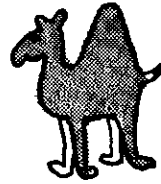
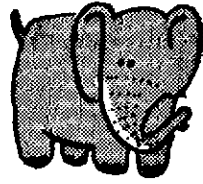




animal talk



ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

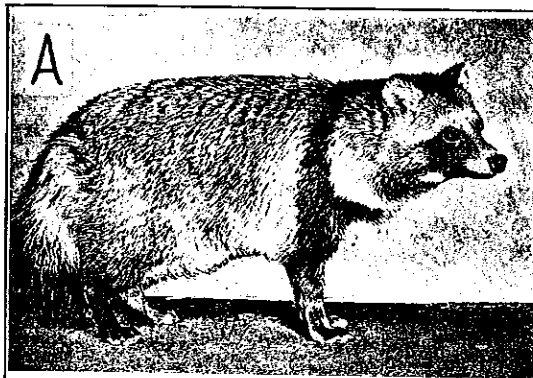
Newsletter #54

Volume V

March 1979

Walter E. Kroening, Editor

Phone: 258-2333



WHICH IS RELATED TO THE DOG?
SEE PAGE 10 FOR THE ANSWER

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**zoo picknik june 21
more later**

inside-outsize samson

an interview



Over the years, considerable media publicity has been devoted to Samson, Chairman of the Board of our Animal Collection and long-time resident male Gorilla-Gorilla. However, it appears no one has done an in-depth study of the physical, psychological and sexual aspects of our Zooperstar. As Samson's closest friend, Sam La Malfa, Primate Curator, should and does know the behavioral habits (and more) about our subject, plus his relatives in our Zoo and others throughout the nation. So let's turn on the tape recorder:

WEK: Sam, how old is Samson and what is his life expectancy ... and tell me more - is he, to use a trite expression, "over the hill"?

SAM: Sammy, as I call him, is 29 years old and he may live to well in the forties. Massa, the Philadelphia Zoo "cousin" reached his 40th in December 1978 --- this is, thus far, the longevity record for this species. Physically speaking, Samson is probably not over the hill in regard to breeding, but psychologically speaking, he apparently can't handle it. Had he been raised in an environment of a social group situation, it's likely he would have fathered a number of offspring by now. Sure, it's true there is a natural instinct or urge to mate but this can lie squelched or sidetracked if the highly social gorilla has had little opportunity to learn by example from others.

QUESTION: Translating these two figures to relate to Man, this would make him about 65 years old with a good chance to go to 80 or beyond. There have been numerous Homo sapien males who sired offspring at age 65 or better - but with wives who were considerably younger. Tell me about Terra, Samson's girl friend and house guest since February 1975. How old is she?

ANSWER: Terra is age twenty, with maybe four more years to go to achieve motherhood.

QUESTION: The next natural question is about Terra's first boyfriend Tanga who lived with her at our Zoo for 15 years before her transfer to Samson. How come they didn't have a blessed event?

ANSWER: Unfortunately, simply putting a young male and female gorilla together when young and letting them grow up together does not always produce a breeding pair. Many times they grow up assuming a sibling attitude - a brother-sister relationship - but if placed with different gorillas of opposite sex when fully grown, they may more than likely mate with them. We are not the only zoo that has gorillas that have not reproduced. Zoo's are now cooperating with each other by transferring gorillas on breeding loan to be placed with gorillas with successful breeding records. In simple mathematical terms, most zoos that have successfully raised gorillas have started out with more and wound up with more. For example, Lincoln Park (in Chicago) started out with a dozen or so which assured them some kind of future with breeding. They, too, have an adult male, "Freddy," who has never fathered. Also, their old-timer, "Sinbad," about 31 years old, has been alone for so many years they hesitate to try him with any of their females. He is not nearly as good tempered as Samson.

Cleveland has had 10 successful births with two breeding males and three females. They had to offer "King Tut" a different female other than his first one before he mated. In other words, animals, too, have a natural selection or choice of mates as do we when it comes to our mates. They don't always mate with the animal of our choice that we place in with them. If Tanga had another mate, it is possible he might take up with her. The same is true of Terra.

WEK: I understand that negotiations are underway to marry Terra to one of the father-type gorillas at the Lincoln Park Zoo. Maybe Samson might want to go to the wedding as Best Gorilla. If so, we should get him properly dressed for the occasion - a complete outfit from head to toe. What are his hat, shirt, suit and shoe measurements?

ANSWER: First of all, Samson is not just an average gorilla. He is an Extra Large - even though he has trimmed down to about 500 pounds (from a former high of 652 in 1971). (The average mature male gorilla weights from 350 to 400 pounds.) Sammy would need a hat about size 14 to 16 and a shirt with a 27" neck and a sleeve length of 42" (average man is 16" neck and 35" sleeve.) His chest measures about 70" around and his

(more)

INSIDE/OUTSIZE SAMSON

belly girth is 62" (man about 44" and 36"). The inseam length of his pants would only be about 18" compared to an average 30" for a man. His feet are something else; nothing but an oversize earthshoe maybe size 12 EEEEE - he needs big feet to support his quarter-ton weight.

