

# Alive



## Inside

- Focus on Ocean Creatures
- Sharing Birds with Belize
- The Zoo's Flower Gardens
- Annual Report



The mission of the Zoological Society is to take part in conserving wildlife and endangered species, to educate people about the importance of wildlife and the environment, and to support the Milwaukee County Zoo.

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For 25 years, I have had the honor to work among the magnificent animals at the Zoo, serving as president of the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (1989-2005) and as director of the Milwaukee County Zoo (1980-1989). I will continue in a leadership capacity, but it's time to plan for the future. ZSM Board Chair Bonnie Joseph, key board members and I developed a succession plan to ensure that the enhancements we have made to the Zoo over the years and the growth of the ZSM continue.



In January we formed a seven-member committee to begin a nationwide search for a president and chief operating officer of ZSM. We hope to have the new president/COO in place by mid-2005. At that time, I will take on a new role as vice chairman and chief executive officer, focusing on the capital building program for the Zoo that began in 2000 and is scheduled for completion in 2008. I also will oversee ZSM conservation efforts, continuing as president of the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation, Inc., a partner of the ZSM in education and conservation. The new president/COO will concentrate on business and strategic planning for the future of the Society and its relationship with the Zoo, and will oversee ZSM's day-to-day operations and management, becoming CEO in Jan. 2006. As FWC president, I will work in tandem with the new president on strategic planning and business development initiatives.

Among the capital building projects scheduled to be done this year are a complete renovation of the old Feline Building, to be called the Florence Mila Borchert Big Cat Country (see page 13), and a significant renovation of the Zoo's farm (page 8), to be called the Northwestern Mutual Family Farm. The remaining projects are The Miller Brewing Company Giraffe Experience (page 12) and an entrance atrium called the U.S. Bank Gathering Place.

Looking back over my years as ZSM president, I am proud of several accomplishments: helping to grow the ZSM from 18,000 member households in 1989 to more than 52,000 in 2004; fostering a private-public partnership between ZSM and Milwaukee County; working with Zoo Pride volunteers, the Associate Board, Board of Directors, Platypus Society and staff to meet our mission; managing two capital campaigns that in total brought in more than \$55 million in ZSM and Milwaukee County matched funding to enhance the Zoo for animals and visitors; launching numerous nationally recognized education programs about wildlife and conservation; creating the tropical butterfly exhibit Jewels of the Mundo Maya, which attracted thousands of Zoo visitors in the summers of 2000 and 2003; leading safaris for 25 years to bring attention to the plight of endangered animals; launching grass-roots conservation efforts (such as Birds Without Borders-Aves Sin Fronteras<sup>SM</sup>, a conservation-research-education project in Wisconsin and Belize, Central America) that have helped save endangered animals worldwide; and creating the 6,137-acre Runaway Creek Nature Preserve in Belize, where I continue to do field research.

Thank you for all your support during a great quarter-century – and for your support into the future.

Dr. Gil Boese



## FEATURES

### 4 Sting Rays Make a Splash!

This summer, Chase brings you an aquatic adventure with Sting Ray Encounter, a touring exhibit of live sting rays, eels and other tropical and sub-tropical sea creatures. While here, visit the Zoo's own unusual Pacific Ocean fish, like the jellies.

### 6 Hi, I'm New Here

Being the new kid on the block is never easy. Learn how new bonobos learn to be part of their great-ape family at the Zoo.

### 8 Capital Campaign Update: Farm Makeover

Introducing the new Northwestern Mutual Family Farm, opening in June. Discover all the new programs and activities in the farm this summer.

### 12 Capital Campaign Update: Giraffes

Ever wanted to come face to face with a giraffe? It's in your future when we remodel the giraffe facility into the Miller Brewing Company Giraffe Experience!

### 13 Capital Campaign Update: Cats Return

Welcome back the tigers and the cheetahs. Big cats are returning to the Zoo in the new Florence Mila Borchert Big Cat Country facility.

### 14 Conservation: Sharing Birds

Here's how we're helping save songbirds in Belize — and how this helps save birds in Wisconsin

### 16 The New Hues of the Zoo

The Zoo doubles as a flower garden after horticulturists give it a colorful makeover.

### 22-31 Annual Report

The Zoological Society of Milwaukee's Annual Report appears in the back half of *Alive*. It's the one place to find an easy-to-read summary of how we meet our mission and of last year's accomplishments. It's also our chance to thank members and other contributors for their terrific support.

## DEPARTMENTS

2 President's Letter 🐼

18 Serengeti Circle 🌍

19 What's Gnu 🐘

20 Platypus Society: Family support, awards 🦢

## KIDS ALIVE

10-11 Fun with Octopuses, Rays and Other Sea Creatures



### On the cover

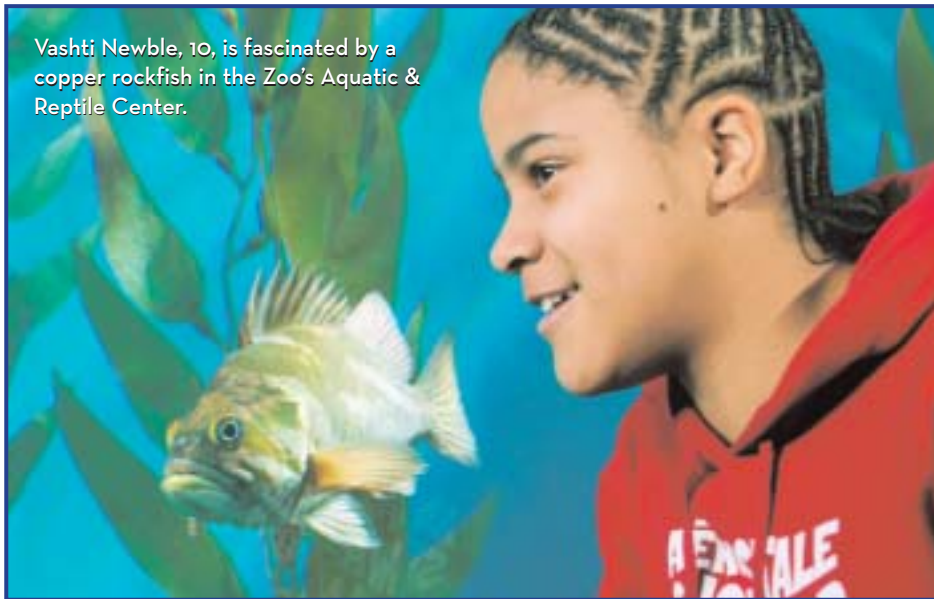
A jelly in the Aquatic & Reptile Center. See page 4.



# Sting Rays Make a

# WAVE!

Vashti Newble, 10, is fascinated by a copper rockfish in the Zoo's Aquatic & Reptile Center.



