

Wild Things

RUNNING WILD AT THE ZOO

Samson Stomp & Romp

Sponsored by Amica Insurance

Jan. 15 starting at 9:30 a.m.

For more information and to register, go to milwaukeezoo.org.

Strap on those running shoes and tie them tight. Whether you're in it to compete against other runners or you're just in need of an excuse to get some exercise, the Samson Stomp & Romp is the place to be in January. The annual race on Zoo grounds brings together runners of all speeds to honor Samson, the Zoo's beloved silverback gorilla, who passed away in 1981.

Four races are offered at the event: a competitive 5K run, which can include teams; a two-mile fun run; a one-mile romp; and a quarter-mile romp for children. Individual runners can pre-register for \$25 and teams for \$20 per runner. The children's romp is \$10 per child. Same-day registration costs \$30. Each registration includes a long-sleeve T-shirt, Zoo admission and parking. Please keep in mind that Zoo Pass memberships and gift certificates cannot be used for this event. *Get ready to run wild!*

Move it to the Rhythm

Zumba® Fitness Party at the Zoo

Feb. 25, 6-8 p.m.; event check-in at 5 p.m.

Cost: \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

Open to ages 14 and up.

Pre-register at zoosociety.org/Zumba by Feb. 23.

"She likes to move it, move it. He likes to move it, move it. You like to move it!" Thanks King Julien, the lemur in the movie "Madagascar," for reminding us that moving it to upbeat music has gotten much more fun. At the Milwaukee County Zoo, you will have a chance to move it at the Zumba® Fitness Party. Zumba® is a routine that focuses on cardiovascular strength through simple choreography set to upbeat rhythms. This highly energetic event, led by Rachel Beimel and other certified instructors, takes place in the wide-open space of the Peck Welcome Center. While you're there, you can purchase Zumba® fitness apparel and raffle tickets to win prizes. The funds raised will benefit the Zoological Society's Sponsor an Animal program. Make sure to stretch those legs. It's time to move it.



Nan Jian of Milwaukee busts a move at last year's Zumba® Fitness Party.

Photo by Bob Wickland

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NEW ZOO PERSPECTIVE

Behind-the-Scenes Weekend

Sponsored by *Prairie Farms Dairy*

March 11-12, tours from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

For more information,
visit milwaukeezoo.org.

As you walk around visiting your favorite animals with your family and friends, you're seeing only a part of the Milwaukee County Zoo. Behind-the-scenes, zookeepers, curators and other staff members are working hard to care for the animals and maintain the exhibits. On March 11 and 12, you'll have the chance to take a peek at what they do and much more during Behind-the-Scenes Weekend. Head on over to see what's growing in the Zoo's greenhouses. Venture to the Winter Quarters where the warm-weather animals stay during the frigid winter months. If you love trains, don't miss learning about the Zoo's steam and diesel engines at the Train Shop. Once you go behind-the-scenes, your perspective of the Zoo will be broadened.



Becky B., of Brookfield, holds son Weston, 2, as they examine one of the train engines.

Photo by Richard Brodzeller



Memberanda

We value your relationship with the Zoological Society of Milwaukee. The Society does not sell member and 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 through April: Weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Zoo hours through Feb. 28, 2017: Weekdays, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Weekends, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Zoo hours from March 1 through May 26, 2017: From 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Note: The Zoo's drive-in gates close 45 minutes prior to the posted Zoo closing time. The animal buildings close 15 minutes before posted Zoo closing hours. The Zoo's walk-in gate closes one hour prior to the posted Zoo closing time.

Tax Tips: For tax-time tips, Zoo Pass benefits and other details, please visit zoosociety.org/Membership/Things2Know.php.

Tax-deductible portions for the 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). Set up a MyAccount and view the tax-deductible portion of all your contributions for the tax year. For more information, please visit zoosociety.org/MyAccount/.

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 in spring 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 office prior to your travels at 414-258-2333, or visit zoosociety.org/Membership/Reciprocal.php.

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.

WILD THINGS

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Hunting for Eggs and Treats



Egg Day

April 15 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Springtime is near. Soon enough the snow will be melted, winter jackets will be stuffed back into closets, shovels stored away, the sun will shine bright in the sky and the grass will be green again. At the Milwaukee County Zoo, it'll be a perfect time to hop on over with your family to enjoy Easter festivities on Egg Day. Kids can meet the Easter Bunny and participate in the egg scavenger hunt at the Lake Evinrude Deck. Throughout the day, visit the Stearns Family Apes of Africa building to get your face painted with a bunny nose and whiskers. At 2 p.m., take part in the parade, which begins at the Northwestern Mutual Family Farm. Make it a hoppy day.

