

Zoological Society of Milwaukee  
Members' Newsletter  
April 2019



# YEAR OF THE ELEPHANTS



## THIS IS THE MOMENT

MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR.

**A**fter years of planning, fundraising and construction, the Zoo is getting ready to unveil the new elephant home on May 4. The Zoo's two female elephants, Ruth and Brittany, moved in late last year to get acclimated before the public comes in. For this huge occasion, much of this year is dedicated to the African giants. The public is invited to the special unveiling of the new elephant home. Read more about this special event on [page 8](#).

On May 10, the Zoological Society is incorporating the new elephant home in its annual family-friendly fundraiser, Zootastic. This ticketed event includes dinner, kids crafts

and activities. For information about the event and how to buy tickets, turn to [page 3](#).

Kohl's Wild Theater is preparing for its new summer show related to elephants. The free theater programs educate children about conservation and wildlife. Go to [page 9](#) to read how Kohl's Wild Theater is tackling a serious topic related to elephants.

The Zoological Society's biggest fundraiser of the year is all about elephants. Check out the black-tie affair on [page 8](#). But first, turn the page to see how a local company is jumping in to help put the finishing touches on Ruth and Brittany's new home.

# WADDLE THIS WAY

## World Penguin Day

April 27, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Free Zoo admission for Zoo Pass members

There is something about a penguin's waddle that will put a smile on your face. Then again, the way they swim is pretty cute too. What about the way they "talk" to each other? Basically, penguins are pretty cool animals, which is why the Zoo is dedicating a Saturday for World Penguin Day. Guests of all ages can learn about penguin adaptations. Feel how blubber keeps them warm in freezing temperatures and see how their black and white feathers protect them from predators. Then enjoy a special zookeeper talk about a day in the life of a Zoo penguin. You can even spruce up your house by buying a painting by a penguin.



Photo by Olga Kornienko

On this day only, you can sponsor a penguin through the Zoological Society and receive a plush-toy penguin. The sponsorship is \$30 and includes a certificate of sponsorship, recognition on our "All in the Family" donor board for one year, an invitation to a behind-the-scenes event for animal sponsors in August and more.



Stock photo



## MEMBERANDA

**We value your relationship with the Zoological Society of Milwaukee.**

The Society does not sell member/donor information to third parties, but may share limited information with the Milwaukee County Zoo for the purpose of confirming membership status.

**Zoological Society office hours:** 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekends.

**Zoo hours: Daily, 9 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.** Please note that the Zoo's admission gates close 45 minutes before the posted Zoo closing time. Zoo animal buildings close 30 minutes before posted Zoo closing time. The Zoo's walk-in gate closes one hour prior to posted Zoo closing time.

**Payment information at Zoo admission gates:** The Milwaukee County Zoo staff does not accept checks for Zoo Pass purchases or renewal payments at the Zoo's admission gates.

**For tax-time tips, Zoo Pass benefits and other details, please visit [zoosociety.org/Membership/Things2Know.php](https://zoosociety.org/Membership/Things2Know.php)**

**The tax-deductible portions for the following Zoo Pass categories are:** Individual (Basic: \$60, Plus: \$71); Individual +1 or Couple (Basic: \$70, Plus: \$80); Individual + 2, Family and Single Adult Family (Basic: \$75, Plus: \$95); Family +1 (Basic \$94, Plus: \$104); Family +2 (Basic: \$101, Plus: \$113); Family +3 (Basic: \$117, Plus: \$126); Affiliate (Basic: \$154, Plus: \$157); Benefactor (Basic: \$218, Plus: \$220).

**Reciprocal zoos and aquariums:** We update our list of zoos and aquariums that offer reduced or free admission to our members with the Association of Zoos & Aquariums each year. We only reciprocate with AZA-accredited facilities and reserve the right to not reciprocate

with zoos and aquariums located within close proximity of the Milwaukee County Zoo. Please be sure to contact our offices prior to your travels at 414-258-2333, or visit [zoosociety.org/Membership/Reciprocal.php](https://zoosociety.org/Membership/Reciprocal.php), if you have any questions.

**Moving?** Please call us when you change your address or name. The call saves us money because when the post office returns your mail with a forwarding address, we pay twice for mailing: to the old address and the new. If you've changed your address on your identification, replacement cards may be purchased with the new information for \$5.

**New benefit:** Ocean Connections is offering Zoo Pass members a 10% discount on their camps and interactive programs. Visit [oceanconnections.org](https://oceanconnections.org)

### WILD THINGS

Issue No. 141, April 2019

Wild Things is a membership newsletter published by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee six times a year.

Editor: Katie Krecklow

Designer: Scott DuChateau

Contributing writer: Stacy Vogel Davis

Contact the Zoological Society at:

10005 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226-4383

Phone: 414-258-2333 Web: [zoosociety.org](https://zoosociety.org)

Contact the Milwaukee County Zoo at:

10001 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226-4383

Phone: 414-256-5412 Web: [milwaukeezoo.org](https://milwaukeezoo.org)



# TRUNKS & TAILS



## Zootastic

Sponsored by *Grow Hope @ SaintA*  
Friday, May 10, 5-9 p.m.