Most of the organisms that live in this habitat have to adapt to extreme temperature fluctuations and desiccation (drying out) since they live in areas where there are two high and two low tides every 24 hours.

Sting Ray Encounter, created by Science Applications Corp. International (SAIC) in San Diego, Calif., is designed to bring a dramatic, interactive experience with exotic marine animals to people in the Midwest who might never travel to a coral reef or even a tide pool, says Dr. Brian Joseph, SAIC's manager of zoological programs. "We hope to provide visitors with a shared, memorable family experience and simple lessons about these marine animals."

Here you can learn about fish that can change their gender such as clownfish or sheephead (see below). You can discover that

Life in the Pacific Ocean will be within reach, literally, this summer. Chase (formerly Bank One) is helping to bring an ocean exhibit called Sting Ray Encounter to the Milwaukee County Zoo May 28 through Sept. 23. In the Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building, amid palm trees, sand dunes and coral, you'll find saltwater aquarium reefs full of life.

Follow the water as it flows through a shallow creek and cascades over a low waterfall into Sting Ray Lagoon, a 30-foot, 11,500-gallon touch pool. After rinsing your hands, you can dip your fingers in the lagoon and feel something slightly extraordinary as you touch an assortment of barbless rays. You can purchase special food and feed the rays, too. As they flap their broad, winglike fins, you'll see how they "fly" or glide through the sea.

You'll meet more than sting rays in this exhibit. Aquarium jewel tanks will display eels, clown fish (anemone fish), the venomous Volitans lionfish and a variety of marine life found in the tropics and subtropics of the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of California and even some from the Atlantic Ocean. If you liked the popular animated movie "Finding Nemo," you can meet the fish on which the main characters were based: the clown fish (Nemo), hepatus tang (Dory) and the lionfish. Giant land crabs from the Caribbean will be displayed on a sand island.

In a tide-pool display, you can observe invertebrates such as small horseshoe crabs, cleaner shrimp, and species of sea stars (formerly called starfish) whose habitat is the rocky intertidal region between the high tide mark and the low tide mark.

the Indo-Pacific Volitans lionfish is invading waters along the U.S. East Coast (see accompanying story). And you can view and touch rays, which are not normally on exhibit at our Zoo (although we plan to have a skate, which resembles and is closely related to rays, on exhibit by summer).



Winston Walker, 14, admires the fanciful lionfish in the Zoo's Australia Building.

**Sneak Preview!** Members, you can view Chase's Sting Ray Encounter before the general public. On May 21 and 22, a free member premiere of this exhibit runs from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. An invitation (for members only) is in the package containing this *Alive* magazine. You will need your Zoo Pass and an I.D. for admission to the exhibit, in the Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building.

# The Zoo's Marine Marvels

When you're done at Chase's Sting Ray Encounter, visit some of the Zoo's own fascinating Pacific Ocean animals, such as:

**California sheephead:** "This fish looks like a pink Oreó," says Craig Berg, aquarium and reptile curator at the Zoo. It has a pink band around its waist sandwiched between black bands at head and tail. It also has a large "forehead." You'll find it in the Aquatic & Reptile Center (ARC), which has a large collection of marine animals on display year-round. Pace in front of the sheephead in the Pacific Ocean exhibit, and the curious creature may follow you. Even more curious is the way the sheephead can change its sex based on the company it keeps. All sheepheads begin life as females and may stay that way if the group they hang out with has a large male. Just the sight of him seems to inhibit the hormonal changes that turn a female into a male. If there's no male, some of the females transform, starting with a color change from the female's all rose to the male's rose and black. The Zoo's sole sheephead came here as a female on March 15, 1995, and changed to a male May 9, 1995. It's more than 30 inches long, and eventually could weigh up to 35 pounds. These popular gamefish live in kelp forests from the California coast of Monterey south to the Gulf of California.

**Jellies:** Is there anything quite so graceful as these transparent, luminous floating umbrellas of "jelly"? You'll find them drifting in a rounded-glass exhibit in the ARC. Formerly called jellyfish, these animals now are commonly known as jellies because they're not fish. Their name comes from the jellylike substance sandwiched between the animal's two cell layers; the "jelly" gives it structure. Technically, all species of these beautiful creatures are venomous.

The box jellyfish of Australia, for example, is one of the most toxic animals in the world. Most jellies won't hurt you, however, says Berg, who notes that many small, clear-water lakes in Wisconsin

have freshwater jellies. "You can pick up the Zoo's Atlantic Ocean moon jellies (shown on the *Alive* cover), and their stingers cannot penetrate your hand."

**Volitans lionfish:** This venomous fish can be found in the Australia Building's Reef Exhibit, which has three aquariums (also home to clown fish, anemones, and peppermint shrimp). This Pacific Ocean fish, also called the red lionfish, is found in warm waters from the coast of Australia to the Indian Ocean and recently has been found off Key Biscayne, Fla., in the Atlantic Ocean and has been declared an invasive species. "Nobody knows for sure how it got there, says Berg. "People presume it's from releases of pets. It preys on other fish and crabs, which eventually may become a problem for other fish."

**Sharks:** The Zoo has two types of sharks: horn sharks and leopard sharks. You can spot them easily by their dorsal (back) fin made famous by the movie "Jaws." The horn shark grows to about 3 feet long, the leopard shark to about 6 feet. Horn sharks are named for their hard-as-a-horn spine embedded in the front of their dorsal fin that discourages predators from eating them. Leopard sharks get their name because they're spotted, like leopards. The Zoo had one horn shark and two leopard sharks on exhibit (see photo on page 10) in February and two leopard sharks that should be on exhibit by summer.

**Giant Pacific octopus:** When excited, a Pacific octopus can change its light brownish skin to a different color (often red) by contracting skin cells filled with pigment. It also can force water rapidly out of its body, propelling itself backward toward prey, or squirt ink at an attacker and escape while hidden by the ink cloud. The Zoo has an octopus (usually female) on exhibit whenever one is available.

By Teresa Dickert & Paula Brookmire



▲ This male sheephead was once a female.



Jelly at the Aquatic & Reptile Center.



# New Kid on the Block

Introducing the new kid on the block to the community can be just as complicated for great apes such as bonobos as it is for humans. Because bonobos' matriarchal society is so rich and complex, finding a place in the troop is never automatic, even at the Milwaukee County Zoo, which has an international reputation for welcoming hard-to-place great apes. Integrating a new member is different for every fresh face, says bonobo zookeeper Barbara Bell.

Tamia, an 8-year-old female from the Columbus Zoo, was sure of a warm reception when she came to Milwaukee Dec. 15, 2004. She was born into a zoo community where the norms of bonobo society are observed, and she was reared by her mother, Lady, rather than a human. Nuances of bonobo behavior come to Tamia naturally. Such nuances can elude captive bonobos that were not raised among other bonobos.