Kylee T., 6, of Milwaukee, finds pink and yellow eggs at last year's Easter egg hunt. Photo by Olga Kornienko



Stimulate Your Senses

Zootastic

Sponsored by Grow Hope @ SaintA
April 28, 5 to 9 p.m.

Explore your five senses at Zootastic 2017 on Friday, April 28! Feel your way around the Zoo as you explore the sights, sounds, smells and even tastes of the Family Farm, Florence Mila Borchert Big Cat Country, Small Mammals, Aquatic & Reptile Center and Stearn Family Apes of Africa & Primates of the World. Meet the zookeepers and maybe even a furry friend! Plus, enjoy crafts and activities at each stop! After you've worked up an appetite with all that fun, chow down on delicious pasta from Noodles & Company. Leave room for dessert and build yourself a deliciously sweet ice cream sundae. Once you've got that sugar high, groove to the tunes of a kid-friendly DJ. Stop by the family photo station and capture a moment from the night you raised funds while partying with the animals! Zootastic is one of the few times during the year that the Zoo stays open late. Registration is limited and fills up quickly! Register online at zoosociety.org/Zootastic or call 414-258-2333 by April 27. You must pre-register; fees are non-refundable.

For members, admission will cost \$75 for a family of four, \$15 for children under the age of 12, and \$25 for anyone 13 and older. For non-members, admission will cost \$80 for a family of four, \$20 for children under the age of 12, and \$30 for anyone 13 and older.



A Zoo Pride volunteer helps Brylee M., 8, of Waterford, make kangaroo ears at last year's Zootastic. Photo by Bob Wickland

Zoo Classes and Camps

Zoo Classes and Camps are presented by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee and sponsored by Meijer.

A Parent's Perspective

For the Endres family of Oak Creek, the classes at the Milwaukee County Zoo are a great opportunity to learn about animals and see them up close. "You not only learn about animals, you learn about the countries they live in and the habitats they survive in," Suzy Endres says. "It opens up the world for the kids." Suzy and her husband, Craig, have three children — Caleb, 11; Joshua, 9; and Nathan, 6. Caleb loves learning about various artists at Zoo art classes and how they developed their styles. Joshua enjoys checking out the behind-the-scenes action at the Zoo and seeing the animals. Nathan, the youngest, especially likes more hands-on activities such as sensory tables and working on art projects in the classroom.

All three boys have attended Zoo Classes at one point or another. They started attending when they were 2 after Suzy heard from her cousin how great the classes were. Suzy spoke in more detail about her family's experiences inside the Zoo's classrooms.



(From left to right): Caleb, Nathan and Joshua Endres hop on top of a giant caterpillar. Photo by Suzy Endres

What do you and your children enjoy about Zoo Classes?

There is so much to choose from. There is no down time, which is great for kids. Every child can find something they like as each class has something for children who learn in various ways — whether it's reading or doing art projects or being at the sensory table. All kids can find something that will keep them busy but also teach them something about animals.

Have you attended "with adult" classes with your child?

What do you enjoy about them?

We've attended many "with adult" classes and enjoy that the parent can interact with the child on various projects.

As an adult, why do you continue to sign your child up for classes?

My boys are always learning something new in these classes. As they get older, they gain more independence and more freedom to explore what they'd like about the subject. Classes can also open their eyes to opportunities for them in the future. Maybe something will strike an interest in a particular subject that will someday become a career.

Is there anything else you'd like to comment on about classes and camps?

We always enjoy the tour portion of class — to get behind the scenes and hear from the zookeepers is an educational experience you just can't get anywhere and is always a favorite of the boys!

Spring Zoo Classes

There is still time to register for Spring Zoo Classes! In the “Livin’ Underground” class for children ages 6 through 10, your child can crawl through classroom burrows and construct a tunnel system complete with a family of underground animals. You can also try the Art Club for children ages 8 through 11, where they create animal art in the style of famous artists. Check out all of our classes from Stroller Safaris for infants to “Bird Photography” for adults at zoosociety.org/Education.

Summer Camps

Registration for Summer Camps, sponsored by Penzeys Spices, begins on Feb. 8.

“Zoo to You” School Programs

Teachers, bring the Zoo to you! Education programs are available at the Zoo or as outreach to schools. Register now for January-May 2017 programs.

Workshop for Early-Childhood Educators

“Farm” is a three-hour workshop on Saturday, March 18, for early-childhood educators. Learn how to incorporate a unit about farm animals in your own classroom. The workshop includes animal background information, classroom station ideas, project samples and a guided tour to see the farm animals at the Zoo. Workshop content is mainly for educators of ages 2-5. To register, call **414-258-5058** or visit zoosociety.org/TeacherEdu.

Summer Internship Opportunities

Education internships at the Zoo: Explore the valuable opportunities for summer 2017 in the Zoological Society’s Education Department at the Milwaukee County Zoo. For most college students and recent graduates, finding an internship or working in the field outside of the classroom is an essential step to reach professional goals.