It's an anniversary so fantastic, it's Zootastic. Join us for the 10th anniversary of our family-friendly fundraiser, Zootastic, this May. With the new elephant exhibit opening just days before, this will be most people's first time seeing the new building and home of Ruth and Brittany. Guests will be allowed in the Zoo after hours and will be able to see the elephant exhibit in addition to the giraffes, rhinos and big cats. Families can learn about the animals that call Milwaukee home while kids can take part in different crafts.

Dinner is included in the ticket. Then, sit back as your kids burn off some energy with music and games from DJ Tim Sledge. This event does sell out and you must pre-register. Proceeds help the Zoological Society fulfill its mission to conserve, educate and support the Milwaukee County Zoo.

Thanks to contributing sponsor *Bridgewood Advisors* and media sponsors: *News/Talk 1130 WISN, FM 106.1, 95.7 BIG FM, 97-3 The Game, V100.7, Big 920 WOKY.*



Laval T., 5, enjoys mac and cheese at Zootastic.

Photo by Bob Wickland



Children getting "wrapped up" in Zootastic fun.

Photo by Bob Wickland

### Zoo Pass Members

Family of Four: \$80  
Adult 13 and up: \$30  
Child 12 and under: \$15

### Non-members

Family of Four: \$90  
Adult 13 and up: \$35  
Child 12 and under: \$20

## EXTRA HELP

Time is running out to help put the finishing touches on the new elephant exhibit. Sendik's Food Markets has chosen the Zoological Society of Milwaukee as its spring charity partner. Through the end of April you can buy a copy of the spring 2019 issue of Real Food Magazine at any Balistreri-owned and -operated Sendik's store. All proceeds will go to the exhibit.

**For the month of April, you can also buy animal crackers to benefit the elephant exhibit.**



# EGGS-TRA SPECIAL DAY



*Harper B., 2, of Menomonee Falls, finds Easter eggs at the egg hunt.*

Photo by Olga Kornienko

## Egg Day

*Sponsored by Nestlé Nesquik and Woodman's*  
**April 20**

Egg Day is a special day for both people and animals. The humans that come to the Zoo can participate in numerous activities. Kids can create and color their very own Easter baskets to carry their goodies. To complete the look, there will be a face painter to paint on a bunny nose and whiskers. The egg hunt is for kids 8 and under. Kids can redeem the eggs they find for sweet treats. You may catch the Easter Bunny hopping around the Zoo taking pictures with kids and families.

The animals at the Zoo also enjoy special Egg Day enrichment items. Many of them go on a "hunt" in their exhibit and find an egg. These eggs are specially made by a group of Zoo

Pride volunteers. "It's a messy project, but it directly benefits the animals as part of their enrichment," says volunteer Nancy Biesterveld. About eight volunteers make all the eggs for the animals around the Zoo. They start about two weeks before Egg Day by blowing up balloons to different sizes. Next, while wearing gloves and masks to prevent spreading germs to the animals, the volunteers dip ink-free newsprint into flour and water to coat the balloons. They come back a few days later to put on a second coat of the papier-mâché. Volunteers can use food coloring or approved wrapping paper to decorate the eggs. "It allows you to be creative, and you can bring out your fun kid side by getting messy." They can't use paint, tape or glue because it could harm the animals if they ate it. Once the mixture is dry the volunteers come back for a third day to pop and remove the balloons.

In the end, the volunteers make anywhere between 50 and 75 eggs. The zookeepers grab what they need and put treats inside for the animals to discover and enjoy. While we find it fun to watch the animals find their eggs and look inside, it's a great example of enrichment. The eggs stimulate their instincts and encourage natural behaviors like foraging. The animals get their eggs at different times of the day so you can see multiple animals enjoy their treats. A program of times and locations is available the day of the event.

**Zoo Pass members get free Zoo admission with their Zoo Pass and ID.**



*Tommy, a male orangutan, enjoys his Egg Day treat made by Zoo Pride volunteers.* Photo by Olga Kornienko

**SPECIAL OFFER: Get a free carousel ride during Egg Day with a Woodman's receipt showing the purchase of any Nesquik product. Bring receipt to carousel ticket booth.**



**1****BY THE NUMBERS****1. Breakfast & Lunch with Santa**

*Santa and Mrs. Claus greeted **2,483** people during Breakfast & Lunch with Santa, sponsored by Racine Danish Kringles. The three-weekend event in December includes a visit with the man in red and a special gift.*

*Photo by Stacy Kaat*

**2. Puttin' on the Ritz**

*Andrew Fleckenstein and Adam Kuczowski try out life-size Rock'em Sock'em Robots during Puttin' on the Ritz, sponsored by Husch Blackwell. The Zoological Society fundraiser held inside Potawatomi Hotel & Casino on Jan. 17 brought in **344** guests and raised **\$148,900**. Boxing was sponsored by HN Co., and the boxing ring was sponsored by Bridgewood Advisors.*

