

Winter 1998

Alive

Zoological Society of Milwaukee County



PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Next fall, we hope to see Zoo visitors squealing with delight as North American river otters roll, slide, dive and somersault in their new exhibit...an exhibit that can be built only with your help.

Last November, we wrote to appeal for your support of a project that will help bring river otters back to the Zoo and give them a remodeled home in the Small Mammals Building. The renovated exhibit will give you the chance to see these clever creatures—and their Asian small-clawed otter neighbors—swim under water.

Our plans also call for an upgrade of all the educational graphics in the Small Mammals Building and enhancements to many of the other exhibits in the building. Our goal is to provide as much space as possible for the animals in the Zoo's care while giving you the opportunity to learn about the animals in an environment that is pleasing and comfortable.

This year, we need to raise at least \$150,000 to bring the otters here and build them a home. If you and every member household in the Zoological Society gave just \$5, we'd reach our goal. As always, you and all of our members will be invited to a special "housewarming" preview of the exhibit before it opens to the public.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to our appeal to date and look forward to participation from our *entire* membership. We hope for your ongoing support as the Zoological Society continues to focus its appeal each year on an area of the Zoo that is most in need of our attention and support.

Gil Boese
 Gil Boese, Ph.D., President
 Zoological Society of Milwaukee County



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

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 Children are learning how to collect weather data like scientists and discovering the effects of climate on animals, thanks to the Zoological Society's participation in GLOBE, an environmental science research program that links children and scientists around the world.

12 **RETURN OF THE TRUMPETER**
 Proud partners in the Trumpeter Swan recovery program, the Zoological Society of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee County Zoo have invested 10 years of time and resources to aid the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in reaching its goal of having 20 pairs of Trumpeter Swans nesting in Wisconsin by the year 2000.

FELINE FINISH

Thanks to funds raised from Zoo Ball XIII: CATS!, the Zoological Society has updated the graphics in the feline building. The new signs feature identification photos (a plus when the animals are off exhibit), improved graphics, and updated information. Since the mid-'80s, when the signs in the building were last updated, some things about some of the cats have changed, like their scientific names. Next time you're in the neighborhood, see our signs. They're the cat's meow.



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FRONT COVER

"Jane," Milwaukee County Zoo Alaskan Brown Bear

BEARS

imagination & reality



The multimedia Bears: Imagination & Reality exhibit (above), sponsored by Wisconsin Electric/A Wisconsin Energy Company, opens at the Zoo Feb. 2. Here's a sneak preview of the exhibit, plus an introduction to some of the bears you can see at the Zoo. For more information on bears at the Zoo and in the wild, see Pullout page D in this issue of *Alive*.

Aurora and Zero (right), the Zoo's polar bears, eat a pound of lard daily in addition to fish and other food. Lard helps their skin and coats. Zero, a male, was born here in 1989. The female Aurora was born in Cleveland in 1982.

Whether celebrated in ceremony, cuddled as a doll or hunted as prey, bears hold a fascination that inspires reverence, adoration and fear. Now you can experience all those emotions in a fascinating traveling exhibit at the Milwaukee County Zoo: "Bears: Imagination and Reality," sponsored by Wisconsin Electric/A Wisconsin Energy Company. This is an elaborate, multimedia

exhibit that explores human perceptions and scientific certainties of this awe-inspiring animal. The exhibit, equally funded by the Zoological Society and the Milwaukee County Zoo, has been wildly popular as it has appeared in museums across the country. While "Bears" opens to the public February 2 and runs through May 3,

Zoological Society members will get a special preview January 31 and February 1. This will be the first winter exhibit in the new Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building donated to the Zoo last year by the Zoological Society and Bill Borchert Larson of Shorewood. Admission to the exhibit is free.

"We're really excited to have the exhibit at the Milwaukee County Zoo," said Bill Maloney, director of traveling exhibits for the Science Museum of Minnesota, which created and launched the bear display in 1990. "Traditionally, exhibits like this have been presented exclusively by natural history museums. The Milwaukee County Zoo is setting a precedent by presenting this exhibit in a zoo setting. This represents a progressive but natural approach to programming for zoos."

MALONEY OFFERS US A SNEAK PREVIEW...

The exhibit, with 26 mounted black and grizzly bears, shows the animals in a variety of scenarios throughout North America. While the mounted animals themselves cannot be handled, there are hides interspersed throughout the exhibit that can be touched. Plus, our own Zoo Pride *Remains to be Seen* carts will be on hand with bear skulls, claws, teeth and other artifacts for visitors to touch. And a couch shaped like a teddy bear is a natural spot for a short break and photos.

None of the bears was killed for the exhibit. Rather, Maloney explains, dead animals were seized from poachers or from areas where they had been killed because of the threat they had posed to humans.



Ursus maritimus

The various tableaux depict bears' wide-ranging influence on culture, from Native American ritual to Elvis Presley singing, "I want to be your teddy bear," to the appearance of "Bart the Bear" in recent Hollywood movies.

Other dioramas show how bears actually live. The creators have juxtaposed disparate images of the bears, reflecting mythology surrounding the animals and the realities of their lives and deaths. Maloney says. A grizzly bear, standing on its haunches, greets visitors. "This is the cave bear of myth, rearing up over the campfire," Maloney says. Nearby, a scene shows a terrified black bear mother shooing her cubs up a tree to flee an unseen danger.

The exhibit incorporates several so-called content areas, each dealing with an aspect of bear lore or life.

The "Image of the Bear" area, Maloney says, exposes the visitor to cultural interpretations of the bear, including those of Native Americans in the Northwest. A "transformation mask," commissioned expressly for the exhibit, shows the symbolic mutation of a human into bear as celebrated by Indians in the Northwest.

This portion of the exhibit also explains the origins of the teddy bear, so named for President Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt. The president, a big-game hunter, had refused to shoot a small bear that had been captured for him. A

cartoonist memorialized the incident with the caption, "Teddy's Bear." A toy maker capitalized on the image, and the name has stuck to the doll ever since. A "Kitsch Case," as Maloney calls it, accompanies this portion of the exhibit and contains old-time teddy bears and other bear memorabilia.

"The Vanishing Bear" examines threats to the animal, including those that have seen the near elimination of the grizzly bear from the continental United States, and the poaching of black bears to supply now illegal markets with bear organs and parts which have traditionally been used as medicine in some Asian cultures.

In "The World of the Bear," viewers can expect to find information and displays of bear biology, eating habits and the differences between grizzlies and black bears. Maloney singles out a black bear den re-creation as a

Black bears, native to North America, are found throughout northern Wisconsin. The Zoo's two black bears, Dakota and Cinnamon (inset), were born in 1989. The Zoo also has two Himalayan black bears, which forgo hibernation and feed year-round.



Ursus americanus



Ursus arctos horribilis

The Zoo has five grizzlies, a type of brown bear native to North America. Laverne and Shirley (above), born in 1977, are 20 years old. Even older is their mother, Emma. But among the oldest animals at the Zoo are grizzlies Kinney and Squiggy, born in 1962. "They're getting up there in age and showing signs of it, too, with arthritis," says Bess Frank, curator for large mammals at the Zoo.

highlight of the exhibit. "You can actually hear the cubs making noises," he says. "It's best described as a cross between a human baby, a piglet and a puppy dog. You hear a sort of yelping, squealing sound." Feeding scenes also show bears scouring the ground for a key feature of their diet: insects.

"Bear Encounters," is not for the fainthearted, Maloney advises. A 45-minute video, shown in a mini-theater setting, features comments by several people who have had face-to-face meetings with bears. "These encounters are rare," Maloney says. "But they can and do happen, often with very unpredictable results.

"There's also an attempt here to ferret out a myth. Number one is that it's unlikely that you'll have an encounter with a bear. Although both black and grizzly bears have been involved in mortal attacks on humans, it's much more likely to occur with a grizzly than a black bear."

continued on next page



Ursus arctos arctos

The Zoo's two Alaskan brown bears, which belong to the same species as the grizzly, are another mother-daughter team. Curly was born in 1961 and gave birth to Jane (pictured here and on the cover) in 1977. In addition to Alaska, brown bears also are found in parts of Europe.