Tamia left the Columbus Zoo because she is just reaching sexual maturity and she is too closely related to her extended family in Ohio to be a part of their breeding population. The Zoological Society's Dr. Gay Reinartz, who has led the North American Bonobo Species Survival Plan since 1988, and her committee decided to bring Tamia to Milwaukee to breed because she would add genetic diversity to the bonobo group here. Tamia, born July 5, 1996, has learned by example from her mother how to be a good bonobo parent.

"She'll click with the girls easily," Bell predicted even before Tamia's mandatory quarantine period had ended. "We have a number of females around her age; so she will have lots of friends." As for the power females who ensure that everybody else lives up to their standards, Bell suggested that one might "adopt" Tamia. "She's charming."

As a nubile youngster just entering sexual maturity, Tamia was an instant hit with the male population. She attracted the bonobo equivalent of wolf whistles when she took up residence in a separate, but visible enclosure in the off-exhibit area in January.

Not every newcomer has such an easy time. The matriarchs heading Milwaukee's 20-member bonobo troop are fiercely devoted to enforcing the community's code of conduct. Infractions often bring brutal retribution. A case in point is Viaje, a 22-year-old male from Mexico who arrived at the Zoo more than three years ago but is still working to win acceptance. An early encounter with the larger group was a disaster.

"The notion of rank (an essential feature of bonobo culture) was completely outside his understanding," said Bell. "The first time the whole group ate together, he took the best mango. If you are a low-ranking adult male, you simply don't do that." Punishment was swift and painful. The troop's power females – Maringa, Linda and Ana Neema – bit his hands until they bled.

"It may be primal," Bell said of the furious response. "In the wild, survival depends on group cooperation, and anybody who doesn't understand how the group operates just can't be there. In captivity, they can't chase off an offender; so they make sure that

offences aren't repeated." Zookeepers here are committed to enhancing the communal as well as the individual lives of those beings in their care. That means allowing the bonobo community to main-

tain and promote behavior as close as possible to that observed among their relatives in the wild. "Did I plan it? No," said Bell. "Did it probably have to happen? Yes."

Viaje was not simply being boorish. He was clueless. A refugee from an era in zookeeping when social primates were kept with no more company than a mate, Viaje spent years with a female bonobo at a private zoo near Cuernavaca. When the female died in 1996, the zoo owner immediately tried to find a larger community for the survivor. However, efforts were slowed and almost curtailed by strict international standards designed to prevent the spread of diseases. Only heroic persistence on the part of the zoo owner, Marcos Orteiza, and Jan Rafert, Milwaukee's curator of primates and small mammals, enabled Viaje's eventual arrival in Milwaukee Nov. 28, 2001.

Milwaukee was eager to receive Viaje because he could offer an important contribution to its breeding population: genetic diversity. Bonobos are endangered in the wild, where they are found only in the central African nation of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The great ape's existence in its remote rain-forest home is threatened by civil unrest, poaching and habitat destruction. The Zoological Society of Milwaukee has established a research station in the Congo to study and help preserve the dwindling wild population, but the captive population is a last bulwark against species extinction. Therefore, incorporating Viaje into one of the planet's healthiest captive breeding groups is a matter of no little importance.

During Viaje's five years of waiting for a new home, Orteiza became a substitute companion. "All this time, Marcos was

*This is an excerpt from a book that writer Jo Sandin, editor Paula Brookmire and the Zoological Society of Milwaukee are preparing about bonobos (endangered great apes) and the amazing people trying to save them. The Bonobo Species Survival Plan for North America is holding the first ever bonobo husbandry workshop in July 2005. Bonobo keepers from Mexico, Europe and North America will come to Columbus, Ohio, to discuss care and management of bonobos. (For more information, go to [www.zoosociety.org](http://www.zoosociety.org) and select conservation, bonobo conservation.)*

feeding him. There was never any question that Viaje would get the choicest bits,” Bell said. For all that time in isolation, Viaje was the alpha (dominant) male by default.

Then Viaje arrived at the Milwaukee County Zoo, where there was an established social order. Suddenly he ran head on into bonobo etiquette in which dining protocols were as complicated as anything devised by 19th century Victorian England. As a healthy, sexually mature male, Viaje (judging by his behavior) saw himself as a prime stud muffin and the group as a splendid array of potential sexual partners.

To the group (judging by behavior), he appeared as a small male displaying the kind of disregard for community customs that would be tolerated only in the best beloved of their infants. He was showing himself to be untutored, uncouth and unfit. To win acceptance, Viaje had to discover that there were rules and that there were unpleasant consequences for failing to obey them.

Once the troop’s ruling females drew his attention to his inadequacies, he was ready to learn. Then Bell and other keepers could establish safe environments in which he could figure out how to eat and play well with others. In a separate enclosure adjacent to the main group during meals, Viaje could pick up slowly on the subtle cues that reveal dominance and privilege and on the behaviors that constitute courtesies.

The separation also allowed him to be available for the kind of sexual activity that is a primary form of communication among bonobos. For a long time, Bell placed him only with one of the troop’s passive females, gentle Kosana or the elderly, blind Kitty. Then, as his social confidence began to return, there would be an occasional, brief addition of one of the dominant females, often at a time when she was certain to be distracted by other activity.

“We still don’t try to combine social skills with eating skills, but he’s learning,” said Bell.

Indeed, Viaje is learning well enough to be favored by attention from the group’s matriarch, Maringa. Bell suspects that Maringa’s latest offspring (born in February) was fathered by Viaje.

*By Jo Sandin*



Viaje

Above: Tamia (left) and Laura





## Farm Makeover

Children will find a lot more to catch their attention this summer at the new **Northwestern Mutual Family Farm**. Adults will be captivated, too. A major remodeling will include a completely new and expanded Raptory Theater, a new building called Stackner Animal Encounter (where the old “petting ring” used to be), and at least 10 other improvements at the farm.

The popular Birds of Prey Show will increase its seating capacity from 300 to 520 in the new Raptory Theater, which also will have a new stage, new animal-holding facility and a rustic, North Woods motif. The show features such raptors as hawks, eagles and owls.

The new Stackner Animal Encounter area will include bleachers and an animal-presentation area (see accompanying story), a chick hatchery, and animal enclosures with yards where animals can be outdoors on exhibit in spring, summer and fall.

New playground areas where the old duck ponds were will feature farm-oriented play structures and rest areas for parents. At a nearby new concession stand (where the old candy store used to be), the menu will be “kid friendly” with some healthy choices offered.