*Photo by Stacy Kaat*

**2****3****3. Samson Stomp and Romp**

*It was a wild winter, and **1,726** runners braved the cold to run the Samson Stomp on Jan. 20. The annual Zoo event sponsored by Amica Insurance includes a competitive 5K, a 2-mile fun run/walk and two races for kids.*

*Photo by Olga Kornienko*

**4. Zumba® Fitness Party at the Zoo**

*Working out never felt so good Zumba® instructors led more than **300** people in high-energy routines. Zumba® Fitness Party at the Zoo on Feb. 23 is an annual fundraiser for Zoological Society's Sponsor an Animal program. This year, participants helped raise **\$6,365**.*

**4**



# LOVE CONNECTION

Getting two animals together isn't as easy as swiping left or right on a dating app. Big cats area supervisor, Katie Kuhn, has been working for months on a love connection between male lion Themba and female lioness Sunny. But when they swipe, it's not a good thing.

The Zoo had two lion prides. Themba and his mate Sanura were one pride for 12 years, and two females Sunny and Amali were another pride. In the wild, prides generally don't combine. But when Sanura died in September, there was an opportunity to start a new pride. The Species Survival Plan® (SSP) gave its breeding recommendations. Amali is not a good genetic match with Themba so she was implanted with birth control. Sunny is the opposite and is considered an ideal candidate.

But as Kuhn explains, you can't just put a male and a female together and assume it will all work out. "I can't force them to be together. If they don't like each other they fight, and one of them is going to get hurt."

The process starts with an intro behind the scenes. Once Sunny is in estrus they allow her to go up to the mesh that separates her and Themba. "She will rub on the mesh, she'll roll on the ground and she'll make moaning sounds towards him," says Kuhn. "He should reciprocate that and rub on the mesh and be interested and happy to see her, but he seems hesitant of her and gets defensive." While it wasn't love at first meeting, each time they meet, Themba seems to be less aggressive and that is a good sign. They only meet when Sunny is in estrus, which



Photo by Olga Kornienko

## SEA LION AND

Their whiskers may tickle and their skin may be wet, but a kiss from a sea lion will melt your heart. Kids and adults can get up close and personal with the seals and sea lions at Ocean Connections, formerly Oceans of Fun. There are dozens of programs to choose from and each one gives you or your child a unique experience with the animals. Ocean Connections is the only place in the Midwest that offers programs where you can get into the water with a sea lion and physically interact with the species. Not only are these programs unique experiences, they send an important message about conservation. Ocean Connections rescues sick and stranded seals and sea lions and gives them a second chance at life. The animals are not only thriving now, they are also animal ambassadors that help spread the message about their needs and why they are in danger right now.





Photo by Olga Kormienko



Photo by Joel Miller

is every few weeks lasting four to five days at a time. Their first meeting only lasted five minutes. From there the time together on each of those available days has extended to more than an hour.

While there are positive signs Sunny and Themba may get together, there is a chance he will signal he wants to be alone. "He may not want a new girlfriend and that's fine. Some people are married for 40 years like he and Sanura were in cat years, then their spouse dies and they never get another one," says Kuhn. "They tell us what they want to do. I rarely get to be the boss. I just make sure no one gets hurt."

## A NEW TRIO

There are three new animals at the Zoo, ready to meet you. Over the winter three waterbuck from the San Diego Wildlife Park arrived. Since the common waterbuck is an African animal, they spend most of the cold months inside Winter Quarters. This worked out well since it gave keepers more time to work on trust and training with the animals before they went into their outdoor exhibit. All three females love to eat alfalfa, and keepers use it as a special treat for their training sessions.

Hannah, Elise and Natalie will turn 2 years old in the coming months. Hannah and Elise are half-sisters. The naming rights were part of an auction at last year's Zoo Ball. The couple with the winning bid named the waterbuck after their granddaughters. (To read more about Zoo Ball, turn to page 8.) As for the name waterbuck, that comes from the animal's tendency to stay near water and use it as a way to evade predators. When they get wet, they are protected by an oily substance that makes their hair waterproof.

## SEAL ENCOUNTERS

Ocean Connections offers programs from an hour and a half to a weeklong camp.

**Sea Lion Splash:** This program is for kids ages 5-10. It's an hour-and-a-half program that teaches children about positive animal training and gives them a chance to put their new skills into practice.

**Caring for Flipped Friends:** Meant for kids 8-13, this program focuses on what the animal care team does to keep the animals and habitat healthy. Participants will interact with the seals and sea lions poolside and participate in a mock medical session.

**Aquatic Adventures:** Adults and kids 6 and up will get suited up and enter the water with the seals and sea lions. All participants are given the opportunity to touch, feed, interact with, and train the seals or sea lions.

**Summer Camps:** Parents can choose day camps, a three-day camp or weeklong adventures. All camps are age appropriate and align with the Wisconsin state education standards.

**Camps and programs must be booked online at [oceanconnections.org](http://oceanconnections.org). Zoo Pass members get a 10% discount on all interactive programs and camps.**

# ▶▶▶ THE GRAND OPENING ◀◀◀



Exhibit rendering provided by HGA

## New elephant exhibit

May 4, 10 a.m.