Bears, Wilderness and People presents a contemporary view of how people and bears live side by side. Visitors are

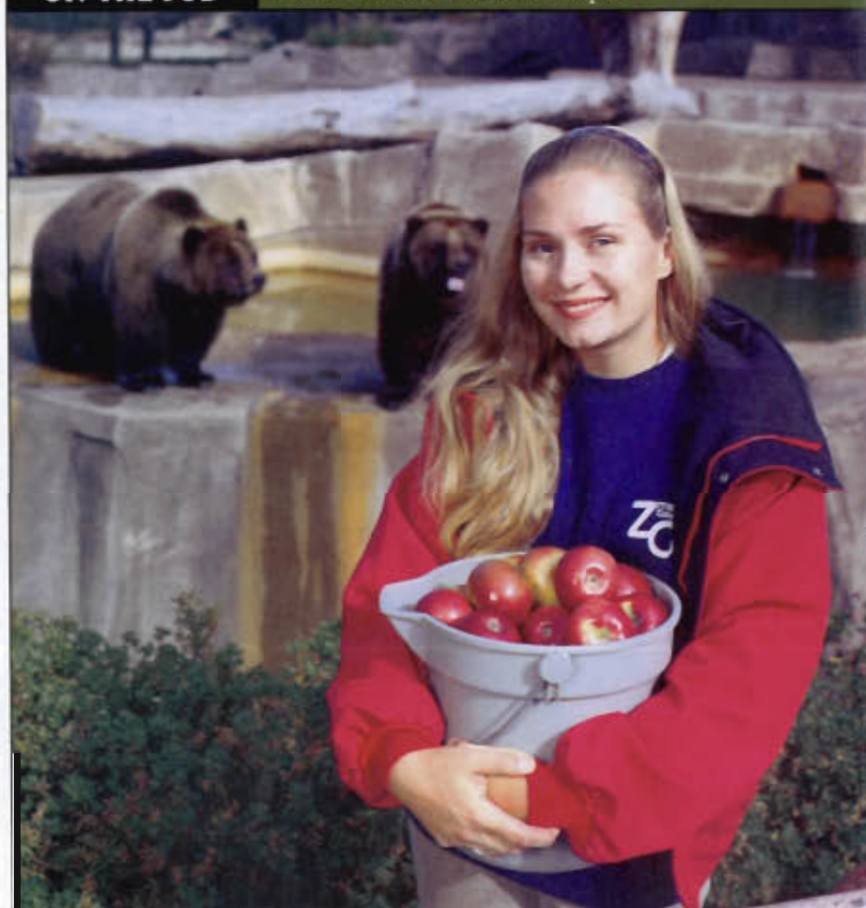
invited to act as land managers for a national forest through an interactive display. They are asked to gauge the effects of

such activities as mining and building recreational facilities on bear habitat. Another activity asks visitors to manage bears in a park to protect both animals and humans.

The exhibit's farewell shows a mother grizzly bear with her cubs nestled next to her amid a field of wildflowers. Says Maloney: That's really our signature piece, an image that we'd like to leave with people. 🐾

If you think your child's school might be interested in participating in a special school program called Bears: Imagination and Reality, offered Feb. 2-May 3, call the Zoological Society's Education Department at 414/256-5421. The school program also is sponsored by Wisconsin Electric/A Wisconsin Energy Co.

ON THE JOB Laurie Talakowski, Zookeeper



For Laurie Talakowski, it was love at first sight. Her initial assignment as a zookeeper at the Milwaukee County Zoo was tending bears.

I just fell in love with them right away, Talakowski says. And the closer you work with them, the more you realize they each have different personalities. They're similar to their dog cousins in that respect.

Talakowski, 25, grew up in Shorewood and maintains her own menagerie of snakes and lizards at her home. I've always been interested in animals, she says. Even as a kid.

For Talakowski, the opportunity to work at the Zoo dovetails with her studies. She works as a roving zookeeper and studies biology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She hopes to continue her research on wild animals after graduation.

She's already learned a few lessons about the Zoo's bears.

Lesson number one: treats. They do love honey, Talakowski says. We'll spread it in the cracks of trees in their exhibit and let them find it. We also give them pumpkins filled with treats and let them rip the pumpkins apart. And we give a wide variety of fruits, veggies and fish as well as scents and spices.

Talakowski says she can't imagine a better place to work. I love working at the Zoo, and the bears are special to me.

Golden Guernsey Dairy Olympics

The next time you're in the historic octagonal barn that's part of the Zoo's Dairy Complex, take a gander at the new Golden Guernsey Dairy Olympics nutrition computer game. You can't miss it: It's in a new, remodeled milk carton not far from where you can view cows being milked.

Designed for elementary-school children, the game has kids working against time to see if they can make healthful food choices for one meal so they can move on to the next. So, if they start with breakfast, the goal is to choose a group of foods that would make up a well-balanced, nutritional breakfast. If they make the right choices, they can move on to lunch, and so on with dinner and a snack. If they move too slowly, the computer will cut them off.

As you can tell by the game's title, Making Wise Menu Choices, the object is to teach sound nutritional habits in a fun way.

While there has been a milk-carton exhibit since 1986, this new Dairy Olympics carton is completely remodeled and the computer program uses the latest technology and computer graphics as well as updated nutrition information (which has changed a lot in a decade).

Additional support for this exhibit came from the Dairy Council of Wisconsin, ACME Corp., Advanced Open Systems and the Zoological Society.



EDZOOICATION



Kids in Science Art Exhibit

Do you think that's a strange title? What does an art exhibit have to do with science, anyway?

Mary Thiry, the Zoological Society's director of education, answers the question of the unusual title by explaining the philosophy behind this new exhibit, which opened November 15, 1997, in the atrium of the Education Center at the Milwaukee County Zoo, thanks to major funding from ANR Pipeline Co.:

When you're learning about animals and science, there are many ways you can learn: through experimentation, research, observation and also through the creative arts. For example, when you're drawing a picture of an antelope, you really have to study the body structure of the antelope. You learn about the way the animal has adapted over the years. The purpose of

Brittany Rusch, 6, and her brother, Christopher, 8, of Wauwatosa play the computer game "Making Wise Menu Choices" at the new Golden Guernsey Dairy Olympics milk-carton exhibit in the Zoo's Dairy Complex.

Sara Henek and Phil Bartoszek of the Zoological Society's 4-H Zoo Club put up artwork from White Rock School in Waukesha. The art was on display in November in the new Kids in Science Art Exhibit in the Education Center at the Zoo.

this exhibit is to show off the wonderful work that kids do in their study of animals.

Another example: Let's say you're charting the growth of a hippopotamus for a science fair. You have to create something that demonstrates what you've learned, which might be charts, pictures, three-dimensional hippos, etc. That research demonstration could be considered creative art. That's why science is art, and art is science.

So when visitors come to the Zoo and stop in at the Kids in Science Art Exhibit, they may see anything from animal sculptures to science projects on display. They'll also see a living part of the exhibit: a fish-filled aquarium. The children's displays will be up for three weeks at a time, usually from one or two schools or youth groups. If you're interested in reserving space for a display, call (414) 256-5423. Additional support for this exhibit came from the David and Ruth Coleman Charitable Foundation and Hoffer's Tropic Life Pets.

They've got the whole **GLOBE** in their hands



Using a Global Positioning System instrument (looks like a phone), children in the Zoological Society GLOBE class take the latitude and longitude of the new weather station set up at the Zoo in November. One boy holds a cylindrical precipitation gauge so they can measure the snowfall amount. Zoo Pride volunteer Toni VanderBerg (in western hat) and instructor JoAnn Marten (right) oversee the readings.

Here's the challenge: Several 9- to 13-year-olds in a Zoological Society science class are given the latitude and longitude of an animal exhibit. Now they must find the spot in the Zoo and which animal lives there.

Many adults wouldn't know enough about latitude and longitude to solve this mystery. But the children have an edge: a small black device that looks like a portable phone. It's really a Global Positioning System (GPS) linked up with satellites orbiting the Earth. They determine their coordinates, then start walking.

As they walk along, the GPS will change the numbers of latitude or longitude, which will tell them if they are going in the right direction, says JoAnn Marten, coordinator of the Zoological Society's new classes in the GLOBE Program. Solving this mystery is a fun, hands-on way to teach science. Yet GLOBE is so much more than that.

GLOBE stands for Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment. It is both an environmental science research program collecting weather data from around the world, and it is a science education program that teaches the scientific method, mathematics and the effects of climate on animals. Plus it links children and scientists around the world through the Internet, allowing them to compare temperatures and rainfall in, say, Wisconsin, with data in Australia, which has opposite seasons.

The connection to animals can be dramatic. The children have learned that almost all the Humboldt penguin nests on an island off the southern coast of Chile were washed away in torrential rains last June, caused by the El Niño weather system. The Humboldt population already was threatened; the weather change has strained their struggle to survive.

The Zoological Society applied to become a participant in the creative but rigorous GLOBE project at Marten's suggestion. Before joining the Society, she was the lead GLOBE teacher at Cleveland Heights Elementary School in New Berlin in 1995-96, the first year of GLOBE internationally. And she was impressed with what the children learned both about the environment and about scientific thinking.

When children at Cleveland Heights used the GPS to survey the school grounds and surrounding area, the instrument told them that a creek near the school was east of their survey area. But the creek actually was west of the area.

Instead of just accepting the instrument's readings as correct, the children wanted to know the cause of the discrepancy. The kids went through the whole procedure to see what went wrong, recalls Marten. Was it weak batteries in the GPS? Was the tree cover confusing the instrument? Were the satellite signals scrambled?

That's what's so important to give kids an interest in science so that they start looking at data rather than just accepting what comes up on a calculator, for example, she says. The goal is to look for causes or conditions or what was done incorrectly. And sometimes there are things in science we have believed for many, many years that, after more research, they find are incorrect. Science is not stagnant. We're always adding more knowledge.

Thanks to \$6,876 in grants—primarily from W.H. Brady Co. with added support from MGIC Investment Corp. and Vulcan Materials Company—the Zoological Society was able to build a weather station at the Milwaukee County Zoo, buy a GPS instrument and acquire a computer to participate in GLOBE. The Society also contributed by providing other equipment and a percentage of teaching time from Marten and her team member Kerry Scanlan, who both attended four-day GLOBE training sessions.