“The farm has been the center of family activities at the Zoo since the 1970s, and many of the components will remain,” says Zoological Society President Gil Boese. “Besides the new buildings, we’re changing the main entrance and reworking all the entrances, giving the goat yard a face lift and a hand-washing center, improving the interactive areas inside the Octagon Barn, adding garden plots and more landscaping, and upgrading fencing.” The remodeling will be complete by mid-June, when we will have a premiere for Zoological Society members during Nights in June, June 15-17.

The Zoo's farm before renovation.



### Thanks to Special Donors

-  **Northwestern Mutual Foundation** gave the major gift to remodel the farm.
-  **The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board** is a donor to the new milking parlor video in the dairy barn.
-  **Sargento Foods Inc. and the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board** are donors to the Meet Belle the Dairy Cow exhibit.





## More Fun on the Farm

It has gotten a lot more exciting down on the farm at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Not only is the farm being remodeled for summer (see accompanying story), but at just about any time of day during the Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day season you can find some kind of program to watch, from pig training or calf feeding to a Birds of Prey Show.

Where the old “animal petting ring” used to be in the farm’s central courtyard there are now Animal Encounter talks six times a day in summer at the Stackner Animal Encounter. Here you can meet and learn about a duck or a chicken or some other Wisconsin animal. Turtles, porcupines, snakes, opossums, groundhogs, even cats are part of the mix. Farm attendants give a presentation about the animal and then allow children, one at a time, to come up and pet the animal.

If you prefer swooping predators to some of the more docile farm animals, visit the farm’s Birds of Prey Shows. This summer a new, larger Raptory Theater will have you ducking as trained raptors fly over the audience.

Over in the barnyard there’s plenty more action. Venture over to the horse barn and you can watch attendants groom Bandit, our 16-year-old mixed-breed horse (at right), and Guiseppi, an attention-seeking, 7-year-old miniature donkey. Don’t be alarmed if these creatures roll in the dirt right after their bath. This is called dusting, and they do this because a layer of dirt on their coat helps to keep away bugs and insects. Horses are big, but Helga is bigger. Helga is our red-haired, 1,300-pound Scottish Highland cow. At the beef cow grooming and care talk, you can watch as staff pet and brush this docile cow. Or you may see our new belted Galloway cow, Nadine.

Remember teaching your dog to sit? At the farm, our two female guinea hogs, Petunia and Peony, are trained to sit upon command and to get up on a scale for weigh-in. Training allows the staff to handle the hogs (at right) easily for medical procedures.

Did you know that the Zoo’s dairy cows produce milk that is sold in local grocery stores? It’s true. In fact, the Zoo sells an average of 5,400 pounds of quality, award-winning milk to Golden Guernsey Dairy each month. Stop by the dairy barn and watch a live milking session. Then walk into the barn and watch staff feed the calves out of an oversized bottle (top photo). Farm attendants explain how calves are cared for and answer your questions.

Finally, kids and adults both enjoy petting and feeding goats (bottom photo) in the goat yard, which is open throughout the summer season.



### Here’s the lineup of farm programs,\* starting Memorial Day Weekend:

- **Birds of Prey Shows:** Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m., 1 and 3 p.m.;  
Sundays/holidays, 11 a.m., 12:30, 2 and 3:30 p.m.
- **Animal Encounter shows:** six times a day (see postings in the farm)
- **Milking demonstrations:** 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in the Dairy Complex barn
- **Calf feeding (when calves are on hand):** 10 a.m. in the Dairy Complex barn
- **Horse grooming:** 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. in the horse yard
- **Beef-cow grooming and care:** 11 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in the cow yard
- **Pig training:** 1:15 p.m. in the pig yard

\*Program times are tentative and may change. Check the Zoo’s gate brochure or signs in the farm.

# Kids Alive



## Shark Watch

Regina Walker, 12, of Milwaukee likes to visit the Pacific Ocean animals in the Milwaukee County Zoo's Aquatic & Reptile Center. A leopard shark swims by as she watches some fish. This summer you can see even more ocean animals at the Zoo. Sting Ray Encounter, presented by Chase, is a traveling exhibit of live sting rays, eels, lionfish and other Pacific Ocean creatures in aquariums. The exhibit runs May 28 - Sept. 23 in the Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building (see story on page 4).

## Reef Search

Reefs are delicate communities made of thousands of corals living together. Corals come in many shapes and sizes, but all are formed by tiny polyps. Coral reefs are found in shallow warm waters and are full of life. They have a great food supply for many organisms and also plenty of hiding places. Find and circle the following animals that are found in a coral reef. Words may be forward, backward, up, down or diagonal.

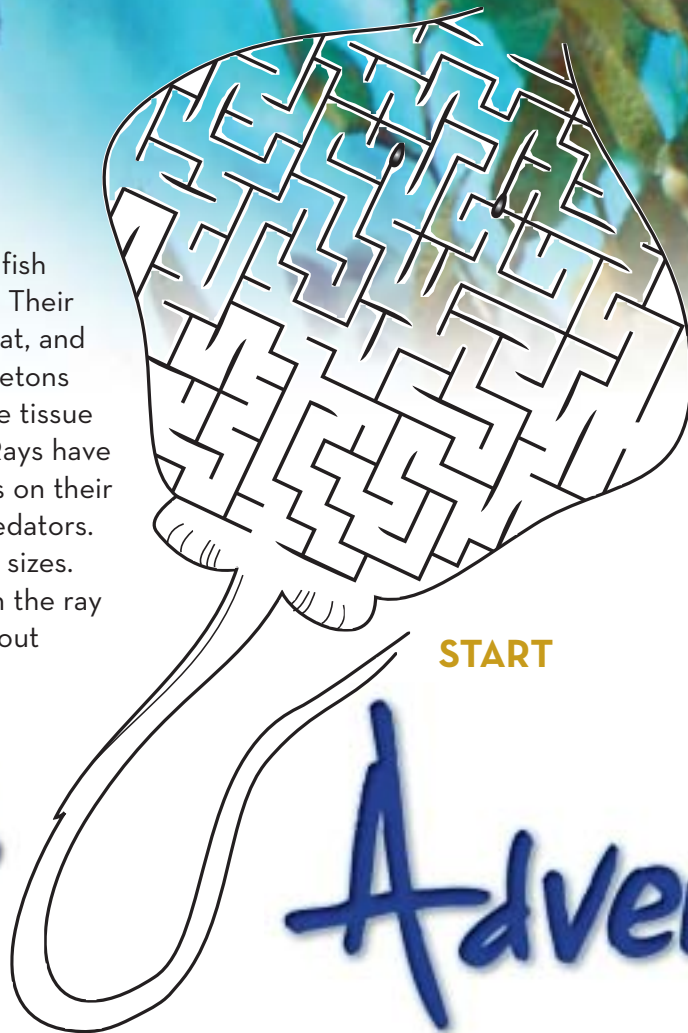
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- OCTOPUS
- JELLYFISH
- ANEMONES
- URCHIN
- TIDE POOL
- LIONFISH
- REEF
- STARFISH
- CORAL
- EELS

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 R A Y S F G J M H I  
 O P N C O R A L S O  
 S Q R E U R C H I N  
 U B S T M U W X F F  
 P Y A R C O Z A R I  
 O E B R E C N D A S  
 T F E I C E K E T H  
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**FINISH**



**Ray Maze**

Rays, like sharks, are a type of fish that live throughout the world. Their bodies are disk shaped, very flat, and they have no bones. Their skeletons are made of cartilage, the same tissue that is in your ears and nose. Rays have spines on their tails and thorns on their body to protect them from predators. They come in many colors and sizes. Can you find your way through the ray maze, from start to finish, without crossing any lines?