When someone moves, they generally wait until they unpack and get situated before throwing a house-warming party. In a similar situation, after months of getting used to their new home, elephants Ruth and Brittany are ready for the public to come in and take a look. It's an event years in the making and everyone is invited.

May 4 will officially be the first time the general public can go into the new elephant exhibit, and the Zoo wants you to be part of the celebration. The event will start at 10 a.m. with opening remarks from Zoo Director Chuck Wikenhauser. Then after the official ribbon cutting, guests will get the chance to see the new outdoor space that is four times the size of their old home. That means more space to roam but also more space for enrichment activities. Depending on

Ruth and Brittany, you may even catch them in their new watering hole. It's so big it can hold up to three fully submerged elephants. There are also three enrichment walls throughout their large exhibit.

When you step into the new Elephant Care Center you'll see Ruth and Brittany's indoor recreation room, which includes a sand floor. Having softer, more natural flooring is good for the elephants' feet and musculoskeletal health. There are also five individual stalls for the elephants.

The elephant exhibit and new space for the African hoofstock are part of Adventure Africa. The next phase includes new homes for the hippos and rhinos.



**TEMBO!  
TEMBO!  
TEMBO!**



## Elephants! Elephants! Elephants!

Zoo Ball, presented by North Shore Bank  
and Northwestern Mutual Foundation

Join us Saturday, June 22, for the Zoological Society's biggest party of the year

Starting ticket price per individual is \$300.

Call Special Events to reserve your table today: 414-258-2333.

Zoo Ball Chairs: Mike & Nancy Carter | Jay & Lisa McKenna | Rich & Jean Tennesen



# THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

There is a lot of excitement around the opening of the new elephant exhibit. The exhibit offers amazing views of our Zoo's elephants in action and lots of learning opportunities about African elephants and the way they shape life in the savanna. While the Zoological Society and the Zoo hope guests will enjoy the beauty of the African elephants, it's also an opportunity to talk about the elephant in the room – the ivory trade.

According to the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, nearly 100 elephants are killed every day in Africa. This summer, Kohl's Wild Theater will debut a new musical to bring more awareness to the problems of poaching. "We couldn't do something that just addressed elephants on a surface level," says Julia Petersen, senior director of programs. "It really needed to be something that was deeper, that had a conservation message and a storyline that evoked emotion and learning among the audience."

It was decided early on that this show was going to have some tough moments. "When it comes right down to it, we're running out of time for these animals, and we don't want to sugarcoat this message," says the show's playwright Brittany Curran. The 15-minute show centers around a baby elephant named Suusa who, because of poaching, is separated from her mother. It's a sad moment that Curran doesn't shy away from in the script. "Being sad may not feel very nice, but it is a valid emotion that people of every age can feel and understand." Suusa travels throughout the savanna looking



for her mother. During her journey, she remembers the lessons from her mother about how elephants use their tusks as tools to solve problems. "The key message of this show is that elephants need their tusks to survive, and humans do not."

There are light moments along the way as Suusa meets new animals. Foondu is a yellow-billed oxpecker who serves as a clown character and offers some comic relief. Petersen says the script strikes the right balance of important conservation messaging and entertainment for all ages. "We don't want to alienate the audience with a musical so heavy and difficult that they walk away confused or not wanting to listen. But we do want to acknowledge the very real challenges these animals are facing, and we want to inspire empathy for them and action on their behalf." While Curran is excited to see the characters she created come to life this summer, she's also excited about the potential impact. "I hope our audiences will leave this show feeling empowered to make a difference."

**Kohl's Wild Theater is made possible by a partnership with Kohl's Cares. It is the largest zoo-based theater group in the nation, performing free shows daily at the Zoo in summer and longer-format shows year-round at local schools, festivals and community centers. It's a marquee program of our conservation education department constantly working to bring new conservation messages to the public. For more information, visit [wildtheater.org](http://wildtheater.org).**



*Kohl's Wild Theater performs inside the farm area daily during the summer.*

Photo by Paul Ruffolo

# EXCELLENT SHELL CARE

When a 125-pound turtle with a big personality is nowhere to be seen, people notice. The Zoo's Arrau turtle, also known as a South American river turtle, is usually found in the Amazon exhibit and has been a part of the Milwaukee County Zoo for decades. So when she wasn't seen in the water earlier this year, it had people asking on a daily basis, "Where's Onassis?"

Zookeepers lift her out of her tank twice a year to weigh her and get a better look at her for health reasons. That's when they noticed what looked like gray matting on her shell. Consulting with the Zoo's veterinarians, there was concern over what the growth could be, and they came up with a plan to remove Onassis from her exhibit. She was put in a pool behind the scenes where it was determined the growth was actually retained shed. The scutes (hard plates that make up a turtle's shell) were not shedding properly. The treatment included

eight shell scrub-downs with betadine to help peel the edges of dry skin away. The treatment was very successful and lasted about a month.

The tissue on a turtle's shell is live. It's made from the turtle's bones and grows along with it, just like our bones grow with us when we are young. The shell is attached and is part of its body. The scutes, or plates, on top of the shell are made of keratin, just like human fingernails. Similar to a snake, turtles shed the outer layers. Shedding the scutes is a natural way to keep their shell clean and free of any type of blockage or infection.