For five months last fall and this January (ending January 17), Marten has been teaching aspects of GLOBE to a 4-H club at the Zoo and to a Saturday afternoon Zoological Society class. This summer she will teach a three-session GLOBE class and use aspects of GLOBE in her Fun in the Sun class. The fall groups have helped conduct a land-cover survey of the 30-square-meter GLOBE site at the Zoo. They described the types and heights of trees and plants found, the kind of soil, the open water, etc.

Meanwhile, the international GLOBE Program has sent them satellite images (one in infrared and one in natural colors) of their Zoo site and the land around it, all divided into 30-square-meter pixels. The children have been challenged to identify features such as roads, parking lots and ponds.

As part of GLOBE, both the teachers as well as children are collecting daily weather data, weekly water readings and, in 1998, monthly soil profiles. Then they record the measurements on the GLOBE database on the Internet. By next fall, when they expand the GLOBE classes to school groups, they will have nearly a year's worth of data collected, for children to compare new data against.

Among the daily atmospheric readings being taken are minimum and maximum temperatures, precipitation, the pH of precipitation, cloud cover and cloud type. Water in Lake Evinrude is tested for pH, turbidity (particles in the water), temperature, etc.

The practical effects of GLOBE include new data to help understand the world environment and perhaps even find solutions to problems. For example, says Kerry Scanlan, as a result of water testing done by children at a GLOBE school in Belgium, the nearby water supply will be tested thoroughly for nitrate contamination. One of the tests done by the children found nitrate in the water.

Speaking of nitrate, in her GLOBE training in Cleveland, Ohio, Scanlan learned how to test water for nitrate. As the instructor was demonstrating

continued on next page



GLOBE instructor Kerry Scanlan shows students how to access the Internet database featuring weather measurements from GLOBE sites around the world. She shows them temperatures and precipitation readings from Australia as it heads into summer while Wisconsin experiences winter.

on a sample of water from a river in Cleveland, she said: The water turns pink if there is nitrate in it, but I have never seen it turn pink — at which point, the sample turned pink. It was a good example of why one shouldn't make scientific assumptions.

In fact, since GLOBE participants can communicate easily through the Internet, the children often challenge each other's data if something seems out of the ordinary, says Marten. And scientists in the project will question school groups about their data, too. So children learn accuracy and accountability (they have to stand behind their data).

That emphasis on scientific method is one of the reasons both Scanlan and Marten like the GLOBE program. It's non-biased, says Scanlan.

We're just collecting data, not making judgments.

Adds Marten:

It's not promoting any particular climate theory, such as global warming. In fact, it teaches children that we can't make conclusions from just our little data. You don't put your trust in one sample, one test. You don't draw conclusions from one experience. That may be a lesson not just in science, but in life.


If an experiment fails, GLOBE teaches students not to be dejected but to find out why. Failures can teach as well as successes, says Marten. And failure can lead to new directions.

Meanwhile, GLOBE data collected by students is analyzed by the scientific research community, which draws conclusions and then reports the results back to teachers and students.

It's exciting to be part of such a large-scale project, says Scanlan. Students from more than 4,000 schools in 55 countries have reported more than 600,000 science observations. Numerous international groups are involved.

In the United States, GLOBE is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency and the Departments of Education and State, working with more than 25 state and local organizations.

The education component of GLOBE is as important as the research part. Whether it's learning about the contents of ponds or the contents of clouds, children get hands-on science that they can put in the context of the whole globe.

For example, in the January 17 GLOBE class, children will face a different challenge using the satellite-linked GPS instrument. This time they will enter their starting coordinates into the GPS, then enter several waypoints as they walk through the Zoo. Then they'll use the GPS to find their way back to their starting point. They'll learn that by knowing latitude and longitude, you can find any spot on Earth. And it's kind of nice to know just where you stand. 



Student Heather Hauze records temperatures as the Zoological Society class visits the Zoo's newly installed weather station. GLOBE instructor JoAnn Marten explains that the temperature must be taken during the noon hour so it can be compared with other noon-hour temperatures around the globe.



KIDS!

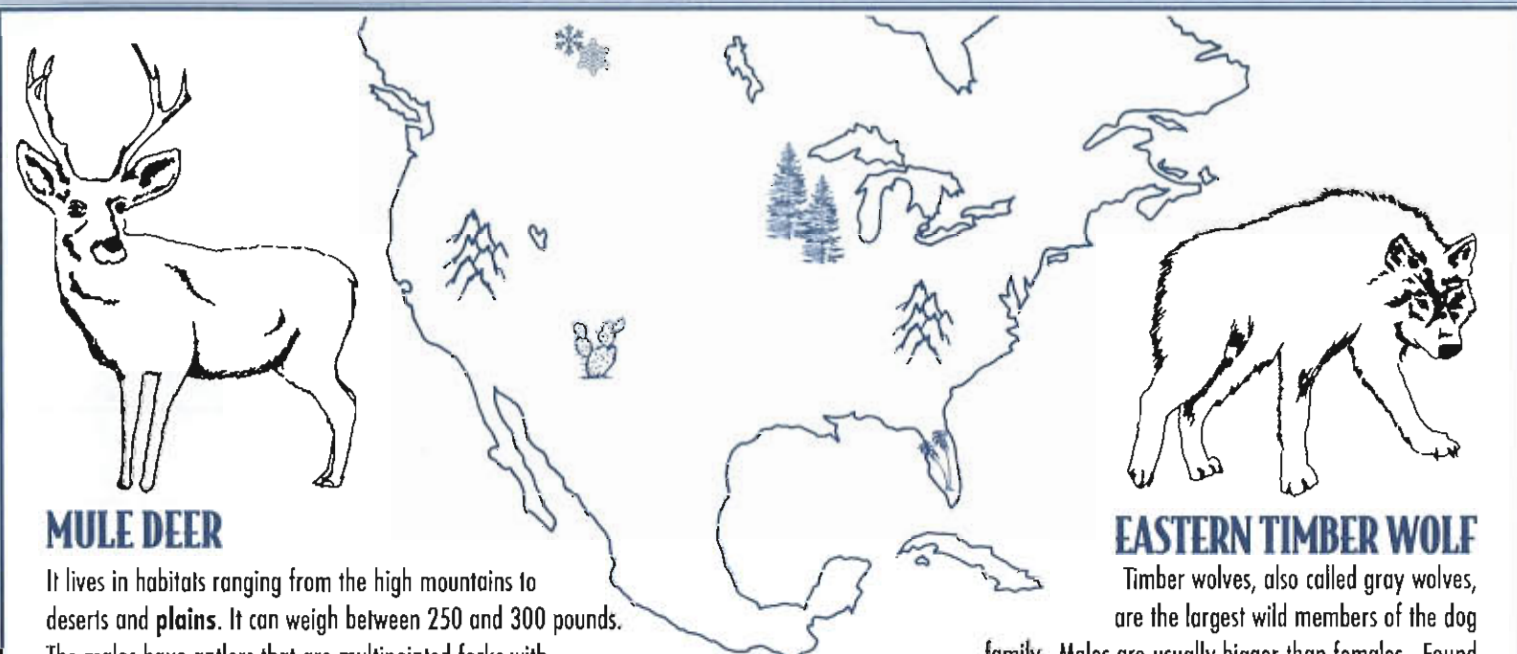
When you are finished reading this page, get out your crayons and color the animals, just like in your coloring books.

Alive

pullout pages

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY WINTER 1998

for kids and families



MULE DEER

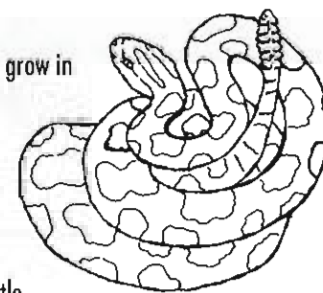
It lives in habitats ranging from the high mountains to deserts and plains. It can weigh between 250 and 300 pounds. The males have antlers that are multipointed forks with about a 2½-foot span. They can live up to 10 years. In winter the mule deer browses on shoots and twigs from pine and aspen trees. In summer it grazes on grasses and shrubs; it also eats mushrooms, nuts, and lichen.

EASTERN TIMBER WOLF

Timber wolves, also called gray wolves, are the largest wild members of the dog family. Males are usually bigger than females. Found in a variety of habitats, in Wisconsin timber wolves live mainly in northern forests. They can kill larger mammals such as deer, moose and caribou. They also eat smaller prey, such as beaver, hare and small rodents.

RATTLESNAKE

Found in arid desert land, they can grow in length from 10 to 60 inches. The rattle of the end of the tail is formed by a series of loosely connected horny segments. When the animal moves, these segments make a noise like that of a hand rattle. All snakes eat animals; there are no vegetarians among them. Small mammals are favored by rattlesnakes.