**Ocean**

**Adventures**

**Octopus Word Play**

Octo means eight. An octopus gets its name because it has eight arms called tentacles. Under each tentacle are two rows of suction cups that help the octopus to climb and catch its food. Did you know an octopus can re-grow a tentacle if it loses one? An octopus is an invertebrate. That means it has a soft body without a backbone.

Fun facts about the octopus:

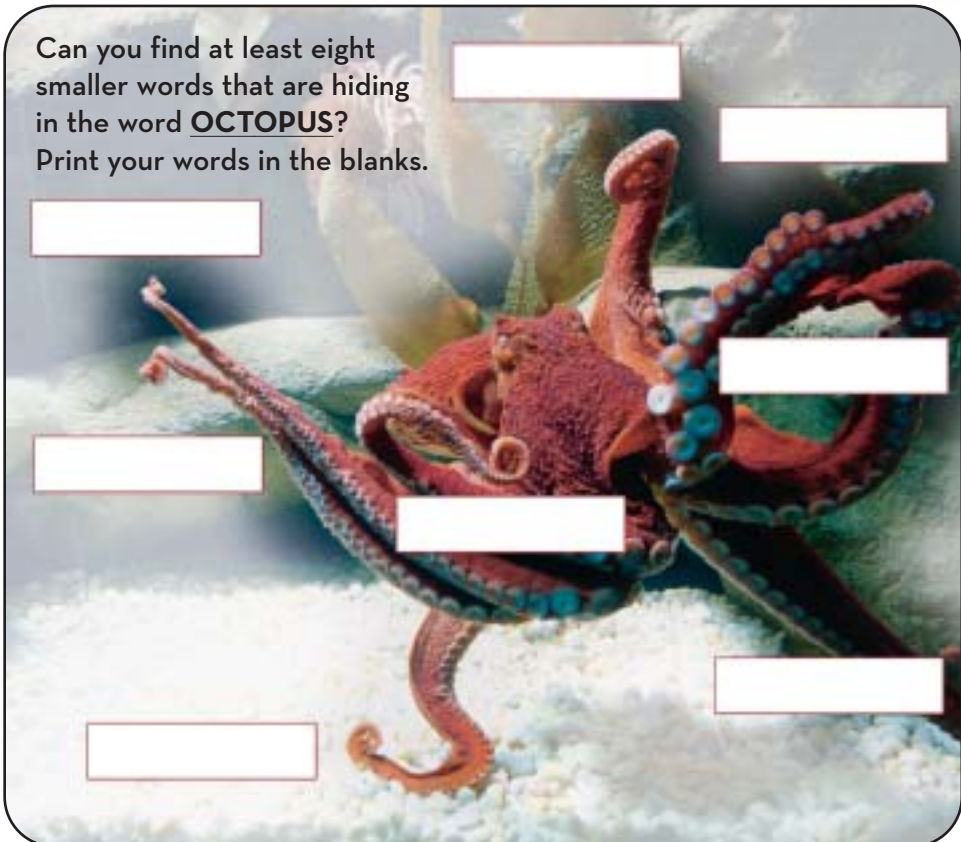
- It has eyes on the sides of its head and very good vision.
- It hides by changing color and blending into the surroundings.
- It can squirt a cloud of black ink to escape from a predator.
- It likes the same food humans do: lobster, clams and crabs.

Can you find at least eight smaller words that are hiding in the word **OCTOPUS**?  
Print your words in the blanks.












# Expansive New Giraffe Yard

Late this year we plan to break ground for the next project in the capital campaign to improve the Zoo: a new giraffe facility with a large outdoor area. "This expanded outdoor enclosure for the African giraffes will be significantly larger than their current yard," says Dr. Gil Boese, Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM) president and project manager for the new giraffe facility. The \$2 million project, to be called the **Miller Brewing Company Giraffe Experience**,

"This will be a rewarding experience unique to the Midwest," says Dr. Boese. "In fact, I know of only a few other facilities that allow visitors to feed giraffes when this close: Giraffe Manor in Nairobi, Kenya; a zoo in Auckland, N.Z.; the Riverbanks Zoo in North Carolina; and the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs, Colorado."



## Thanks to Special Donors

-  Miller Brewing Company is providing a major gift to start the renovation.
-  Donors to the ZSM's 2005-'06 Annual Appeal will help us complete the facility.
-  Donald and Janet Greenebaum are donors to the exhibit.

is one of the last in the joint ZSM and Milwaukee County New Zoo II Capital Campaign.

The most exciting feature of the new exhibit will be a deck that will allow zoogoers to get face to face with the giraffes and even feed them. The design challenge will be to get the public close and at eye level with animals that can grow to more than 15 feet high.

How are we getting the extra space to expand the giraffe yard? Look at the photo of the current yard taken around Halloween in 2003 and you'll see that there's room to expand.

The 50-year-old indoor public viewing area for the giraffes will be remodeled with a more attractive, barnlike motif, says Dr. Boese. Currently visitors stand on a covered walkway to view the indoor giraffes, but the area is unheated and open to the wind. In the new facility, visitors will view the giraffes in a temperature-controlled environment. New graphics will provide interesting insights into giraffes. Complete renovation of the indoor exhibits will improve animal-care areas and make it easier for Zoo staff to check the health of the giraffes in a safe setting. The expected completion date is summer 2006.

To contribute to the capital campaign, please call us at (414) 258-2333, or go online at [www.zoosociety.org](http://www.zoosociety.org).







## Cats Return

Now that it's April the Milwaukee County Zoo is preparing for a most anticipated homecoming. With the new **Florence Mila Borchert Big Cat Country** nearing completion, many of our beloved big cats are returning to the Zoo, and eventually, to their completely renovated facility.

There will be two new faces in the snow leopard exhibit: Tomiris, a 4-year-old female from the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle, Wash., and Boris, an 11-year-old male from the Great Plains Zoo in Sioux Falls, S.D. Bess Frank, curator of large mammals, says that Tami the snow leopard will stay in Baraboo for now, but expects her to return to Milwaukee in the future.