As an intern, you’ll help educate children ages 2 to 14 about science, animals and conservation. These paid education internships are open to any major but are most beneficial for education majors. Interns are mentored and extensively trained in child management techniques and interactive teaching strategies. Cover letters and resumes are accepted through Feb. 7. For more information on the internship and its requirements, please visit zoosociety.org/Education.

UW-Milwaukee Course at the Zoo for Teachers

“Observing Animals at the Zoo: Behavior” takes place April 1 and 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Education Center. This course explores animal behavior and behavior research techniques used by scientists in the wild and in zoos. It includes tours, discussions and activities to help teachers develop study units. Call UWM Outreach at **414-229-5255** for more information and to register.



Intern Nick Peterson assists Spencer T., of Brookfield, in creating a cryptid, a mythological creature. Photo by Bob Wickland

Volunteering

Passion for Animals Leading to Bright Future

When you're passionate about something, it shows. Rachel Staedler's passion for animals and the Milwaukee County Zoo has evolved since she was 3. Growing up only a short distance away in West Allis, she attended camps and education classes throughout her childhood. Starting her education in those classes has helped her develop an undeniable connection to the Zoo. To get closer to the animals and spend more time on Zoo grounds, she started volunteering as part of Zoo Pride with her grandmother Judy Jones.

Now a junior at Nathan Hale High School in West Allis, Staedler tries to be at the Zoo as much as she can — at least two or three days a week during the summer months and every other weekend during the school year. She likes to spend her time inside of the Stearns Family Apes of Africa building — specifically with the energetic bonobos. Months before she started volunteering, her special connection with the bonobos started the moment she saw Katu, one of the bonobos, jump and spin around the exhibit. "Bonobos are so funny and personable," Staedler says. "My favorite bonobo, Laura, will come up to the glass when she sees me. She'll come sit by me and pose for selfies every so often."



Staedler enjoys sharing her knowledge of bonobos and other apes with friendly Zoo guests. Photo by Steve Staedler

She wasted no time getting in touch with Stacy Whitaker, the Zoo's lead bonobo zookeeper. "I sent her a letter telling her that I really like bonobos and I want to be a zookeeper," Staedler explains. "She set up a meeting with me and then took me under her wing." The Zoo currently has the largest bonobo population of any zoo in the world, so Rachel was tasked with a project to help volunteers and others to tell them apart. In a little over a year, in between classes and homework, Rachel took photos of each bonobo. Whitaker provided a list of identifying features, ages, offspring and a few fun facts to include in an ID booklet. "Because there are so many and you don't know which one is which, it's helpful to have something to use to match faces with the pictures in the book," Staedler explains.

With the bonobo project now complete, Staedler is already working on the next project. Currently, she's reconstructing one of the boards located outside the Humboldt penguin enclosure. This "Meet the Penguins" board will include a photo of each penguin identified by its different colored band, personality traits and some additional facts. "It's kind of like the big, public version of the bonobo book," Staedler says.

Staedler has her eyes set on what's next beyond high school. She hopes to attend UW-Stevens Point and is deciding between studying animal psychology or primatology. When asked if she'd ever consider coming back to the Zoo to work full time in the future, she said "yes" without hesitation. "Any kind of zoo position would be amazing," Staedler says. According to Whitaker, Rachel continues to show her dedication. "I have really high hopes that she will exceed all expectations in whatever direction she chooses for her career," Whitaker says. "Hopefully it will be in bonobo conservation. We could use someone who is a great educator." Right now Rachel is enjoying her time getting to know everyone at the Zoo and what they do. "They're quite fascinated by a teenager who wants to volunteer and just get involved in something that's unpaid, but it's something that I have such a growing passion for."

To become a volunteer like Staedler, contact the Zoo Pride office at **414-258-5667**. Training dates are located in the calendar on the back cover of this issue.

By Colton Dunham

Fall Instagram Contest: #fallingforMKEZoo

There's nothing quite as beautiful as an exotic animal against a backdrop of vibrant orange and red trees. This fall, the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (Instagram: zoosocietymke) asked our followers to capture some of those autumnal moments in our Instagram photo contest. Throughout the month of October, zoo-goers submitted photos of their fall days at the Milwaukee County Zoo using the hashtag #fallingforMKEZoo. The weekly winners received an orangutan animal sponsorship, which included a plush-toy orangutan. The grand-prize winner received a one-year family Zoo Pass. Here are the winning photos:

@mc.oceans



@kaylakastent7



@kimcinar



@anameer

Winter Instagram Contest: #WildWinterMKEZoo

Winter at the Milwaukee County Zoo is beautiful. The cool, crisp air and the white, fluffy snow make your visit to the Zoo a memorable one. Share these moments with us in our winter Instagram contest! From **Jan. 1 to Feb. 11**, post your favorite photos on Instagram with the hashtag #WildWinterMKEZoo and the corresponding hashtag for that week's theme.