Aquatic and reptile curator Shawn Miller says Onassis took to the treatment well and seemed to enjoy the extra attention and delicious treats from the keepers. If she can no longer shed like she should, these shell treatments will most likely become a yearly routine for her.



*A zookeeper scrubs Onassis's shell to help peel off the dead pieces.*

Photos by Joel Miller

# HIP TO HIPPOS

It's hard to learn about something you can't always see. That's probably why you may not know a lot about hippos. They are underwater for about 16 hours a day, and once they go under at the Zoo, you can only really see a portion of their head when they come up for air or maybe the top of their rump. What you aren't seeing is hippos don't actually swim. They sink and walk along the bottom. They may glide for a few moments when they push off, but otherwise they're walking. You will be able to see for yourself when the Zoo creates a new hippo exhibit with an underwater viewing area. That means only glass will separate you and the giant animals. Imagine how much more you'll see and learn. For example, there will be a better

opportunity to see how wide a hippo can open its mouth – about 150 degrees. When they do open their mouths you'll get an up-close look at their impressive and dangerous looking teeth. Their canine teeth can reach 20 inches in length.

This new exhibit can't happen without your help. The Zoological Society is raising money for the new exhibit and a new filtration system that will not only keep the water clear but will save 20 million gallons of water a year. Gifts are tax deductible, and donations \$100 and above will receive recognition on a new electronic sign within the Adventure Africa area.

**To read more about this project and to make a donation, go to [zoosociety.org/hippos](https://zoosociety.org/hippos).**





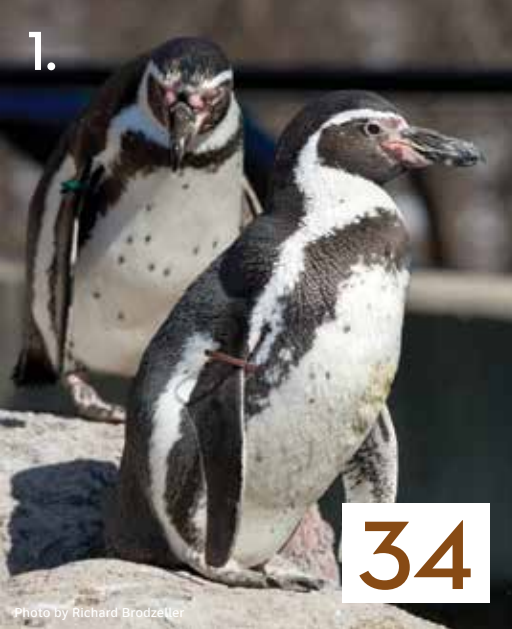
Photo by Bob Wickland

100+

## DID YOU KNOW...

ONASSIS IS THE OLDEST ANIMAL AT THE ZOO WITH AN ESTIMATED AGE OF AT LEAST 90 YEARS OLD BUT COULD EASILY BE OLDER THAN 100?

Here are some other animals at the Milwaukee County Zoo with some impressive ages:



1.

34

Photo by Richard Brodzeller



2.

20

Photo by Richard Brodzeller



3.

35

Photo by Bob Wickland

- 1. Arisco, a Humboldt penguin, is 34 years old.** She is believed to be the oldest Humboldt in North America.
- 2. Kiama, a Matschie's tree kangaroo, is 20 years old** and is assumed to be the oldest in North America. Kiama is cared for behind the scenes in private quarters.
- 3. Polar bear Snow Lilly was born in 1984** and, based on available information, is assumed to be the **oldest in professional animal care in North America and the fourth oldest in the world.**

*\*Age information is based on records shared with more than 1,100 zoos, aquariums and other wildlife member organizations.*

Happy shows off his impressive teeth. >>  
Photo by Bob Wickland

YOUR REASON TO DONATE JUST DOUBLED.

MillerCoors will match donations made from April through July.