Cheetahs Onyx and Juba are returning from Kansas City. Our returning spotted hyena cousins, Huckleberry and Cahli, stayed at the Riverbanks Zoo in South Carolina. In the new building, they will rotate exhibits with the lions.

When we went to press, we were working on plans to bring jaguars here from the Fort Worth Zoo in Texas and the Audubon Zoo in New Orleans, La. In the meantime, the cats that stayed on Zoo grounds

have been doing well. Ace the cheetah seems to love his spot in the Zoo's Animal Health Center. Ace was raised by female keepers at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago and trained by our feline zookeeper Valerie Werner and still prefers women. Lucky for him, the hospital staff is almost entirely female. "With all the girls taking care of him, he purrs to no end!" Werner says. Sasha the lioness, who also is staying at the hospital, adjusted well to the move and spends her days soaking up the attention of the staff, gracing them with occasional roars.

Sheena and Kajmak, the mother and son Siberian tigers, have been hanging out near Zero the polar bear while their northern Siberian forest takes shape in the new building (see photo of a gunite "tree" being prepared in their exhibit). Sheena underwent surgery in September to remove mammary tumors and has been recovering nicely. Kajmak, Werner says, seems a little "suspicious" of his new polar bear neighbor, but overall, is enjoying himself.

With the exhibits much larger than before, there is room for even more cats at the Zoo. There are going to be new additions to at least two feline species in the not-so-distant future. A couple of 2-year-old lions, a male from Madison and a female from Indianapolis, will be introduced to each other in hopes that they will breed. "We'd like to be able to breed one species per year," says Werner. "It's going to take some time, but bringing in young animals that are able to be bred is the first step." The Zoo also plans to welcome two young male Siberian tigers from the Metro Toronto Zoo. "Our hope is that the tiger Species Survival Plan will opt to move one of the males and bring in a female for breeding," says Werner.



## Thanks to Special Donors

-  The major gift from the **Florence Borchert Bartling Foundation** allowed us to start the renovation on the Florence Mila Borchert Big Cat Country.
-  **Donors to the Zoological Society's Annual Appeal** will help us to complete the building.
-  The jaguar exhibit will be named in honor of donors **Gerald and Katherine Nell**
-  An **anonymous donor** is sponsoring the red-panda exhibit.
-  **Bridget and Mark Kirkish** are donors for the cheetah exhibit.
-  **Gordana and Milan Racic** are donors for the snow-leopard exhibit.
-  **Carole F. Houston** is a donor to the jaguar exhibit.
-  **Neal and Carla Butenhoff** are donors for the Birch Creek Trailhead, a new visitor walkway and outdoor retreat.
-  Other donors are the **Schoenleber Foundation**, **Marian Scheibe Foundation**, and **Alvin & Marion Birnschein Foundation**.

To contribute to the capital campaign, please call us at (414) 258-2333, or go online at [www.zoosociety.org](http://www.zoosociety.org).





To help save Wisconsin's songbirds, Zoological Society staff have been taking wing to Belize in Central America. They've taught schoolchildren and adults about bird conservation, trained Belizeans to do bird research, set up research sites, and established a nature preserve. Now these efforts are taking flight as they turn the research results into helpful tips for private landowners in Belize on how to manage their land to benefit birds. These tips will be published this spring in a landowners report.

So how does this help Wisconsin birds? Well, they're not just OUR birds. "There are 114 bird species that migrate between Belize and Wisconsin," says Vicki Piaskowski, international coordinator for the Birds Without Borders-*Aves Sin Fronteras*<sup>SM</sup> project run by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM) and its partner, the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation, Inc. (FWC). "Even though we look at these neotropical migrants as Wisconsin birds, they spend more time in Belize than they do here, about six months. Migrating takes about three months. The breeding season is three months. So their time in Wisconsin ranges from three to five months. By protecting their non-breeding habitats in Belize, we help to increase their survival and, we hope, get them into good condition for migration."

using pine savanna during the non-breeding season. Pine savanna is also important to Belize's resident birds."

ZSM education programs also have helped teach Belizeans why birds are important to them. "Birds and nature tourism are main draws for tourists to Belize and important to its economy," says Piaskowski. "Belize has 574 bird species, and many people come to see birds such as the elegant jabiru stork; the keel-billed toucan, the national bird of Belize; the yellow-headed parrot (see photo); and beautiful songbirds such as the red-throated ant-tanager (see photo)." In addition to public talks and bird-banding demonstrations, school programs, and the landowner report, ZSM created a colorful bird poster called Let's Protect Our Belizean Birds and distributed more than 2,000 copies in Belize last year. About 3,000 copies of the landowner report will be distributed, and it also will be available on CD and on the ZSM



Web site: [www.zoosociety.org](http://www.zoosociety.org), select "conservation."

## Birds of Belize Are Also Ours

This landowners' report for Belize\* is a model for a similar report that ZSM will publish in Wisconsin later this year. "The majority of land in both Wisconsin and Belize is privately owned," notes Piaskowski. "So private landowners, if they manage their land properly, can help to save bird populations." A lot of the advice will be the same for both Belize and Wisconsin:

- Preserve dead trees, which woodpeckers and parrots dig nest holes in for breeding
- Preserve or grow plants that provide food for birds. We'll recommend different plants in Belize and Wisconsin; in Belize we'll provide lists of nurseries that sell native plants that birds love.
- Preserve habitats important to birds, such as pine savanna in Belize
- Keep cats indoors, which is a radical change for Belizeans, who normally permit animals to run free.
- Don't keep wild birds as pets

"Belizeans routinely call savanna wasteland and don't realize its conservation value, especially for birds," says Piaskowski. "Birds use savannas during migration stopovers. For example, we have seen thousands of dickcissels (members of the cardinal family) migrating north from South America stop over in the pine savanna at Runaway Creek Nature Preserve\*\* in Belize. Dickcissels are in severe decline. We also have found many species of migrants

Our education programs deal with the basic question: Why save birds? "Birds make life more pleasurable for humans," says Piaskowski. "Because people can see birds everywhere they go, it's a way for them to connect with nature, even in cities or from their kitchen window. Birds also have important roles in our environment: regulation of insect and rodent pests, seed dispersal, plant pollination, removal of carrion. Several species of birds are in decline, however, probably because humans have altered bird habitats."

It's not too late. Our research suggests that even small plots of land, like a park or backyard, can be stopovers for migrating birds. So individuals can make a difference in bird conservation. We're doing our part to help.

