

In 2009, Lesperance welcomed Rick Cullen (above, with Lesperance) as a business partner and fellow "Platy" member. Cullen, a former airline pilot, looks forward to supporting the Platypus Society and enjoying the benefits. He often visits the Zoo with his wife and 2-year-old daughter. Says Cullen: "I'm determined to grow the business and follow in the same tradition of Platypus Society support."

By Julia Kolker

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 **THE
PLATYPRESS**

The Platy Press is a newsletter for members of the Platypus Society. The Platypus Society is the highest level, donor-member-recognition group in the Zoological Society of Milwaukee's network of support. Members include about 375 area foundations, businesses and individuals contributing more than \$700,000 annually with in-kind services and support. The Platy Press is published four times a year by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, 10005 W. Blue Mound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226. The Zoological Society celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2010.

www.zoosociety.org

ZOO PRIDE &

Volunteers are some of the Zoological Society of Milwaukee's (ZSM's) most devoted supporters. On these pages, several members of Zoo Pride, the ZSM's volunteer auxiliary, tell why they chose to leave a planned gift through the Simba Society. This program recognizes people who make bequests in their wills or arrange lifetime gifts to the non-profit ZSM. Leaving a gift can help us carry out our mission to conserve wildlife, to educate people about animals and to support the Milwaukee County Zoo long into the future. Irrevocable trusts, wills, annuities and endowments are some of the ways to give a gift. If you'd like to join the Simba Society or learn more about planned giving, please contact the Development office at (414) 258-2333.

INSPIRED BY VOLUNTEERING



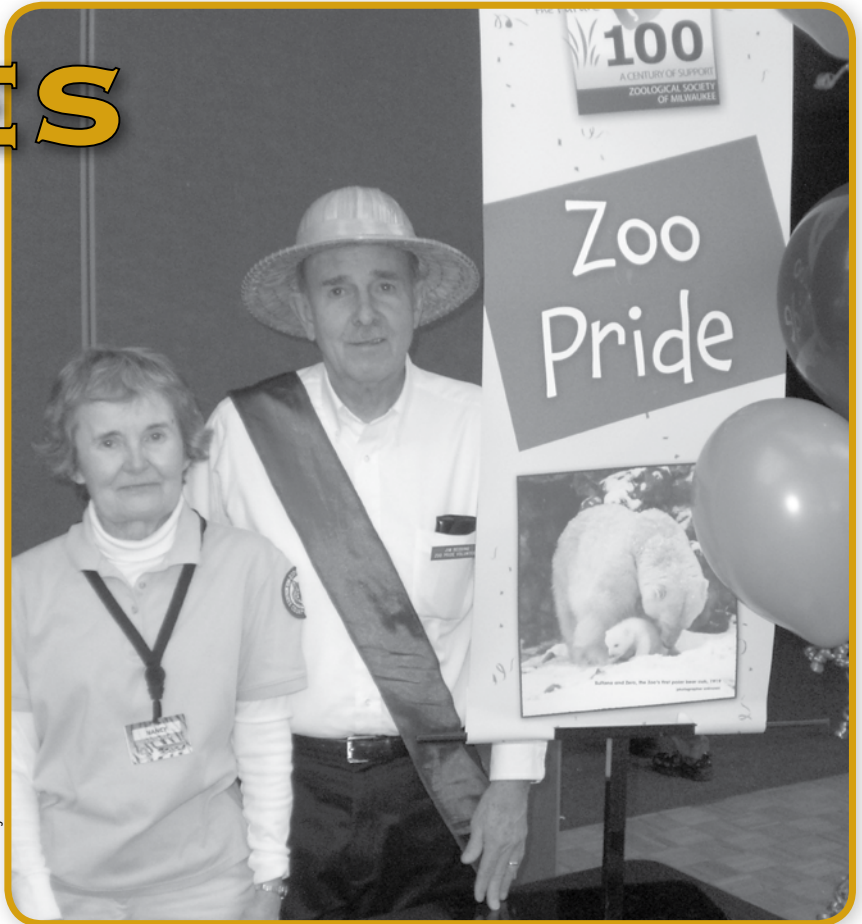
Lygere Panagopoulos is a longtime fan of the Milwaukee County Zoo. "I've had the Zoo in my will for almost 40 years," she says. In the late 1980s, she joined Zoo Pride and helped with office tasks. A busy work schedule caused her to leave Zoo Pride, but volunteering renewed her commitment to the Zoo and the ZSM. In 1999, she became a member of the Simba Society. "The Zoo is a great community resource," Panagopoulos explains. She appreciates the year-round Zoo and ZSM events that appeal to both children and adults. She also values the Zoo's international reputation and its dramatic growth over the last two decades. "The Zoo has certainly done a lot of improvements and innovations over the years." (The ZSM conducted two capital campaigns in partnership with Milwaukee County from 1988 to 2008. The second campaign improved almost 25% of the park.) "A planned gift helps support Zoo enhancements so future generations can enjoy the park as much as I do," says Panagopoulos.