# DONOR ADVISED FUNDS:

## PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE REST OF US



**Giving to charity is usually fairly easy: write a check and a charity benefits financially.**

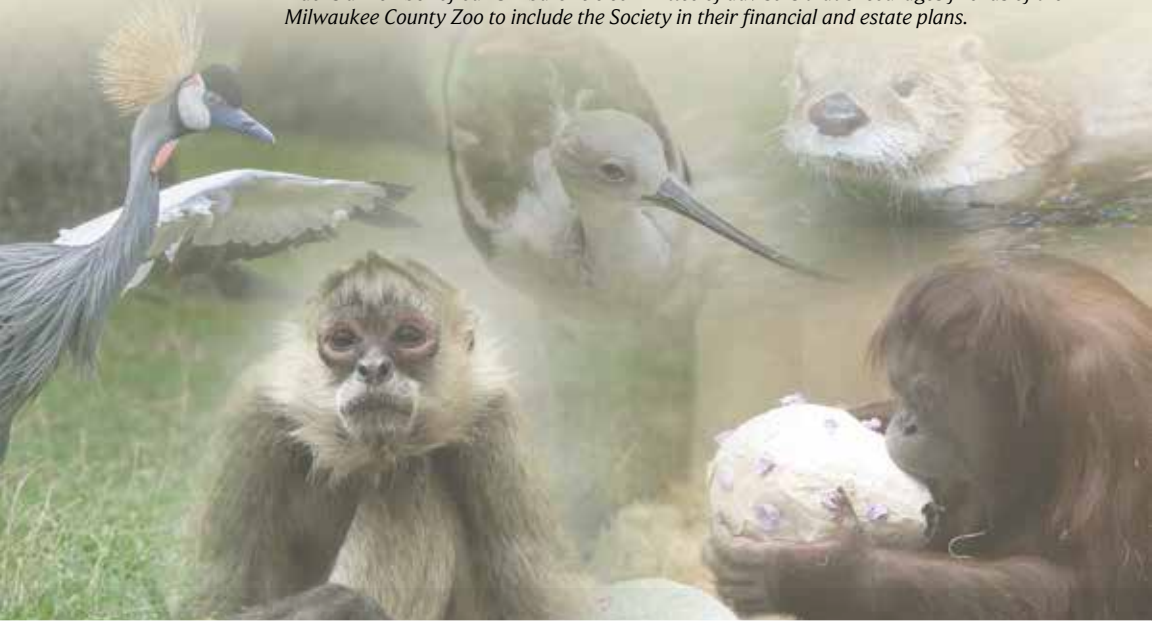
Beyond that basic premise, however, many individuals consider more advanced charitable giving methods to be too involved and complicated. In addition to complexity, charitable foundations and charitable trusts can be cost prohibitive, both at inception and in maintenance. However, there is an alternative giving method that can provide the tax benefits associated with the more complex charitable giving vehicles, but in a more simplified and cost-effective structure.



Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) are a charitable giving vehicle established at an existing public charity. Donors make a charitable contribution to the fund and receive an immediate income tax deduction. The amount of the deduction will depend on the type of asset contributed. The assets in the fund can be invested and grow tax free to the donor. During the donor's lifetime, they can advise the fund and make recommendations for grants to charities. The donor can also name successors to ensure the fund is administered in accordance with their wishes in the future.

Anyone with charitable inclinations beyond annual giving should consider a DAF. The benefits for both the donor and the charity can be significant, without all the issues generally associated with similar methods like charitable foundations or charitable trusts.

*Article submitted by attorneys Kelly Dancy and Eido Walny from Walny Legal Group LLC. Eido is a member of our Simba Circle committee of advisors that encourages friends of the Milwaukee County Zoo to include the Society in their financial and estate plans.*



**We thank and welcome the newest members of the Simba Circle, individuals who have named the Zoological Society of Milwaukee in their wills or other estate plans.**

Kim Haebig  
Karen L. Kraft  
Lynn & Lawrence Olsen

Patrick & Audrey Thomas  
Sandy & Paul Wysocki

**For more information about becoming a member of the Simba Circle contact Mary Albrecht at [marya@zoosociety.org](mailto:marya@zoosociety.org) or 414-918-6151.**



# BASEBALL IN THE ZOO? IT REALLY HAPPENED



Photo by Ristaino Photography

Author Stacy DeKeyser grew up hearing her dad's stories about Washington Park, the original home of the Milwaukee County Zoo. "My dad grew up a couple blocks away from Washington Park, and the Zoo was their playground. I grew up

with stories he would tell about playing baseball in the Zoo, playing cops and robbers, sledding." The kids played baseball near the bison exhibit, and if the ball went into the exhibit, someone had to climb over the wall to go get it. "He probably embellished a little bit, but he claimed they'd have to get the ball and get the heck out of there before the buffalo saw them. He claims to have been chased by the buffalo."

One day DeKeyser realized these stories were the perfect foundation for a children's book. "It finally dawned on me that this is not a really common childhood for someone to have." She replaced the bison with a rhinoceros, and the result is "The Rhino in Right Field," a novel for young readers that takes place in 1948.

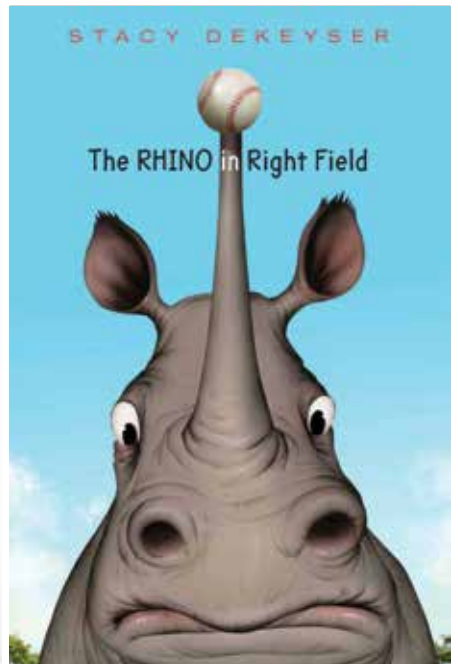
Much of the story is based on real life. The main character, 12-year-old Nick, is the child of Greek immigrants, just like DeKeyser's dad. Nick loves playing baseball and wants to enter a contest to become "Batboy for a Day" with the local minor-league team, but the contest is on a Saturday and his dad won't let him out of work at the family store. The baseball team, the Mudpuppies, is based on the minor-league Milwaukee Brewers, and the team owner is based on Bill Veeck, who owned the Brewers and later owned several major-league teams. "He was just a colorful figure and cheerful guy," DeKeyser says. "He would go to a game and sit in a different section for each inning and talk to the fans, and he especially loved talking to kids."