AMERICAN ALLIGATOR

The American alligator is found in river swamps, lakes, bayous, marshes, and other bodies of water. Their size can range from 6 to 16 ½ feet. They are distinguished from the American crocodile by a broad and rounded snout. The American alligator is generally black with yellowish or cream cross bands. It feeds on rough fish, small mammals, birds, turtles, snakes, frogs and invertebrates.



Animals of North America

North America has one of the widest varieties of climates of all the continents. It has tundra in the north and deserts in the Southwest. The continent is dotted with a fantastic variety of forests, from

temperate rain forests in the Northwest to semi-tropical forests in Florida. Mountains border the western and eastern coasts. Freshwater and saltwater habitats abound. The Great Plains —

our savanna, or grassland — is the central focus of the entire continent. North America — what a wonderful continent to live in!

Animals of North America

The eagle and the timber rattlesnake are two North American animals that live in Wisconsin. The eagle is a protected bird, but the timber rattlesnake has very little protection and still can be killed on private land. Here are kids' drawings of a rattlesnake and an eagle plus an eagle story.

EAGLE

Art by Hannah Marquardt, 9, of Milwaukee



The Wonderful Eagle

Story by Marissa Pescheck, 8, of Milwaukee

Once upon a time there was a beautiful Eagle named Alice that soared above the clouds. When she was in her egg, it fell off the cliff that her nest was perched upon. When she landed, the egg cracked! Even though she landed in the hands of a little girl. To this day on, Alice the eagle still knows the little girl who saved her.

TIMBER RATTLESNAKE

by Shannon Bartel, 10, of Franklin



When it's cold outside, it's time to warm up your creative juices. Let's think bears. On February 2, a new indoor traveling exhibit opens at the Milwaukee County Zoo. It's called "Bears: Imagination & Reality," it's sponsored by Wisconsin Electric/A Wisconsin Energy Co., and it runs Feb. 2 through May 3 in the Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building. So before it arrives, how about drawing your own bear or bears on a poster for our poster contest. Make sure it is not larger than 10 inches by 14 inches. Use white paper with dark colors. And write this title on the poster: **Making Winter "Bearable"**

POSTER CONTEST



This contest is open to children ages 3 to 13. And the poster does not have to be of bears, but it should be about whatever you think **Making Winter "Bearable"** means. The top three posters will be printed in a future issue of ALIVE. All entrants will receive a poster on bears. Send your entry to: Education, 10005 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226, by **February 9, 1998**. It is unbearable waiting to see all the creative art work our members will be submitting. Put your name, age, phone and complete address on the back of your poster.

CURIOUS CORNER

Astrid Stuth, Age 8

Menomonee Falls, WI

Dear Astrid,
Excellent question: "What enables cheetahs to run so fast?" Cheetahs are the fastest animal on land over short distances because of their slim build and highly flexible spine. Unlike other cats, the claws of a cheetah are exposed. This provides added traction when chasing prey. Although cheetahs are able to outrun other animals over short distances, their chases rarely last longer than one minute and they catch their prey only about 50% of the time.

Lauren Engelbrecht, Age 8

Keri Frantell

Fort Atkinson, WI

Dear Keri and Lauren,
You had a good question: "Why don't penguins fly?" Penguins are flightless birds that are well-adapted to swimming. Large wings can be clumsy in the water; so the wings of a penguin are reduced to strong, narrow, stiff flippers, which allow them to swim swiftly through the water. Penguins also have heavier bones than flying birds. This extra weight makes it easier for penguins to dive and swim.



Scott Gevaert, Age 12

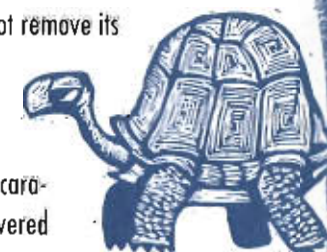
Waukesha, WI

Dear Scott,
You are on your way to becoming a great zoologist. You wanted to know: "Why do hyenas laugh?" Is it because they have a problem with their larynx?" The spotted hyena is commonly known as the laughing hyena because of its demented-sounding cackle. The spotted hyena communicates with other hyenas through scent and a variety of sounds. According to a great reference book entitled *Walker's Mammals of the World*, "The spotted hyena is extremely vocal. The well-known laugh sound is emitted by an animal that is being attacked or chased. A whoop or howl is usually given spontaneously by a lone individual with the head held close to the ground."

Jason Holmdohl, Age 10

Rocine, WI

Dear Jason,
I'm glad you asked: "What are turtle shells made of?" Turtle shells are made from bone. A turtle's shell is part of its skeleton. A turtle cannot remove its shell. Its ribs and backbone are attached to the shell. All turtle shells have a top and a bottom. The top (back) of the turtle is the carapace, and the belly (bottom) is covered by the plastron.



Dear Curious Corner Questioners:

Thanks for all your questions. I look forward to hearing from more of you this year. Send your questions to:

Curious Corner
Zoological Society
10005 W. Bluemound Rd.
Milwaukee, WI 53226.

Your crazy-about-animals friend,
Dr. Kerisa Zoology



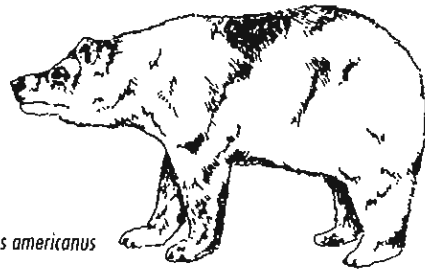
JUNIOR SCIENTIST

COLLECTIBLE ANIMAL CARDS

Color in these mammals of North America, cut apart the cards and add them to your animal-card collection. (Note: Don't cut out the cards until you've read the backside of this page.) All animals in this series are animals you can see at the Milwaukee County Zoo.

MAMMAL

BLACK BEAR



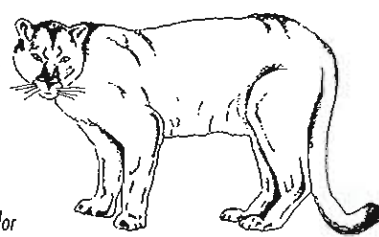
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Ursus americanus*

The most widespread and numerous bear in North America, they inhabit the continent's forested areas and meadows that provide them with numerous berries and other desirable foods. They are most abundant in hardwood forests of the East and in the coniferous forests of the Pacific Northwest.

- **STATUS:** Population estimated at around 600,000. They are in jeopardy because of the trade for their body parts in the Orient.
- **DIET IN THE WILD:** Berries, acorns, honey, grass, herbs, animal carcasses, dead fish, and insects.
ZOO DIET: Omnivore pellets, Western Plateau, carrots, apples.
- **FUN FACTS:** Black bears come in many colors, including black, white, brown, or reddish cinnamon color, even a bluish color. Adults are 4 1/2 to 6 feet long and can weigh from 125 pounds to more than 600 pounds.

MAMMAL

COUGAR



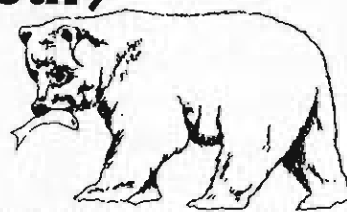
Scientific name: *Puma concolor*

Also known as puma or mountain lion (or many other names), cougars can live in dramatically different habitats, from snow-covered mountains to tropical rain forests. Cougars are 5 to 6 feet long and stand 2 feet high (or higher) at the shoulder. They weigh between 75 and 200 pounds.

- **STATUS:** Once common across the western hemisphere, the cougar has been eradicated in many areas, and its survival is threatened.
- **DIET IN THE WILD:** Deer. If there are no deer, they eat anything available.
ZOO DIET: AFS Carnivore diet (a specially prepared ground meat).
- **FUN FACTS:** The cougar is found over a wider range than any other mammal in the western hemisphere, except for humans. Cougars keep deer in check. When cougars were removed from the Kabib Desert in Arizona, deer populations grew rapidly until the land no longer could support them and they starved.

MAMMAL

Brown Bear/ Grizzly Bear



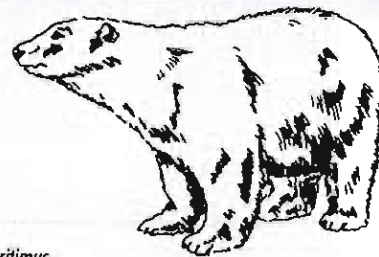
Scientific name: *Ursus arctos*

Grizzlies are a subspecies of the brown bear. They prefer regions punctuated by river valleys, mountain forests, and open meadows. They have a stout and rather chunky shape, with a large hump of fat and muscle over the shoulders. They can stand 6 to 8 feet tall.

- **STATUS:** Approximately 2,500 to 3,000 in Alaska's Kodiak National Wildlife refuge; fewer than 900 brown bears in the United States' lower 48 states.
- **DIET IN THE WILD:** Grasses, roots, moss, bulbs, berries, tubers, and fish. It also eats insects, carrion, and a variety of mammals.
ZOO DIET: Omnivore pellets, carrots, apples, Western Plateau.
- **FUN FACTS:** In the Rocky Mountains, grizzly bears often are seen with white frosting the long hairs of their shoulders and back, thus giving a grizzled appearance and the common name grizzly, or silvertip.