LEGACIES

FUTURE GENERATIONS IN MIND

Jim and Nancy Redding are a husband-and-wife volunteer team who know the Zoo inside and out. Jim joined Zoo Pride 13 years ago, and Nancy has been a volunteer for four years. Between them, they have worked on nearly every one of Zoo Pride's 29 committees. In 2005, the Reddings joined the Simba Society, and designated part of their estate to the ZSM. "We wanted to keep the Zoo's mission alive by sharing with others all the benefits that we have seen," says Jim. The couple have made a lot of friends among fellow volunteers and ZSM staff. The Reddings' four children grew up visiting the Zoo, and five of their grandchildren have taken ZSM Conservation Education summer camps (the youngest grandchild, age 2, is starting camps this summer). "Milwaukee County is blessed to have one of the best zoos in the country," says Jim. "There's a family feeling here."

Photo by Paula Brookmire



Jim Redding wore the original Zoo Pride uniform—black pants, white shirt, blue sash and a pith helmet—at the ZSM's centennial celebration event on Jan. 9 at the Zoo. Zoo Pride celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2010. Nancy Redding wore a present-day uniform, khaki pants and a khaki top.

A GIFT FOR TWO CAUSES



Dr. Elsen received a Platypus Society award in 2006 for exceptional support of the ZSM's education programs.

The Simba Society gave Dr. Kay Elsen the chance to support two institutions dear to her heart: the ZSM and Mount Mary College. As a retired professor of chemistry at Mount Mary, Dr. Elsen set up a trust to fund internships at the ZSM for Mount Mary students. In the future, when the trust is executed, Dr. Elsen hopes that it will help pay for some Zoological Society internships in various departments such as art, education, and marketing. Currently the ZSM offers internships (see www.zoosociety.org/jobs) in publications, special events, graphic design (periodically), development (periodically) and education (with the most internships). About 20 education interns annually get hands-on experience working with children in the ZSM's Conservation Education summer camps each year.

Dr. Elsen has long been devoted to education and the Zoo. She has helped train new Zoo Pride volunteers ever since she joined the group in 1976 (today, she chairs the Zoo Pride volunteer training committee). She has developed and taught ZSM-run University of Wisconsin Extension courses at the Zoo for teachers. She's a member of the education and the research and conservation committees of the ZSM Board of Directors. Says Dr. Elsen: "The Simba Society gives me comfort that once I pass away, my love for the Zoo will continue."



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Please remember the Zoological Society in your will or estate plan.

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NEW-MEMBER PROFILE

Names: Elizabeth Roesler
City: Brookfield, Wis.
E-mail: valley1500@wi.rr.com

Reason you joined the Platypus Society: "I've been a member of Zoo Pride, the Zoological Society's volunteer auxiliary, for eight years. I've always loved animals very much." Roesler serves on Zoo Pride's primate committee, whose members give talks in front of the great ape exhibits at the Milwaukee County Zoo in the summer. She also serves on the Animal Watch committee, whose members observe animal behavior.

Personal history with Zoological Society and Milwaukee County Zoo: "I've been coming to the Milwaukee County Zoo since I was a toddler. My grandmother, Dorothy Pain, was a founding member of Zoo Pride. My grandfather was a friend of George Spiedel [Zoo Director 1947-1978]. I grew up at the Zoo."

Why the Platypus Society is important: "I feel that supporting and conserving animals is very important," Roesler says. "The Zoo has been a big part of my life."



Photo by Dale Gray

CALENDAR

March 6 & April 10

Family Free Day at the Zoo, sponsored by North Shore Bank and FOX 6*

March 13 & 14

Behind the Scenes Weekend at the Zoo, sponsored by Tri City National Bank*

March 27 & 28

Breakfast and Lunch with the Bunny at the Zoo (photo at right), sponsored by Racine Danish Kringles*

April 3

Egg Day at the Zoo, sponsored by Welch's & Pick 'n Save*

April 7 & 10

Two-session Zoo Pride introductory volunteer orientation; call (414) 258-5667.

April 14, 17, 21, 24

Four-session follow-up Zoo Pride volunteer training

April 23

Zootastic!, sponsored by Johnson Controls, Inc., the ZSM's family-friendly event at the Zoo. Pre-register at (414) 258-2333 or zoosociety.org.*



May 9

Mother's Day at the Zoo, sponsored by Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort*

May 16 & 17

Party for the Planet at the Zoo, sponsored by American Transmission Company*

May 27

Platypus Society/VIP premiere of special summer exhibit Adventure Dinosaur!, sponsored by Lowe's; look for your invitation in the mail. (Exhibit open to the public May 29-Sept. 6.)

June 20

Father's Day at the Zoo, sponsored by Chinet® & Pick 'n Save*

June 26

Zoo Ball 2010, sponsored by American Airlines & American Eagle*

June 30 & July 7, 14, 21, 28 & Aug. 4

Sunset Zoofaris at the Zoo, sponsored by Tri City National Bank, 6-9 p.m.*

July 13, 15 & 16

Kids' Nights, sponsored by WaterStone Bank, for ZSM members only, 5:15-9 p.m.*

July 22

Platypus Society Family Picnic; look for your invitation in the mail.

*For more information, call (414) 258-2333 or go online at www.zoosociety.org. Free admission for moms on Mother's Day and dads on Father's Day does not include parking.