From **Jan. 1-7**, use #FlyingHigh when snapping photos of colorful birds in action inside of the Herb and Nada Mahler Family Aviary. From **Jan. 8-14**, use #MightyMammals when taking photos of small but mighty mammals in the Small Mammals Building. **Jan. 15-21**, use #GoBananas when swinging by the Stearns Family Apes of Africa and Primates of the World buildings to capture the primates and apes "monkeying" around. **Jan. 22-28**, use #JustKeepSwimming when escaping the Wisconsin cold and visiting some more tropical waters. Send us photos of your favorite fish from the Aquatic & Reptile Center. From **Jan. 29-Feb. 4**, use #OutdoorPursuits and brave the outdoors to capture photos of the animals that enjoy the snow. On **Feb. 5-11**, use #SnowFlake while you're spending a snowy day at the Zoo and take photos of you, your friends or family at your favorite snowy spots.

Winners from the previous week will be announced on Mondays. Each week's winner will receive a gift certificate from the Zoological Society that can be put toward Zoo Classes or Camps, Zoo Passes and more.

For contest rules and other information, please visit zoosociety.org/WinterInstagram.

THE VILLAGE IS EXPANDING AT KOHL'S WILD THEATER

Quality will always be the focus of Kohl's Wild Theater (KWT). Dave McLellan, theater coordinator, is committed to the delivery of the best content, performances and internal operations to ensure that each show goes off without a hitch. KWT is more than learning lines and performing at schools. It's a creative business with a professional machine working from within to keep it going. It certainly takes a village of people who understand theater is a collaborative art form.

In September, McLellan expanded the village and welcomed two more-than-qualified professionals to continue to build KWT. Brittany Boeche's and Reva Fox's professional experiences led each of them to the Milwaukee County Zoo. The new additions will help KWT reach out to audiences in new, exciting ways. McLellan says, "Bringing on Brittany and Reva gives us so much more potential to be the very best we can be."



BRITTANY BOECHE

Role: Administrative Assistant

Education: Boeche grew up in Janesville and graduated in May 2014 with a degree in theater along with a certificate in arts administration and management from UW-Parkside in Kenosha. She moved to Milwaukee shortly after graduating.

Professional Background: Boeche has done everything from Shakespeare to sketch comedy, studying and performing theater since childhood. She has been seen at ComedySportz as part of Sketch 22, a group that brings together the best comedians in the city to create and perform a sketch show within a 22-hour period. She has also performed with Milwaukee Youth Theater in their production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." In addition to the performing arts, Boeche has worked in the corporate world in a position focusing on customer experience and brand management.

Working for Kohl's Wild Theater: In the theater world, if you're a generous person, the people you befriend during shows will be generous in return. "A friend of mine who used to act for Kohl's Wild Theater posted about this position being created," Boeche says. She applied because, according to her, it's the perfect intersection of her professional and theater experience.

As the administrative assistant at KWT, she's a jack-of-all-trades. She does a bit of everything, including performing in shows when needed. "When a venue wants to book us, all the paperwork goes through me," Boeche says. "I have to understand what the venue is like. Will the performers have to walk up and down stairs with their equipment when they get there? Where do they park? Do they have to buzz in or sign in? I also deal with actors' schedules and archiving a lot of backlogged information. This position hasn't existed before, so there's a lot to catch up on."

The aspect that Boeche most appreciates about being part of KWT is giving kids an introduction and exposure to the arts in a way that isn't high-brow. "It's totally accessible to them," Boeche says. "The arts are obviously important because funding is being cut for financial reasons. KWT provides a necessary exposure to the arts, specifically theater. KWT also mixes in the educational elements of how children, on their own individual scale, can help make an impact on the world. You can do this in an educational way with puppets and songs."



REVA FOX

Role: Production Stage Manager

Education: Fox got involved in theater because her mother was a director and a theater professor at Northern Illinois University. After growing up around theater, she went to college and then earned a Master of Fine Arts in Directing from Indiana University.

Professional Background: She moved to Los Angeles and worked in script development, professional theater and theme park entertainment. She was hired by Universal Studios Hollywood Theme Park as a stage manager, then promoted to production stage manager and then a show quality manager. She wrote and directed many shows, and worked with a large number of animals.

She made her way to Philadelphia where she worked for Historic Philadelphia, a company that did historic interpretation and live theater performances at historic sites within the Independence National Historical Park. In 2005, she moved to Milwaukee where she has worked as a director, actor and educator. Favorite experience have included directing at Renaissance Theatreworks, playing Beatrice in "Much Ado About Nothing," and teaching at Cardinal Stritch University.