MAMMAL

POLAR BEAR



Scientific name: *Ursus maritimus*

Found in Arctic regions, these bears can range as far south as there is pack ice. The males can reach weights of about 1,320 pounds, and can stand as tall as 11 1/2 feet. Females weigh up to 660 pounds and have a body length of 6 to 8 feet.

- **STATUS:** Total number in the wild is estimated to be 20,000. The polar bear is considered a vulnerable species.
- **DIET IN THE WILD:** Seals and walrus.
ZOO DIET: Western Plateau, polar bear pellets, fish (mackerel or herring), lard.
- **FUN FACTS:** The body is egg-shaped (small head/large body) and its toes are partially webbed. These are two characteristics that were adapted for swimming and diving. They can swim up to 60 miles at an average speed of 6 mph without resting. These bears may travel 24 miles or more in one day.

▼ \$10.00 ENTRY FEE INCLUDES 3 games bowling, shoes, munchies, and a key chain. (\$5.00 of your fee is tax-deductible, 5.6 % sales tax is included.) We accept MasterCard, Visa, American Express, and Discover.

▼ GRAND PRIZE DRAWING! Prizes include Grand Prize Drawing eligibility for individual bowlers with a minimum of \$250 in paid pledges. For you to be eligible for the Grand Prize drawing and other pledge category prizes, pledge money must be received by March 20, 1998, at 4:30 p.m. at the Zoological Society office. Grand Prize Drawing will be held at the Zoological Society office on March 20, 1998, at 4:30 p.m.

▼ PRIZES also will be awarded for the following categories:

Top series scores for:
Senior men and women age 55 and older,
Adult men and women age 18 - 54,
Junior boys and girls age 13 - 17,
Kids boys and girls age 7 - 12,
Tiny Tots boys and girls age 3 - 6,
Bumper Bowlers age 3 - 8.

▼ PRIZES also will be awarded for raising pledges in the following categories (prizes for these categories will be awarded only after pledges are paid. Deadline: March 20, 1998):

\$10 - \$24 Animal Button.*
\$25 - \$49 Animal Button, Sm. Plush Toy
\$50 - \$99 Animal Button, Sm. Plush Toy, Baseball Hat with Photo of Hippo on it
\$100 - \$249 Animal Button, Sm. Plush Toy, Baseball Hat, 1 Lg. Plush Toy
\$250 and over Animal Button, Sm. Plush Toy, Baseball Hat, 1 Lg. Plush Toy, and entry into the Grand Prize Drawing

* Buttons feature animals at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Photos taken by photographer, Mark Seeley. Zoological Society will choose your button. Other animal photo gift items on sale that day!

▼ STINKER AWARD to those with the lowest score in each age category. One prize per category.

▼ COLORED PIN PRIZES also will be given throughout the games. (If the colored pin comes up as the head pin and you throw a real, 10-pin, strike on the first ball, you win a prize!)

▼ TO RESERVE A LANE, sponsor a lane, donate an attendance prize, or give a cash donation to support the animals, please contact Sheri Lusthoff or Jennifer Young at the Zoological Society office, (414) 258-2333. If you can't get a team together but would like to bowl, let us know. We'll team you up with someone.

TRI CITY NATIONAL BANK

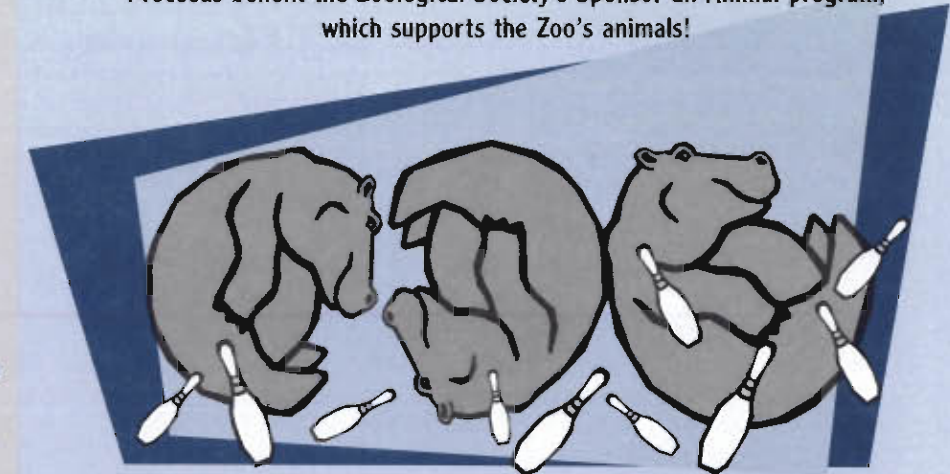
presents

BEASTLY BOWL-A-THON

9 Pin Tap

(9 pins down on your first ball counts as a strike)

Proceeds benefit the Zoological Society's Sponsor an Animal program, which supports the Zoo's animals!



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1998

AMERICAN RED CARPET-WEST ALLIS

10901 W. Lapham Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214

GRAND PRIZE DRAWING! (\$250 minimum in pledges)

- ▼ 2 round-trip, coach tickets anywhere in the continental United States on American Airlines
- ▼ Majestic Elk Print
- ▼ CD Boom Box
- ▼ Cooler filled with 4 cases of Pepsi Products
- ▼ Color Television

TWO SHIFTS OF BOWLING AVAILABLE:

12:00 Noon (registration begins at 11:00 a.m.)
3:00 p.m. (registration begins at 2:00 p.m.)

SPONSOR AN ANIMAL



TO RESERVE A LANE, please contact the Zoological Society at (414) 258-2333

TRI CITY NATIONAL BANK

presents

Feast for the Beasts

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

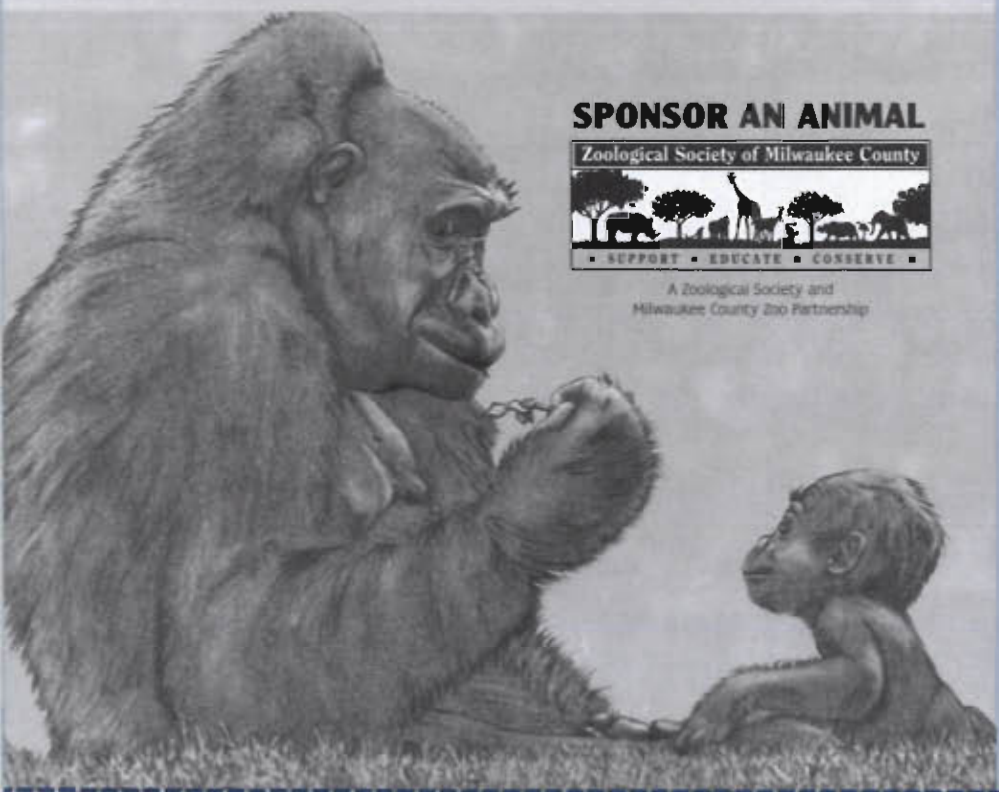
Sunday, March 29, 1998

Zoofari Conference Center

9715 W. Bluemound Road
(just east of the Zoo)

8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Questions? Call (414)258-2333



SPONSOR AN ANIMAL



A Zoological Society and Milwaukee County Zoo Partnership

◆ ADVANCE TICKETS:

\$4.75 for adults
\$3.25 for children (includes children age 2 and under if they want a meal)

◆ PARKING: FREE

◆ AT THE DOOR:

\$5.25 for adults
\$3.75 for children
Price includes 5.6% WI sales tax and is not tax-deductible. (Ticket payment is non-refundable and does not include admission into the Zoo.)

◆ BREAKFAST INCLUDES:

All the pancakes you care to eat, Klement's sausage, Golden Guernsey dairy products and juice, applesauce, and Superior coffee*.
*Additional charge for "seconds" of sausage, juice, and milk.

Proceeds help the Zoo's animals through the Sponsor an Animal program.