*The author's father claimed he would play baseball in the Washington Park Zoo and sometimes fetch stray balls out of the bison exhibit.*

Photo by Joseph Brown

DeKeyser spent a lot of time researching the Washington Park Zoo with the help of Mary Kazmierczak, the Milwaukee County Zoo and Zoological Society of Milwaukee librarian. "As a book geek, I was just so thrilled to find out the Zoo even has a library," DeKeyser says. She also corresponded with Trish Khan, primates and small mammals curator, and Tim Wild, large mammals curator, about details of animal behavior and care. Tank, the rhino in the book, is based on a Washington Park Zoo rhino named Karonga. The book even includes Monkey Island, known today as Macaque Island.

Of course, the Zoo is very different today from the one described in the book. For starters, Zoo staff makes sure no visitors sneak into the animal exhibits! That's why DeKeyser, who now lives in Connecticut and Florida, enjoyed learning about the history of Milwaukee and the Zoo. "I grew up at the Zoo in a way, too, not the Washington Park Zoo but the Milwaukee County Zoo."



## FURTHER READING

The "Rhino in Right Field" is available at the Milwaukee County Zoo gift shop, local bookstores and online. Visit [stacydekeyser.com/the-rhino-in-right-field](http://stacydekeyser.com/the-rhino-in-right-field) to find a list of real-life references in the book.

To learn more about the history of the Zoo, check out "Images of America: Milwaukee County Zoo" by Darlene Winter, Elizabeth Frank and Mary Kazmierczak.



# GORILLAS ON THE LINE

## ANSWER THE CALL

To say cell phones are common is an understatement. In many households, each person has their own cell phone. Then, every few years you'll probably upgrade to a new phone. When you do, recycle your old device to help save gorillas and wildlife.

Handheld electronic devices use a mineral called coltan to allow the device to hold an electronic charge. Coltan is only found in Africa and the mining process is destroying gorilla habitats. Recycling your device reduces the need to mine for coltan.

This spring, the Zoo, along with other zoos and aquariums accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, is taking part in a nationwide cell phone collection drive called "Gorillas on the Line." The goal is to collect 10,000 cell phones nationwide through April 30. During this drive, ECO-CELL recycles the phones and donates the dollars made through recycling to gorilla conservation projects. "A key part of the Zoo's mission is to contribute to worldwide conservation efforts," says the Zoo's conservation, research & sustainability coordinator, Kari Williams. "Hosting a program to recycle these devices is a great way to connect our guests with the issue and to empower them to take action." Not only will recycling your electronic devices reduce the demand for coltan, Williams explains, it has positive health effects for our local community and wildlife. "Many components of handheld

electronic devices can leach toxins and pollute groundwater, leading to negative health effects for humans and animals alike."

The Milwaukee County Zoo has collected handheld devices for recycling for years. But "Gorillas on the Line" is bringing together

organizations within the community. The Zoological Society's education department stepped in to coordinate with local schools. One organization participating is Milwaukee Recreation. "This partnership was very exciting because they are a cornerstone in the Milwaukee community, and the potential for both education and collection is significant," says Julia Petersen, Zoological Society senior director of programs.

A handful of local schools also agreed to participate. For Petersen, it's not just about getting more phones. "Giving our community members an opportunity to participate in conservation efforts through community organizations that are known, trusted and accessible is key, as not everyone can get out to the Zoo to learn more and participate."

The nationwide drive benefitting gorilla conservation ends on April 30. Phones can be deposited in the collection bin inside the U.S. Bank Gathering Place within the Zoo. You can also recycle your handheld devices such as tablets, GPS units and music players year-round at the Zoo.



*One of the Zoo's male gorillas Maji Maji.*

Photo by Olga Kornienko





# UNFROGETTABLE GIFT

Make your mom “hoppy” this Mother’s Day with an un“frog”gettable animal sponsorship. The Zoo is home to five species of frogs, from the vibrant colored poison dart frog to the darker, more camouflaged Surinam toad. Frogs are among the most diverse animals in the world. Each one is unique in its own way, just like our moms.

The Zoo is planning to remodel and change some of the frog exhibits this year. The dart frogs will be moving to a bigger exhibit that will give guests a better view. While dart frogs are tiny, each one eats 20 to 30 small food items, like crickets, each day. So if you love frogs and love your mom, sponsor the frogs at the Zoo today.