Working for Kohl's Wild Theater: When the opportunity came up at KWT, she was excited because it's the culmination of everything that she's done throughout her career so far. "It combines theater, education and animals," Fox says. "These three things have reappeared in my career over the years, and they bring me great joy." Fox likes that KWT treats theater as an educational tool. "KWT challenges kids to think about the world and animals in a bigger way. It changes their ideas about science and nature and where they fit into conservation."

She's been busy ever since she was hired. "What don't I do?" Fox asks with a smile. "I run the rehearsals, I go to all the schools and manage the technical equipment like the sound system. I make sure the actors have what they need. I make sure all of our supplies, props, scenery and such are organized. I pack the vans and I organize all of our storage spaces. Every day is something new, which is how I like it."

KOHL'S WILD THEATER

Kohl's Wild Theater is made possible by a partnership with Kohl's Cares, the Zoological Society of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee County Zoo. It performs shows throughout the year, free of charge, at schools, festivals and community events within a one-hour radius of the Zoo. For more information, visit wildtheater.org. To book a show, call **414-258-2333** or email at KWT@zoosociety.org.

Zach Woods performing in last year's show, "The Treasure of the Sea."

Photo by Richard Taylor



Insider Tips

New Rockhoppers are Rockin' On

Have you waved your flippers and welcomed the Milwaukee County Zoo's three male rockhopper penguins yet? Tolstoy, Hemmingway and Squirt came all the way from the Cincinnati Zoo last March and joined six other rockhopper penguins — four females and two males.

Rockhopper penguins are distinguished by their spiky yellow and black feathers that crown their heads. They are known to be the most aggressive and territorial breed of penguin, defending their terrain from other penguins fiercely. Caty Poggenburg, zookeeper at the Herb and Nada Mahler Family Aviary, says that although the new additions have blended in nicely, they have definitely marked their territory. "They kicked the female rockhoppers out of their spots," says Poggenburg. "Tolstoy is especially bossy. He doesn't let anyone else share."

Like all new Zoo animals, the penguins spent 30 days in quarantine before being introduced to their exhibit. Before that, they were driven all the way from Cincinnati to Milwaukee. Transporting penguins to new zoos is tough, says Poggenburg. They must stay on ice with the air conditioning running high. The penguins carpooled with red panda Dr. Erin Curry, who came to the Zoo at the same time.

The addition of new male rockhopper penguins to the Zoo adds the exciting possibility of breeding. Sammy and Chester, the Zoo's other male rockhoppers, are past reproductive age, but Hazel, Stella and Clover are single and ready to mingle. "We hope that the males get to know the nice, single ladies here for breeding season," says Poggenburg.

Check out Tolstoy (red wing band), Hemmingway (orange wing band), and Squirt (yellow wing band) in the penguin exhibit at the Herb and Nada Mahler Family Aviary. The rockhoppers share the space with seven Gentoo penguins.



Rockhopper penguin Squirt (front) and Tolstoy (rear).

Photo by Joel Miller

By Mary Jo Contino

Animal Files

"The Case of the Missing Hay"

Suspect: Janine or "Jozi"

Species: *Diceros bicornis michaeli*

Subspecies: Eastern black rhinoceros

Age: 4

Jozi, the 2,100-pound Eastern black rhinoceros, arrived at the Milwaukee County Zoo on Oct. 28 from the Pittsburgh Zoo. She joins the Zoo's Southern-Central black rhino, Mimi, who is 30. But they will not share the same exhibit, as adult black rhinos are mainly solitary. Jozi is an herbivore and a browser, which means she eats leaves, branches, and ground vegetation.

Apparently, her favorite foods are melons and cooked sweet potato. On top of that, she eats 30 to 40 pounds of hay a day (so that's where all the hay went). Jozi likes being scratched by her zookeepers, and she is trained to do different techniques like open her mouth on command, sit and lay down, and allow voluntary blood collection. She can even walk backwards. "Jozi has acclimated well, but she's still getting used to her surroundings," says Ray Hren, primary rhinoceros zookeeper. "She likes taking showers and getting plenty of attention from the keepers. It's been lonely having only one rhino, so it's nice to see a new direction and that the Zoo is continuing its commitment to rhinos. Eventually, we hope to find her a mate. But we're in no hurry." As a new addition to the Zoo, we're going to let Jozi off the hook. She's an enthusiastic and affectionate rhinoceros, and we look forward to seeing her grow and mature.



The suspect: Janine, or Jozi, is more than ready to call Milwaukee County Zoo her new home. Photo by Joel Miller

Detective: Mary Jo Contino

Giving Belize Zoo a Helping Hand

Sprawled across 29 acres of tropical forests, the Belize Zoo has become a mecca of tourism and natural conservation of wildlife. Over the last several years, the zoo has grown larger and has been transformed into a nonprofit organization focused on conservation through progressive rehabilitation and education. Although the efforts at the Belize Zoo have been growing over the last several years, the means of continuing the transformation has been troubling as zookeepers haven't had the training opportunities that keepers at the Milwaukee County Zoo and other zoos across the U.S. have had.