Purchase tickets at any one of the 31 Tri City National Bank locations or mail this order form, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to the

Zoological Society Pancake Breakfast
10005 W. Bluemound Road
Milwaukee, WI 53226.

For faster service, call our office at (414) 258-2333 to charge your order.

Tickets purchased in advance will be mailed to you. Booster chairs and high chairs are not available.

To comply with WI Statute 440.455, a financial statement will be provided upon request.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____
I would like to purchase _____ adult advance tickets
at \$4.75 each. = \$ _____
I would like to purchase _____ children's advance tickets
at \$3.25 each. = \$ _____

I have enclosed a check for \$ _____ payable to the **ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY**
Please charge my:
____ Visa ____ MasterCard ____ American Express ____ Discover
Acct. number _____ Exp. date _____
Signature _____

Be sure to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

For your
reference

JANUARY

10
Cheerios' Family Free Day
sponsored by Cheerios & Roundy's Pick'n Save
Everybody gets into the Zoo free today! Members, tell your friends.

18
Samson Stomp
sponsored by Golden Guernsey
Run and walk for the Zoo! All Zoo animals will benefit when you join the Samson Stomp (named after the late, great Samson the gorilla) 10K competitive run, the two-mile fun run or the children's romps (one-quarter mile or one mile). Runners receive a long-sleeve T-shirt, light refreshments, Zoo admission and parking. Zoological Society memberships do not apply to this Zoo fund-raising event. Registration starts at 7:30 a.m. and runs begin at 9:30 a.m. Preregistration is recommended; call (414) 256-5412.



On your mark! Run or walk for the Zoo's animals at Golden Guernsey's Samson Stomp, to be held January 18 on the Zoo grounds.

Calendar

Winter 1998

Jan. 31 through May 3
Bears: Imagination & Reality
sponsored by Wisconsin Electric/ A Wisconsin Energy Co.
Zoological Society member premieres are January 31 & February 1 (Look for your invitation enclosed with this magazine). The exhibit opens to the public February 2 and runs through May 3. Bears is the first winter exhibit in the warm indoors of the new Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building. Bears features a black bear hibernation den with a model of a mother nursing three cubs, more than 25 taxidermic mounts of both young and adult grizzlies and black bears, plus videos, computers and interactive displays.

FEBRUARY

2
Groundhog Day
Wanda, the Zoo's groundhog, comes out for a ceremony at 11 a.m. to see if she can see her shadow.

7
Cheerios' Family Free Day
sponsored by Cheerios & Roundy's Pick'n Save
Everybody gets into the Zoo free today! Members, tell your friends.

14 & 15
Family Snow Sculpting
Create your own icy masterpiece or marvel at animal sculptures done by other families. Each



Bowl for the animals at the Zoological Society's Beastly Bowl-a-Thon, sponsored by Tri City National Bank, February 21 at American Red Carpet in West Allis. See Alive Pullout page E for more details.

See the November and February WILD THINGS newsletters for more details on these events!

team of four (or fewer) family members gets a block of snow to sculpt, and they may work all day Saturday and from 9 a.m. to noon on Sunday. Judging will be at noon Sunday, and prizes awarded immediately. There'll be entertainment indoors all day. If there's not enough snow, the event is postponed. There's no extra charge other than Zoo admission, and Zoological Society members get in free, as usual. Preregistration is required; call (414) 256-5406.

21
Beastly Bowl-a-Thon
sponsored by Tri City National Bank
Throw a ball, have fun, win prizes and help support the Zoo's animals! Come out to the American Red Carpet - West Allis for this Zoological Society fund-raiser. A \$10 entry fee (\$5 is tax-deductible) includes three games of bowling, shoes and snacks. Bowling begins at noon and at 3 p.m., with registration one hour before. Call (414) 258-2333 for registration, pledge materials and more information. (See Alive Pullout page E for more details.)

For your
reference

Calendar

MARCH

14 & 15

Behind-the-Scenes Weekend sponsored by Equitable

This is your opportunity to get behind the scenes at the Zoo to learn about animals and how their keepers care for them. Visits to the animals' winter quarters, keepers' kitchens, the commissary and hospital are among the highlights of this weekend tour of the Zoo. If you can't make it to Behind-the-Scenes Weekend this spring, the Zoo will be hosting another one in fall. For information, call (414) 256-5412.

29

Feast for the Beasts Pancake Breakfast sponsored by Tri City National Bank

Sunday breakfast is for a good cause when you come to this all-you-care-to-eat Zoological Society fund-raiser to help support the Zoo's animals. Enjoy pancakes, sausages, applesauce and beverages at the Zoofari Conference Center (one address east of the Zoo), 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Advance tickets: \$4.75, adults; \$3.25 for children 12 and under (including children under 2 if they want a meal). Call (414) 258-2333 for advance tickets or purchase them from any Tri City National Bank location. Prices include Wisconsin sales tax and are not tax-deductible or refundable. (Ticket payment is non-refundable and does not include admission into the Zoo.) (See *Alive* Pullout page F for more details.)



Celebrate the Easter holiday at the Zoo's Egg Day. The event, to be held April 11, features an egg hunt; bonnet-, tie- and egg-decorating activities; an Easter parade; and family entertainment all day.

10

Mother's Day sponsored by Heinemann's

Moms will have a wild time at the Zoo and get free admission with coupons exclusively available at Heinemann's restaurants. Zoological Society members get in free, as usual.

See the November
and February WILD THINGS
newsletters for more details
on these events!

EDZOOICATION PROGRAMS

January-May 1998

A listing of the Zoological Society's January-May education programs for kids and families was printed in the November issue of *Wild Things* newsletter. If you missed it, call (414) 256-5424 for a copy. School programs: If you know a teacher or day-care supervisor who would like a brochure listing the Zoological Society's programs for classes ranging in age from preschool to high school, call (414) 256-5421. For information, call (414) 256-5412.

Summer Adventure Camps

Mark your calendar for in-person registration to be held April 25 in the Education Center, on the Zoo grounds. Watch for your April/May *Wild Things* for a full camp listing.



CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

A bird in hand

In the fall issue of *Alive*, you read about Birds Without Borders-Aves Sin Fronteras, a five-year international project to help save migratory and resident songbirds. Now the first summer's research is completed. Numerous bird species were counted, banded and studied in Wisconsin. And we have some highlights for you.

In fact, we will keep you updated on this project regularly because it involves so many aspects. Sponsored by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee and its partner, the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation Inc., the project is being conducted at three sites in Wisconsin and at two sites in the Central American country of Belize, which hosts in winter more than 190 species that nest in Wisconsin. The project has three goals: research, education and the involvement of private landowners in conservation.

Vicki Piaskowski, international coordinator of the project, provides these highlights of the first summer's research at the Wisconsin sites:



In Land O Lakes, the northernmost site, 17 species of birds were found to be breeding in or near the coniferous bog there. Nests of 10 additional species of birds were monitored, including the Nashville warbler, Yellow-bellied flycatcher and White-throated sparrow.

At the Rosendale site, which is near Ripon, 12 species of birds were documented as breeding in the Horicon Marsh



Vicki Piaskowski examines a Common yellowthroat at a Wisconsin research site.

area or adjacent grassland. On a 97-acre restored native grassland within the Rosendale site, the research staff monitored 67 nests of 11 additional species of birds, including the Bobolink, Sedge wren and Savannah sparrow.

At the southernmost study site, a marsh and adjacent forest at Pewaukee Lake, 18 species of birds were found to be breeding. Actual nests of 12 bird species were monitored, including the Wood thrush, Gray catbird, Rose-breasted grosbeak, Eastern wood pewee, Blue jay and Scarlet tanager.

We wouldn't have been able to get Birds Without Borders off the ground without the commitment of private

landowners who donated land for migration stopover sites, the support of research groups around the world, and the much-appreciated contributions from foundations and businesses with an interest in preserving wildlife, says Gil Boese, president of the Zoological Society and the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation.

For more information on this project, please contact Piaskowski at (414) 276-0339, extension 307.

Major funding for Birds Without Borders-Aves Sin Fronteras comes from the Derse Family Foundation, Antonia Foundation, Equitable-Schlesinger Agency, Grootemaat Foundation, Menasha Corporation Foundation and Norcross Wildlife Foundation.

RETURN of the TRUMPETER

It was midnight. A June thunderstorm raged. Yet Kim Smith was at the airport to pick up a precious cargo: 45 Trumpeter Swan eggs. They were being flown to Milwaukee from Alaska by Terry and Mary Kohler of Sheboygan on their Windway Capital Corp. Lear jet. The plane was more than four hours late.

Smith had been curator of birds at the Milwaukee County Zoo for only four months, having arrived in Milwaukee Jan. 31, 1996, in sub-zero weather. Now she faced perhaps her most interesting challenge: escort these eggs carefully to the Zoo through torrents of rain and get them started in an incubation and captive-rearing program



Photo by Sumner Matteson



Photo by Skylar Hansen

Top: Alisa Bartos, a University of Wisconsin student interning with the swan program, monitors Trumpeters that were reared with a decoy parent and then put in a protected area in northern Wisconsin last summer.

Bottom: A Trumpeter Swan fans out over her brood. Several captive pairs of swans on protected land will continue to raise cygnets as an ongoing part of the swan recovery program.

that would prepare them to be released into the wild in spring 1998.