Each \$35 sponsorship includes a plush-toy frog, a certificate of sponsorship, an invitation to a behind-the-scenes event for animal sponsors held in August, sponsor recognition

on our “All in the Family” donor board for a year and more. Upgrade your sponsorship to the \$75 level to also receive a photo of a frog and two Zoo attraction tickets.

Send your gift anywhere in the continental United States (shipping and handling included). We must receive your order by May 6, 2019, to guarantee delivery for Mother’s Day. Tax-deductible portion is \$29 (\$35 level) and \$64 (\$75 level).



## SUMMER CAMPS

*Sponsored by Penzeys Spices  
June-August 2019*

It’s time to think warm and sunny thoughts and make plans for summer. Registration for Summer Camps through the Zoological Society of Milwaukee is officially open. Purchase classes (for your littlest ones), single day camps, or use our new scheduling capability to make it a week of Zoo Camp!

**We still have a few spots available for a variety of camps, including:**

- Insect Invasion for 6- and 7-year-olds. In this engaging camp, kids will learn how insects help humans and challenge the misconceptions surrounding bugs. Kids will come home equipped with a “bug guide” of their own and ready to identify critters in their backyard.
- Or, if you have a 10- and 11-year-old, consider Vet Camp. Kids will go behind the scenes of the Animal Health Center, a rare opportunity! They will also learn about drawing blood from an animal and experiment with some of the equipment veterinarians use to provide care.
- Two-day Colorful Scientist Art Camps are also available for ages 8-9. Art and science come together to engage learners in animal adaptations, properties of water and forms of energy.
- Actin’ Wild Camp for 9- to 11-year-olds is a weeklong camp June 24-28. Kids learn acting skills through imagination and teamwork. The week will end with students performing an animal-based skit.

Children of all ages can enjoy Zoo Classes and Camps, from Stroller Safari for infants and their adults to career-based camps for teens age 12-14. It’s a great time to plan your summer at the Milwaukee County Zoo!

**To find a class for your little one, book a single-day camp or build a week of awesome Zoo Camps, go to [zoosociety.org/summer](http://zoosociety.org/summer).**



<< *Actin’ Wild weeklong camp.*  
Photo by Bob Wickland



Zoological Society of Milwaukee County  
10005 W. Bluemound Rd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53226-4383

**DATED MATERIAL**  
Please Deliver Promptly



**Zootastic,  
page 3.**

Photo by Bob Wickland

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

Details Inside

## April 20

Egg Day, sponsored by Nestlé Nesquik and Woodman's\*

## April 27

World Penguin Day\*

## May 4

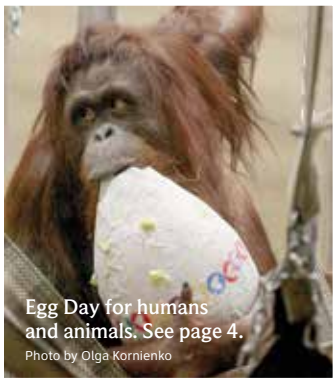
New elephant home ribbon cutting\*

## May 10

Zootastic, sponsored by Grow Hope @ SaintA (pre-register)

## May 12

Mother's Day at the Zoo, sponsored by Noodles World Kitchen\*



Egg Day for humans and animals. See page 4.

Photo by Olga Kornienko

## May 13

Zoo Pass member online registration for Snooze at the Zoo, sponsored by Post Consumer Brands and Sentry Foods, starts at 8 a.m.

## May 14

Snooze at the Zoo online registration for non-members starts at 8 a.m.

## May 18 & 19

Party for the Planet, sponsored by American Transmission Co.\*

## May 25-Sept. 2

Special summer exhibit, Brick Dinosaurs, sponsored by Sendik's Food Markets

## May 25-Sept. 2

Kohl's Wild Theater's summer season at the Zoo with free shows daily\*

## June 1

Zoo Summer Camps, sponsored by Penzeys Spices, begin

## June 4-6

Nights in June, sponsored by Milwaukee Montessori School, for Zoo Pass members\*

## June 16

Father's Day at the Zoo, presented by Prairie Farms Dairy\*

## June 22

Zoo Ball, presented by North Shore Bank & Northwestern Mutual Foundation (pre-register)

## June 26; July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Sunset Zoofari, sponsored by Tri City National Bank\*

## June 30

Military/Veterans Family Day, sponsored by Thrivent Member Network South of Wisconsin\*

## July 9, 11 & 12

Kids Nights at the Zoo for Zoo Pass members, sponsored by WaterStone Bank\*

## July 29

Birdies & Eagles Golf Tournament, sponsored by GRAEF (pre-register)

## Aug. 7-10

Snooze at the Zoo, sponsored by Post Consumer Brands & Sentry Foods (pre-register)

## Aug. 15-18

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel a la Carte, sponsored by Meijer\*

## CONNECT WITH US!

facebook.com/ZooPass

twitter.com/ZooSocietyMKE

instagram.com/ZooSocietyMKE

Snapchat: ZooSocietyMKE

Milwaukee Zoo Pass App



The Zoological Society is proud to bear Charity Navigator's highest rating of four stars.



The Zoological Society of Milwaukee is recognized for our transparency with GuideStar's Gold Seal.