Amanda Ista (left) and Katie Kuhn (right) with an anesthetized jaguar at the Belize Zoo during a procedure. Photo provided by Amanda Ista

The Zoological Society and the Milwaukee County Zoo have had a long relationship with Belize and its zoo, supporting several projects including its jaguar rehabilitation center. In March of 2008, the Zoo received Pat, a rehabilitated jaguar from Belize. As a way to continue the relationship, the Zoo has lent a helping hand. Recognizing the lack of formal zookeeper training, Katie Kuhn, area supervisor of Big Cats, and zookeeper Amanda Ista traveled to Belize in January of 2016. Over the course of eight days, both Kuhn and Ista made it a goal to create an extended relationship. "We were down there to get an introduction to the Belize Zoo, to see how they operate, and see what they needed from us," Ista says. "We also looked for other conservation opportunities down there and not just what the zoos can do for each other," Kuhn adds. "We tried to find out how we can be a part of Belize conservation to help the whole country and not just the zoo."

During the week, Kuhn and Ista were bystanders. They observed what the keepers were doing and how they took care of the animals and exhibits. "We talked to the keeper staff and their animal management staff," Kuhn says. "They just had a lot of questions on how we do stuff and what we thought of certain things that they did. They encouraged us to speak up and give ideas when the time came." Kuhn and Ista were there to help, after all. They learned that the zookeeper staff would like more formal zookeeper training.

Both Kuhn and Ista are eager to travel back to provide them what they need. With funding approved by the Milwaukee County Zoo to venture back to Belize in January 2017, they will hold a week-long keeper workshop. Spread across the week, the workshop will be a mix of new information along with reinforcing familiar ideas. "They want to get out there. They want to go to conferences. They want to send their staff to places like we do here," Kuhn explains. "They just kind of feel behind the curve right now, and this'll get them on the curve." Throughout the week, there will be a project the zookeepers are going to work on and classes will be taught by instructors on a variety of subjects to make it a well-rounded experience.

This time, Kuhn and Ista are bringing more people with them: Bob Korman, the Zoo's veterinary technician; Danielle Faucett, Winter Quarters area supervisor; Zoo Deputy Director Beth Rich and more. "We're kind of hoping to build off this workshop," Ista says. "We'll have the general one this year and if we need to do more, we're hoping this will be an annual thing where we can repeat some core topics like they want us to for new staff, but add new topics as well." It's truly no surprise that they want to go back. Their first trip to Belize was a time of education, adventure and connection.

By Colton Dunham

Insider Tips continued from page 11

Three Little Big Cats

Give a big “ROAR” and welcome the three Amur tiger cubs at the Milwaukee County Zoo! The cubs were born to mom Amba, 13, and father Strannik, also 13, on Sept. 14. They join Tula, a 7-year-old female. The male, Kashtan, and two female cubs, Eloise and Bernadette, are growing day by day, says Katie Kuhn, Big Cats area supervisor.

After the cubs were born, zookeepers were allowed to enter the tiger’s indoor enclosure and weigh the cubs daily while Amba enjoyed some “mommy time” in her outdoor enclosure. Years of forming a trusting relationship have allowed Amba to be comfortable with the keepers babysitting her cubs. “Having cubs is hard, then when they start being more mobile and mouthy, it gets even more challenging,” Kuhn says. “She is an amazing mom and she is doing a great job with them.”

All three cubs are healthy, although Kashtan spent time in the Animal Health Center in October to address issues gaining weight and an abscess on one of his legs. After spending much time apart from his mother, the staff decided it was too risky to reunite the two. Keepers are hand-raising Kashtan, and he is regularly able to spend time with his two sisters.

Amur tigers are the world’s largest cats, with full-grown adults weighing close to 700 pounds. Unfortunately, Amur tigers are endangered — an approximate 400 to 500 exist in the wild today. The Milwaukee County Zoo’s tigers belong to a Species Survival Plan (SSP), which manages specific species — typically endangered or threatened — within institutions accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA).



The three new tiger cubs are cute, aren't they?

Photo provided by the Milwaukee County Zoo

The cubs made their public debut on Dec. 2 in the indoor exhibit in Big Cat Country. Zoo visitors can see Kashtan in one of the indoor exhibits, sometimes accompanied by his sisters and zookeepers feeding and socializing with him. Eloise and Bernadette are with their mother Amba in the indoor Tiger Exhibit. “They’ll start playing more,” Kuhn says. “It takes a lot of energy to grow.”