But Smith had nine years of Wisconsin's Trumpeter Swan restoration program to back her up. So, when the jet finally arrived, Smith and others packed up the eggs and transported them to the Zoo without losing one. Of the original 45 eggs, 40 hatched successfully and thrived. These cygnets (babies) plus five more from a private breeder are living this winter on an isolated lake near Pewaukee, protected from predators. In May they will fly away

free, the last of 355 swans in a 10-year release program.

By most measurements, the nearly \$1 million Trumpeter Swan recovery program — more than 80% of it funded by private groups such as the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, which has donated \$100,000 — is a success. It has benefited not only swans, but also wetlands where they live, other migratory birds, efforts to teach people about conservation, bird researchers, and the Zoo (where Smith says zookeepers have applied data from the swan program to care for other birds).

"We started from ground zero, trying to restore an endangered species that was once a magnificent part of our landscape," says Sumner Matteson, coordinator of the swan program for Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources, which is a partner with the Zoo and other groups for this program. The Trumpeter Swan once was common throughout the northern United States and Canada. But by the late 1800s it had been wiped out by hunting for swan feathers, used in ladies' hats. (Decades later researchers found a small population of swans in remote mountain valleys of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming.)

While a swan-protection program started as early as 1935, and a restoration program in Minnesota started in the 1960s, Wisconsin's program started in 1987, with a foster-parenting program: Trumpeter Swan eggs were placed in the nests of Mute Swans (an exotic species from Europe). Of 35 Trumpeter eggs put in Mute nests, 26 hatched but only two cygnets survived. Mute Swans built nests in areas vulnerable to snapping turtles, which probably killed most of the cygnets.

In 1989 the DNR and the Zoo, with help from the University of Wisconsin, switched to different rearing techniques, which have been successful. One of the techniques is called "decoy rearing," and it involved putting the new hatchlings in an isolated chamber where they "imprinted" on a Trumpeter Swan decoy manipulated by a pulley system. The cygnets learned to follow the decoy mom to food.



Photo by Richard Benzell



Generally, after three to five days, cygnets were flown from the Milwaukee County Zoo to a wetland in northern Wisconsin where they followed floating decoys maneuvered by UW interns in camouflaged float-tube blinds.... Follow me calls were played to keep a brood together, and alarm calls were broadcast when potential predators were in the area, Matteson explains.

In the evening cygnets were led into predator-proof enclosures on islands or isolated soil banks. This lasted during the summer. When the cygnets fledged (grew feathers for flying), usually by October, they were weaned from the decoys and allowed to fly free and migrate.

In another technique, captive rearing, hatchlings were moved to indoor brooders at the Zoo with a loafing area and a runway ramp that descended into a swimming pool. These cygnets were not as isolated from humans as the decoy-reared cygnets, but zookeepers who cared for them wore camouflaged costumes with modified welder's masks, so the swans would not get

used to human faces. At age three to five weeks, the cygnets were transferred to one of two outdoor, enclosed pens on ponds at a General Electric Medical Systems facility near Pewaukee.

GE spent more than \$150,000 creating a clean-water site just for the swan program, says Matteson. Lead poisoning from lead shot at the bottom of many Wisconsin lakes has been a killer of swans and other birds, he adds.

At about 12 weeks of age, the cygnets were released from the pens onto the larger fenced pond, but they could not fly away because their wings were clipped. For almost two years these captive-reared cygnets lived on the pond with food provided and periodic health checks. They were released in May of their second year.

We don't let them just fly from the site, explains Matteson, because southeastern Wisconsin is full of power lines, dense urban areas, and lakes riddled with lead and dangerous snapping turtles. We fly them to sites in northern Wisconsin.

A smaller part of the program has been

A pair of adult swans have been raising broods on Lake Evinrude since 1989. They are very protective of their offspring, as Zoo visitors venturing close to the shore have discovered.

Inset: Candling a swan egg, Sumner Matteson, coordinator of the Trumpeter Swan restoration program, checks embryo development by looking through a magnifier with sunlight behind the egg. Photo by Rod King.

cygnets reared with captive parents. People who visit Lake Evinrude at the Zoo will see one swan pair raising their own brood every summer. The parents don't migrate because their wings are pinioned, and zookeepers put an aerator in the lake so that the center won't freeze and the swans will have fresh water all winter. Each fall cygnets from their brood are donated to another Trumpeter Swan restoration program in the Midwest in hopes that they will establish nesting sites there.

Five private individuals also have been caring for state-owned swan pairs and their broods. We release the young when they are about 10 months of age, says Matteson.

The goal of the program was to have 20 pairs of Trumpeter Swans nesting in Wisconsin by the year 2000 (not all of the swans released will stay in the state). As of 1997, Wisconsin had 17 nesting pairs great success, according to Matteson.

It's part of our heritage that, once lost, is now on the road to restoration.

The biggest value of this program, says Kim Smith, has been not just in conservation but in education of the public

continued on next page



Photo by Becki Ziel


Very young cygnets "imprinted" on a decoy mother, who was pulled up and down a runway at the Zoo to exercise the cygnets. The decoy-rearing program ended last summer.

about Trumpeter Swans, about conservation of a large migratory bird and about decreasing wetlands." Big birds like swans need isolated wetlands to reproduce.

Smith notes that the swan research is leading to a new era of cooperation between zoos and government agencies such as the DNR, the National Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of Engineers -- all to save species.

For example, in August 1996 the Missouri River flooded in North and South Dakota. The Army Corps of Engineers wanted to rescue eggs of the endangered piping plover and called upon the Milwaukee Zoo and the Lincoln Park Zoo in Illinois. Zoo staff went to the Dakotas and rescued 30 eggs; each zoo took 15. Techniques that Milwaukee had learned from the swan program for transporting eggs, for incubation and for feeding the hatchlings helped with the plovers.

"One keeper learned so much from the Trumpeter Swan eggs that she became very adept at candling all bird eggs (holding them in front of a light to see if the embryo is developing normally)," says Smith. "We've had a 90% to 95% 'hatchability' rate with Trumpeter eggs, as a result. Most programs think they're doing well if they get a 60% hatching rate."

Although the Trumpeter Swan recovery program has received federal funds, private donors have provided the bulk of funding and support. These include Terry and Mary Kohler (who donated flights to and from Alaska) and the Zoological Society, which donated \$100,000 in 11 years to support field research and college interns who have cared for young swans in the wild. The Society also paid for initial incubation equipment used for the swan eggs. Other major support came from the Milwaukee County Zoo. Fund-raising efforts for the swan program are coordinated by the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. 

Award-winning Conservation Program

The Milwaukee County Zoo, the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, and the Department of Natural Resources' Bureau of Endangered Resources won a regional conservation award in fall 1997 for their cooperation in Wisconsin's Trumpeter Swan recovery program. The award was presented at the American Zoo and Aquarium Association's 73rd annual conference, held in Albuquerque, N.M. Last summer the 17 pairs of swans that have been reintroduced into Wisconsin and chosen to nest here produced a total of 63 cygnets.



ON THE JOB Kim Smith, Curator of Birds

When Kim Smith moved her large collection of cactus to Milwaukee in January 1996, almost all of the plants died. "When I left the Dallas Zoo to come here, it was 72 degrees," she recalls. "And when I arrived, it was negative 60. I had no idea."

For someone who grew up in Phoenix, spent eight years at the Phoenix Zoo, put two years in at the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, then worked two more years at the Dallas Zoo, starting a new job in Milwaukee in midwinter was an environmental lesson. But the chance to be in charge of Milwaukee County Zoo's aviary was enough of a draw to overcome weather shock.

Birds simply fascinate Smith, who has a bachelor of science degree in zoology. "There are so many different types. And their adaptations for survival are incredible. They fly. They have feathers to keep them warm. They have different beaks to eat. You've got birds that eat only fruit, birds that eat only meat. There are more opportunities than you can ever dream of for learning new things."

Smith also liked the opportunities Milwaukee County's Zoo provided for research and conservation, particularly the program to reintroduce Trumpeter Swans (see accompanying story).

"There is so much about birds that is still unknown and the opportunities for research are vast," says Smith. "Birds are very versatile; several species like the Peregrine Falcon have adapted to the urban environment."

One of them is Smith's pet Macaw, who also has adapted to her other pets: two cats and two dogs.

SERENGETI CIRCLE

The Serengeti Circle is an exclusive group of corporations and foundations who support the Zoo and Zoological Society through sponsoring special events, exhibits/attractions, programs and promotions at the \$2,500 level and above. If you would like more information on sponsorship opportunities at the Zoo, please call Patsy Harrigan, (414) 258-2333.

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5 year Platypus Society Member in bold (updated each fall)

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Friends contributing to the Platypus Society after November 28, 1997 will be recognized in the next issue of Alive.