*By Paula Brookmire*

\*Authors of the landowners report, which is published by ZSM, are Vicki Piaskowski; the BWB-ASF project assistant, Kari Williams; and ZSM Belize staff: Mario Teul, Belize national coordinator for BWB-ASF, Reynold Cal, manager of Runaway Creek and a BWB-ASF researcher, and David Tzul, administrative coordinator for BWB-ASF in Belize and a researcher. Since the project started in 1996, 19 Belizeans have been hired to work on research and education.

\*\* Runaway Creek Nature Preserve is a 6,137-acre, undeveloped, remote area in Belize that's owned by the FWC and managed by ZSM staff who are members of Birds Without Borders-*Aves Sin Fronteras*<sup>SM</sup> staff. The staff also explore and conduct research on the preserve.

Above: Vicki Piaskowski and Reynold Cal explore the Runaway Creek Nature Preserve in Belize.





1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



7



10

- 1 Tennessee warbler\*
- 2 American redstart\*
- 3 Black-and-white warbler\*
- 4 Yellow-headed parrot
- 5 Ovenbird\*
- 6 Gray catbird\*
- 7 Wood thrush\*
- 8 Northern waterthrush\*
- 9 Red-throated ant-tanager
- 10 Magnolia warbler\*

\*These birds migrate between Wisconsin and Belize.

Bird photo credits: 1, 7, 8 by Richard Brodzeller; 2, 10 by Stephen J. Lang; 3, 5 by Lynn Miller; 4 by Kevin Schafer; 6, 9 by BWB-ASF staff.





# New Hues of the Zoo

Just as lakeside and downtown areas of Milwaukee are undergoing a renovation of sorts, the Milwaukee County Zoo is experiencing a bit of an aesthetic renaissance of its own.

It all started about two years ago when Zoo horticulturalists Ann Hackbarth and Noah Huber started planning to give the Zoo a colorful makeover. They may spend their days digging in the dirt, but they've got a sense of style that has proven fruitful for the grounds' complexion. It is their gift of gardening grace that carefully combines multitudes of blues with scores of oranges and layers lavender with popping pinks. The striking contrasts are everywhere. With the zoological gardens blooming with fresh vitality, their hope is that people will start to think of the grounds not only as a place for animals, but also as a garden.

"There's a whole psychology behind what we're doing," explains Huber. "Good, clean horticulture makes you feel good." What he means is that the bright colors, the pleasant smells, and the summer-like feeling all add up to a more enjoyable Zoo experience. "Most importantly," he says, "kids really love it, and a happy kid usually means a happy parent. There's a good chance that those parents will be bringing their kids back again."

When trying to attract the attention of a kiddy clientele, it's important to think fun. "We incorporate a lot of color contrast to make the flowers pop out at you," says Hackbarth, who adds that a variety of plant textures is also a key element of style. On a stroll through the grounds, you're likely to see beds of smooth coleus dotted with spiky plants, such as yuccas or blue salvias, which create places for the eyes to both play and rest. "We've also been working to brighten up a lot of the darker areas, especially near the main entrance." They weave together textures and unusually colored foliage to expand the space visually. Removing drab hedge lines and other non-colorful foliage frees up space for added color, giving beds more depth and volume.

When it's your job to transform 208 acres of Zoo grounds into the colorful gardens we've come to expect each summer, planning

is everything. "We start growing our summer plants during the previous winter in our greenhouses," says Hackbarth, who has been digging, planting and watering the Zoo grounds for two years. The Zoo currently has two greenhouses, the second of which was a gift from the Zoological Society. A third greenhouse is now in the works

and should be up and functioning by summer, giving them 33% more space to grow plants.

After doing seasonal gardening work for the Zoo for seven years, Huber was hired as a full-time horticulturalist when a spot opened in June 2004. He spends a lot of time in the greenhouses. About 30% of the plant life used is grown here on grounds, saving the Zoo a lot of money. In the past,

Zoo horticulturalists had to purchase plants from the county's greenhouse.

"Without a space of our own, we'd be dead," says Hackbarth. "We'd have to cut back significantly on the number of beds and the variety of flowers, which is something we take great pride in. For an attraction as large as the Zoo, we rely on variety to make it stand out as something special."

The Zoo's recent floral makeover has been a lot of work, and largely a team effort. Even with a staff of about nine and lots of seasonal help there's always lots to do. With 35,000 annuals and nearly 1,000 perennials planted each year, watering is a full-time job. There are about 125 areas to maintain every day.

Like any gardener, they have their share of natural competition to deal with. With various Zoo-wandering animal species and herds of human traffic to work against, how does one go about defending her precious foliage from the curious mouths of squirrels, geese, peacocks and even the occasional human toddler?

"We've used temporary fences, but, mostly, we rely on luck," Hackbarth admits. Keeping the animals' health a priority, they use organic pest deterrents, such as scented geraniums. These "stinky



The farm's pretty-in-pink hillside.

Above: Drawing in the dirt: Ann Hackbarth poses by a 2004 floral design of a polar bear across from the polar bear exhibit.



plants” have fragrant oils on their leaves and give off minty, lemon or pine odors. The smell, while almost pleasant to humans, is highly offensive to birds and other small critters that might otherwise make lunch out of a row of perennials.

The new hues of the Zoo carry with them a sophisticated beauty that is ever-changing. “In five years we hope to have completely redone the horticultural look of the grounds,” says Hackbarth. “You should never have the attitude that you are done,” she adds. “You can always make things better.”

This spring, you can expect the zoological gardens to be blooming with vibrant color again. According to Hackbarth and Huber, the 2005 season promises to be perfectly pink, coated with cranberry and filled with a fun orangish color they’re calling tutti-frutti. Here are few particularly beautiful areas to enjoy in between visits with the animals:

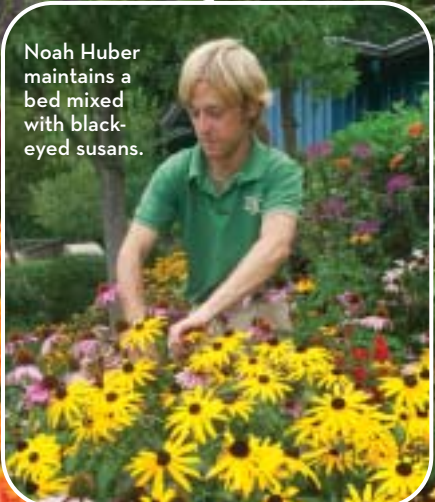
- **The Flamingo Café:** A large mixed-foliage bed between the pathway to the Animal Health Center and the Café’s terrace. A variety of perennials gives it a wild, prairie-like feel.