By Mary Jo Contino

Kids Conservation Club Workshop

The next Kids Conservation Club (KCC) workshop, “Leaping Lemurs,” will be held on Saturday, Feb. 11, from 10 a.m. to noon. Kids will make lemur crafts, visit the Small Mammals Building to meet ring-tailed and red-ruffed lemurs. A keeper will be in attendance to provide an informative talk about what makes lemurs special.

KCC members must pre-register with Becky Luft by phone at **414-258-2333** or email at beckyl@zoosociety.org. If you’re not a KCC member, you can join online or over the phone.

Workshops are free to KCC members and one parent or guardian per child. Membership is \$20 per child and is good for a year. For more information, please visit zoosociety.org/SponsorAnimal/ConservationClub.php.



Ring-tailed lemur

Photo by Richard Brodzeller

Wild Throwback

Welcome to Wild Throwback! Here is where you will find memories and photos that readers and staff members will be sharing. As you might already know, 2017 marks the 125th anniversary of the Milwaukee County Zoo. This significant milestone, of course, will be celebrated throughout the months ahead. As part of the celebration, we'll be taking time to reflect on the many memories that have been made both at the Zoo's original location, Washington Park, and the modern Zoo grounds.

Over the last several decades, the Zoo has undergone many renovations and has evolved to ensure that each and every guest can have the best experience possible while visiting. What began as a small Zoo with a herd of donated white-tailed deer has grown into a widely recognized Zoo, having more than 3,300 animals (exact count as of Dec. 2015 was 3,342) spread throughout 200 acres.

The Zoo promises that 2017 will be filled with fun and special activities to celebrate its 125th anniversary. To mark this significant milestone, a variety of activities are planned for visitors to commemorate the lasting effects the Zoo has had on the community and beyond. **Here's a sampling of some of the activities the Zoo has planned for the celebration:**

Let's Get This Party Started: \$1.25 Zoo admission for all visitors on Jan. 25.

A Historical Safari: Journey from 1892 to present day as the Zoo's historic timeline is displayed with photos, stories and descriptions of important events spanning 125 years.

Familiar Faces: It's all about the animals as you walk through a special gallery giving recognition to the most famous residents who have called the Zoo home.

Roll-Back Weekends: Over two designated weekends, take a trip back in time and enjoy a special menu item offered at 1892 prices.

It's a Party: Have your photo taken with the Zoo's giant, 7-foot tall cake, adorned with animal print frosting and the Zoo's signature species.

Zoomobile Tour: Hop aboard our Zoomobile tram and reminisce with new facts and trivia highlighting the Zoo's storied history.



Zoo guests check out the seal exhibit at Washington Park Zoo on August 1, 1915. Photo by Joseph Brown

Get a chance to have your photos featured in Wild Things! As a new feature of the newsletter, we want to include your favorite memories from the Milwaukee County Zoo. Submit your best throwback photos, including a description of the photo and your name, to Colton Dunham (coltond@zoosociety.org). Our favorites will be included in the next issue of Wild Things!

By the Numbers

1



1. Family Farm Weekend

(From left) Rosy B., 4, of Grafton; Cameron G., 5, of Grafton; and his brother Aiden, 6, compete in the milk-chugging contest at Family Farm Weekend. The event, sponsored by **Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board**, drew 9,754 people Sept. 10-11.

Photo by Olga Kornienko

2



2. Zoo Brew

Lauren Polkinghorne and boyfriend Nick Janous, of Cedarburg, enjoy their beer samples at Zoo Brew, sponsored by **Sazama Design Build Remodel**. The event, held Sept. 29, drew 551 thirsty attendees and raised \$36,766.68. Photo by Stacy Kaat

3



3. Boo at the Zoo

Alexis B., 4, and her sister Lily, 3, from Pewaukee, dress up as a cowgirl and Peppa Pig at Boo at the Zoo. The Halloween event, sponsored by **Sendik's Food Markets**, drew a total of 12,128 people Oct. 14-15.

Photo by Olga Kornienko

4



4. Halloween Spooktacular

Allison G., 6, and Ryan G., 8, of Mukwonago, meet family-friendly monsters on stilts at Halloween Spooktacular, sponsored by **Sendik's Food Markets**. The event, held Oct. 21-22, drew in 24,275 people for a spooky good time. Photo by Stacy Kaat

5



5. Family Free Day

A group of friends pose at the giraffe exhibit during Family Free Day, sponsored by **North Shore Bank**, on Nov. 5. A total of 49,070 Zoo guests attended Family Free Day in 2016. Photo by Bob Wickland

Development

Giving To a Home Away From Home

Milwaukee County Zoo feels like a home away from home for Nathan Bublitz and Amanda Losinski of Franklin. Among the youngest members in the Platypus Circle, an annual giving program in the Zoological Society of Milwaukee's network of support, they try to make a difference in any way they can. By simply being members, they are keen on supporting the Society's mission of conserving wildlife and endangered species, educating the public about wildlife conservation, and supporting the Milwaukee County Zoo. They enjoy traveling and making an effort to visit different zoos whenever they have the opportunity, but they're always drawn back to Milwaukee, visiting the Zoo upwards of 25 to 30 times a year.