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The Zoological Society welcomes the following new Platypus Society members as of November 28, 1997:

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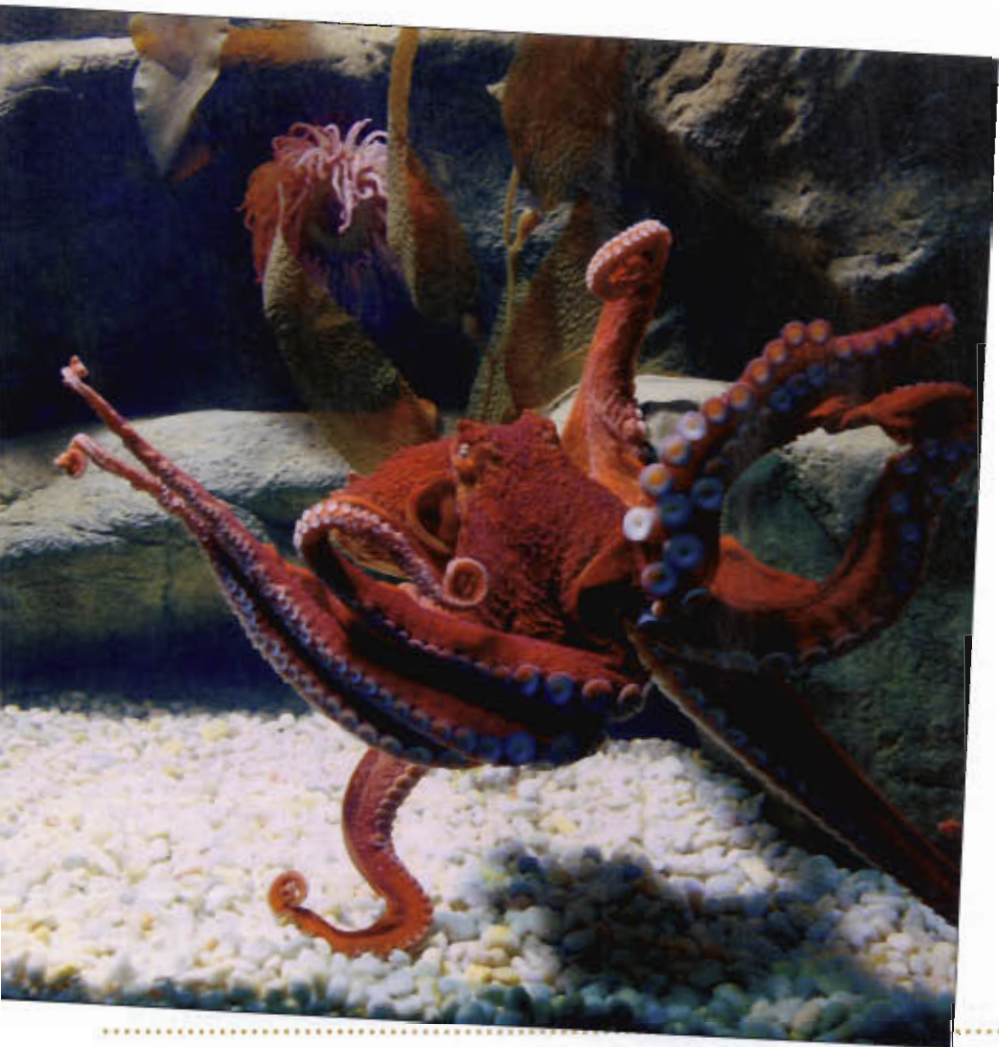
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The Platypus Society is a group of about 400 Milwaukee-area foundations, corporations and individuals that contribute more than \$425,000 annually to the Zoological Society. If you would like to join this group in helping the Society uphold its mission of supporting the Zoo, educating the community about wildlife and the environment and conserving endangered species, call Joan Rudziński at (414) 276-0843.



WHAT'S GNU

Pacific Giant Octopus

Aquatic & Reptile Center
Arrived: October 10, 1997

The Pacific giant octopus certainly measures up to its name. Male octopi may reach 30 feet from arm tip to arm tip, while females stretch out to seven feet across the beam. The Milwaukee County Zoo will feature a female freshly caught off the coast of Vancouver, British Columbia, in Canada for a simple reason. We couldn't fit a 30-foot male octopus in our exhibit, explains Craig Berg, aquarium and reptile curator at the Zoo. Another compelling reason to display just one octopus here is the daily demand additional octopi would create. Raising additional octopi, which subsist primarily on shellfish, could require the full-time attention of two keepers. The Zoo's new octopus, estimated to be two to three years old, is named Mariah, although animals like this don't really respond to names, Berg says.

Yellow Giant Chuckwalla

Aquatic & Reptile Center
Arrived: October 15, 1997

The meek in this case the yellow giant chuckwalla may exit rather than inherit the Earth. All told, there are some 4,500 yellow giant chuckwallas in the wild and only about 90 of the endangered reptiles in captivity, according to Craig Berg, the Zoo's aquarium and reptile curator. The Zoo's two unnamed females, ages 8 and 5, come from the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, but they are native to San Esteban Island in the Gulf of California. With no mammal predators in their natural island habitat, the chuckwalla evolved defenses only against birds. Now, the reptiles face predation from humans and rats, newcomers to their island homes. Their temperament is pretty mild, says Berg. They had not been exposed to mammals, and they're not terribly aggressive. As a result, their defenses are extremely ineffective. It's important to show people here the problems such species have.



Giant Solomon Island Skink

Aquatic & Reptile Center
Born: October 15, 1997

Dragon, the Milwaukee County Zoo's new giant Solomon Island skink, has a reputation to match its fierce name. That is, of course, when its babies are threatened. It's really a very, very nice animal, says Craig Berg, the Zoo's aquarium and reptile curator. But once you approach its young, it violently defends its nest. Its babies are big. Born live, the skink baby may be as much as one-quarter the size of its mother. The lizard, which grows to two feet in length, is a social animal, with several females living with a male inside a hole in a tree. Its prehensile tail, unusual among lizards, along with sharp claws allow it to maneuver in tree limbs.

Those trees, however, are growing scarce, falling to foresters and farmers, and making life for the skink tenuous. Typhoons also can take a toll on their habitat, Berg says.



Cinereous Vulture

African Savanna
Born: April 19, 1997

He's a six-month-old with an attitude. The Milwaukee County Zoo's newest Cinereous vulture knows he's a tough customer and isn't afraid to show it. He definitely knows he's big enough to push his weight around, says Kim Smith, the Zoo's aviary curator. He does have quite an attitude, although he's been pretty well-mannered in general. The chocolate-brown bird showed his manners in a recent photo shoot. He was awfully curious about the camera equipment and the photographer, but he didn't act out. The Cinereous vulture is the largest of the Old World vultures and is native to Eurasia. It is extinct throughout most of its former range but can still be found in parts of Spain, Mongolia and China. This particular male was hatched at the Birmingham Zoo in Alabama. He joins a breeding pair of the vultures here in Milwaukee.





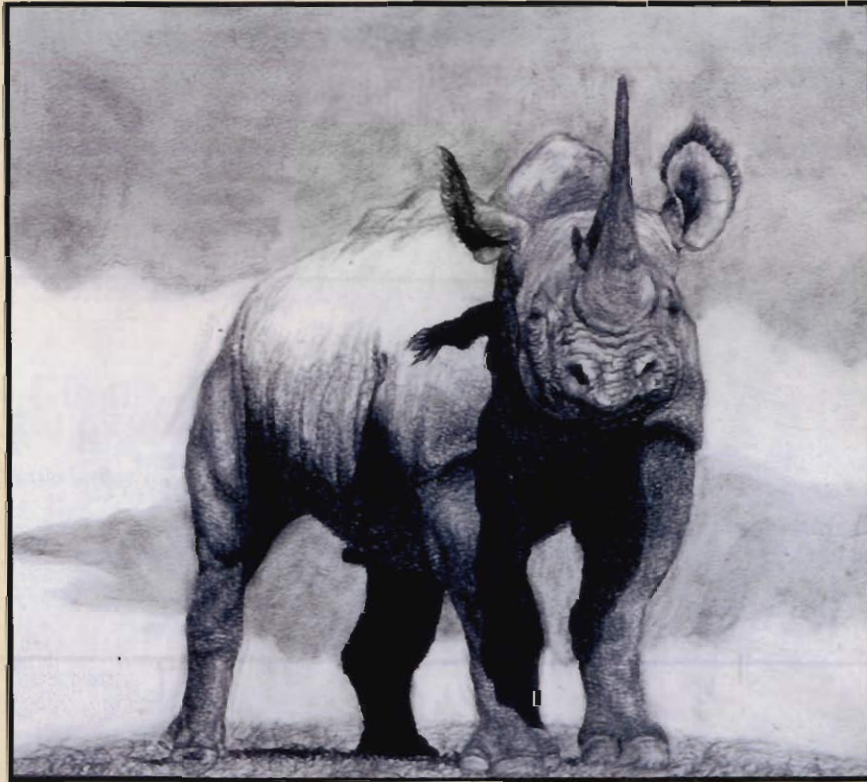
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**Third Annual Animal People's Choice
Art Competition**

This untitled charcoal drawing of a rhinoceros by Tyler Schmitt, a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, was one of four top award winners in the Third Annual Animal People's Choice Art Competition, sponsored by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee and exhibited at Mayfair Mall in Wauwatosa in June 1997.