- **Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building:** An oceanic arrangement of blues and grays will give this bed the look of water. A sculpted 3-D topiary of a seahorse wrapped in creeping ficus welcomes visitors to the Chase Sting Ray Encounter exhibit inside.
- **Lake Evinrude:** Between the black bears exhibit and Lakeview Place restaurant, this median of flowers mixes a variety of bright coleus (see photo).
- **Polar Bear & Sea Lion exhibit:** You’ll find the word “Zoo” spelled out in yellow alternanthera and two giraffes garnished with ornamental grass manes (see photo for last year’s design).
- **Northwestern Mutual Family Farm:** A hillside overlooking the horse barn radiates pink tones (see photo).

*By Julie Lawrence*



Below: Colorful coleus brighten a walkway in between the black bears and Lakeview Place restaurant. Right: A large bed outside the Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building was wild with color in 2004. This summer, look for aquatic colors on the theme of Chase’s Sting Ray Encounter exhibit inside.



Noah Huber maintains a bed mixed with black-eyed susans.





## Red-Eared Slider Turtles

Aquatic & Reptile Center

Arrived: November 2004

Ever wondered if turtles have ears? Take a look at the Zoo's two new red-eared slider turtles in the Lake Wisconsin Aquarium. You can spot them by the green and yellow stripes on their heads and necks and a red patch around the "ear" area. The sliders don't have actual ears, however; they have a disk of skin that functions as an eardrum. These turtles can live 25 to 30 years. Many turtles are long-lived. In fact, the Zoo's oldest animal is Onassis, an Amazon River turtle that's estimated to be age 64. Slider turtles are originally from freshwater areas in the southeastern United States. Unfortunately, they've been released as pets all too often and now are common in ponds and lakes worldwide. Pet turtles released by neglectful owners can become a nuisance because they compete for food with other species and push them out of their natural habitats, upsetting the ecosystem. The Zoo has one male and one female slider turtle. How can you tell which is which? The females are much larger – as long as 11 inches – when they mature because they carry eggs. Adult males are no bigger than 5 or 6 inches. Sliders are lively in the daytime and like to perch under the Zoo's terrarium radiator, soaking up the rays. Although these turtles may look calm, they can become aggressive in seeking food. They get to know who feeds them and, when they spot a familiar keeper, will swim rapidly toward him or her, mouth open.



## Congo Peafowl

Herb & Nada Mahler Family Aviary

Born: March, June, September 2004

The Milwaukee County Zoo was the only zoo in the United States last year to breed the rare and endangered Congo peafowl. Tremendous effort by our bird keepers helped a first-time peahen mom hatch five healthy chicks (see photo of one) in three "clutches." Breeding Congo peafowl in captivity is an enormous challenge, says bird curator Kim Smith. Chicks grow very slowly and have to be taught how to eat. Our peahen laid her first clutch of eggs all over the exhibit instead of in the nesting spot keepers had set out for her. Keepers removed the eggs, incubated them and hand-raised the one chick that hatched, a male named Hawkeye, teaching it how to eat. Smith never gives up on teaching a bird to nest, however. "We worked with her." The mom had laid one egg in her bowl. So keepers removed the bowl and replaced it with a nest with wooden eggs. She soon learned how to sit on them. "We felt she would be a really good mother," says Smith. Their efforts paid off when four more chicks hatched and were raised by the mom: Poppy II, Poppy III, Poppy IV and Rose (three males and one female, respectively). Smith says keepers also



made several changes in the chicks' diet that helped them survive, and she is sharing what they've learned with other zoos. The chicks could fly when they were just 2 days old because they are born with developed wings. This is a survival adaptation to escape predators like snakes in the African Congo River Basin, the only place in the world where they are found in the wild. At the Zoo you'll find them in the large tropical flight exhibit that also houses the Livingstone's touraco and is near the sand exhibits and shorebird exhibit.





# FAMILY DEDICATION TO THE ZOO

For non-profit organizations, success is often measured by the generosity of dedicated families and businesses willing to support something they believe in. The Arnow family, Mike and Laura and their children, Robert and Rachel (in photo), have been supporting the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM) for at least 10 years. In April 2004 they decided to take their membership to the next level by joining the Platypus Society, the highest level, donor-member-recognition group in the ZSM's network of support.

"We met a very devoted family, the Eneas [Richard, Mary Ellen and Emily], at the Zoological Society's butterfly exhibit, and they encouraged us to join," explains Laura Arnow. "It has given us the opportunity to become more involved in special programs and stay updated on new projects."

Zoological Society projects are important to the Arnows, who are also involved with the Antonia Foundation. Mike is on the board and Laura is the accountant and tax preparer for the Foundation, which supports several environmental education organizations in Wisconsin, including the Schlitz Audubon Center, the Nature Conservancy and Boerner Botanical Gardens. "The Birds Without Borders-*Aves Sin Fronteras*<sup>SM</sup> (BWB-ASF) program was especially appealing to the board," says Laura. BWB-ASF is a research-conservation-education project coordinated by the ZSM and the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation, Inc. (FWC), to study migratory and resident bird species in Wisconsin and Belize. "It is important for us to continually fund a program that has done such good things locally and in Belize (where the ZSM conducts several conservation projects)."

The Antonia Foundation pledged a large donation to the new Animal Health Center, which is naming one section the **Antonia**

**Foundation Surgery Center.** "After touring the hospital and meeting the staff, the board was very impressed with the facility and the essential work done to support the Zoo. We felt that the addition

of the animal-treatment and surgery room viewing area inside the visitor's section of the hospital really complemented our own goal of wildlife conservation and education," says Mike. The viewing area, a special section of the hospital created by the Zoological Society, allows people to view, through large windows, the veterinarians and veterinary technicians perform live procedures in the animal-treatment and surgery rooms. The Animal Health Center was a Capital Campaign project completed in 2003.

Mike and Laura are both certified public accountants at Arnow & Associates, their tax and accounting firm in Milwaukee. The firm supports the ZSM's Animal Ambassador program at the 65<sup>th</sup> Street School in Milwaukee. "Through this science-based outreach program, children get an

opportunity to learn new things about nature and animals directly from the ZSM conservation education staff," says Laura. Both the Arnow children are animal lovers. "Rachel is a walking animal encyclopedia, and always has things to add when we go to the Zoo." One of her favorites is the African warthog. Robert prefers the zebras and penguins.

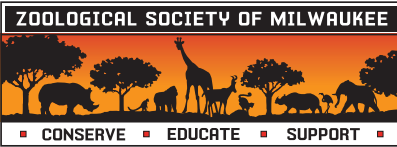
So why should a family care about supporting the Zoo? Mike puts their efforts into perspective quite simply: "The Zoo is a resource that we need to cherish and protect," he says. It is important to him that everyone, especially children, have the opportunity to experience everything the Zoo has to offer. "Each time Rachel visits the Zoo, she gets the chance to share and expand her knowledge, and see the animals in person, not just on TV or in a book."

*By Julie Lawrence*





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# Need a Place for the Kids to Play?

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See story  
on page 8.

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