Nathan, who is the Controller at The Printery in New Berlin, and Amanda, who writes code as a logistics analyst on the data analytics team at Caterpillar, are heavily involved with the Zoo — and that itself is an understatement. The couple, who've been married since 2008, started being active at the Zoo shortly after they began to date 11 years ago. "We started out with just a handful of events, attending the summer nights when the Zoo was open late and quickly expanded to attending multiple events year after year," Nathan says. Three years ago, while looking for ways to give to the Zoo that they've grown to love, they decided to join the Platypus Circle because of their strong passion for the animals and the fact that they enjoy the memory-making, family-oriented atmosphere that the Zoo promotes.

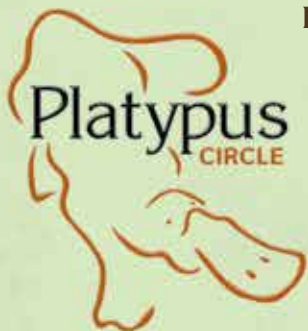
The couple, who are expecting their first child in April, are excited for what the future holds. They're thrilled to bring their child to the events and to the Zoo to see what there is to offer and to show that the simple act of giving is an important thing. "One of our favorite ways to support the zoo is through the annual 'Giving Tree,'" Nathan says. "This is a way for us to support a variety of animals and show our appreciation to the keepers as well." To them, the Zoo has already created so many memories. Part of the memories made have stemmed from the connections made with fellow members of the Milwaukee community.

"At the annual Platypus Dinner, we have been seated with a variety of people, including other business leaders in the community, who have found various ways to support the Zoo through sitting on the board or championing events like the Zoo Ball," Nathan says. "Without the involvement of community members," Amanda adds, "the Zoo cannot and will not continue to be a leader in the zoological community."



Nathan Bublitz and Amanda Losinski were all smiles at the premiere of Bugs! Larger than Life, sponsored by Sendik's Food Markets.

Photos by Stacy Kaat



Become a Platypus Circle Member

The Platypus Circle includes individuals, corporations and foundations who share the Zoological Society's passion for conserving wildlife and endangered species, educating people about the importance of wildlife and the environment, and supporting the Milwaukee County Zoo. Members receive benefits such as behind-the-scenes tours, invitations to exhibit premieres and VIP events. For more information, visit zoosociety.org/Platy or contact Candy Walton in the Development office at 414-258-2333, ext. 310, or candyw@zoosociety.org.



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Photo by Olga Kornienko

What's Happening

Details Inside

Jan. 7

Family Free Day, sponsored by North Shore Bank;
media sponsor: WITI FOX 6*

Jan. 15

Samson Stomp & Romp,
sponsored by
Amica Insurance
(pre-register)

Jan. 26

Puttin' on the Ritz at
Potawatomi Hotel &
Casino, sponsored by
Husch Blackwell
(pre-register)

Feb. 2

Groundhog Day at the Zoo*

Feb. 3

Spring Zoo Classes begin, sponsored by Meijer

Feb. 4

Family Free Day, sponsored by North Shore Bank;
media sponsor: WITI FOX 6*

Feb. 8

Online registration begins for Zoological Society
Summer Camps, sponsored by Penzeys Spices

Feb. 25

Zumba® Fitness Party at the Zoo (pre-register)

March 4

Family Free Day, sponsored by North Shore Bank;
media sponsor: WITI FOX 6*

March 11-12

Behind the Scenes Weekend, sponsored by
Prairie Farms Dairy*

March 15 & 18

Level I Zoo Pride volunteer training. Call 414-258-5667
before March 8 for an interview and application.

March 22, 25, 29 & April 1

Level II Zoo Pride volunteer training.
Call 414-258-5667 for more information.

April 15

Egg Day*

April 22

Members-only field trip to Dane County
Farmer's Market and Henry Vilas Zoo in
Madison. Register online at zoosociety.org
or by calling 414-258-2333.

April 28

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

May 6

Special summer exhibit, Body Worlds: Animal Inside
Out, sponsored by Sendik's Food Markets, opens

May 14

Mother's Day at the Zoo, sponsored by Lifeway Foods*

May 15

Online registration for Snooze at the Zoo
begins for members

May 19

Endangered Species Day*

May 20-21

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

*Zoo Pass members get free Zoo admission with their Zoo Pass.
Those with Zoo Pass Plus also get free parking for one vehicle
per membership per day.



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Milwaukee Zoo Pass App