WEK: Wow! This is no off-the-rack or shelf outfit from Sherkow; a size 70, long, stylish, stout. Sam, tell me, how tall is Samson?

LA MALFA: As he stands, about 5'4", but if he could stand as erect as Man, he would be over six feet tall.

WEK: Why can't he "stand up straight" like Man?

SAM LA MALFA: Because Man has special muscles in his buttocks that are not a part of a gorilla's makeup. Man is also capable of locking his knees when standing erect which a gorilla cannot do.

WEK: So that's why he crouches ... by the way, what does a big ape like Samson eat in one day and when is he fed?

LA MALFA: Samson's diet consists of 1 pound of monkey chow pellets, a handful of peanuts, a large slice of sweet potato, a stalk of celery, 1 medium onion, one hard-boiled egg, 1/2 cup of pineapple chunks, a half head of lettuce, a large carrot, 8 bananas, 8 oranges, 7 apples, and 6 slices of bread, a total of about 15 pounds of food in one day, which contains about 6000 calories. He is fed at 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Every morning he also receives a half pitcher of jello liquid which contains 1/2 ml. of liquid vitamins A, B, C, D and E, 4 anti-tubercular pills and any oral medication that is deemed necessary if he comes down with a virus or whatever.

WEK: That's a lot of bulk; no wonder gorillas, as a species, have pot bellies. Let's see --- 15 pounds for a 500 pound "person" is about 3 pounds of food per 100 pounds - that's a lot more than a fully-developed 175 pound active man puts away daily. Samson's 6000 calories amounts to 1200 calories per 100 pounds of weight ... on this basis a full-grown Homo sapien would be allowed 2000 calories daily. I have heard of people who spill that much. Enough of odious comparisons. Tell me (and any of our readers who have come along this far), how does Sammy communicate and what non-verbal signals does he use?

SAM LA MALFA: Sometimes I hear him make a low guttural growl when contented. When I come with food, this vocal sound is comparable to a

(more)

INSIDE/OUTSIZE SAMSON

youngster smacking his lips uttering a sound of yum, yum, when served his favorite ice cream. When he doesn't like someone, the growl turns into a higher pitch with considerably more force behind it. When in a playful mood, he lets me know by a series of short barks. This is when he is in good humor. If I scold him, he pouts. If I praise him, he beams. Animals, particularly apes, respond to their friends by tone of voice more than actual sounds.

WEK: What other non verbal signals does he and other gorillas use?

SAM: Chest Beating: most times accompanied by hooting sounds "glissando from pianissimo to crescendo" (as you would phrase it) with a once-in-a-while kicking one leg in the air. This may be his response to teasing or provocation by the viewing public - oft times it is done early morning while at play with his roommate, before visitors arrive, which then is interpreted as an indication that -- "I am the boss around here even tho we are playing games." There are also numerous facial expressions Relaxed: sitting quietly mouth closed, eyes bland Aroused: eyes fixed, lips slightly parted, head slightly raised Annoyance: eyes hard and fixed in stare, head tipped downward, lips pursed and a bit parted ... Anger: eyes hard and fixed on the cause of anger, mouth open showing teeth, with lips curled back, screams or roars Playful: while kidding around with Terra, mouth partially open with corners drawn back to a smile but not exposing gums and teeth, most times accompanied by slight, but rigorous, shaking of head Show-off-Strut: a very rigid walk which makes him appear big and powerful.

WEK: Samson doesn't have to convince me he's B I G and P O W E R F U L. Incidentally, Man can assume 16,000 different facial expressions because of the number of face muscles and an abundance of electronic brain cells to command these muscles voluntarily or sometimes involuntarily -- this I read in "The Silent Language" by Edward Hall. Obviously, gorillas are not as well endowed as Man. Sam, you've done a great job answering my questions which will add to the insight re "Inside/Outsize Samson." Our Readers and I thank you.

(The End — Genug already)



Milwaukee's ZOO... grrrrreat!

Milwaukee, your zoo ranks with the best in the world. Over one million visitors a year converge on its wooded acres to watch animals from all over the globe living in natural, bar-less surroundings. Elephants and lions from Africa... colorful flamingos and streamlined jaguars from South America... black bears and badgers from our own continent. And your zoo has made friends of visitors and animals alike with its many innovations. Like invisible moats to separate predator from prey. Artificial night for nocturnal animals. And Penguin Hall, one of the most ambitious inside exhibits of any zoo in the world. Even on the coldest winter day, visitors can enjoy tropical birds and other animals inside six different buildings, while polar bears and Siberian tigers roll in the snow. Your enticing, exotic zoo. Just one of a million reasons to celebrate... Milwaukee!

Presented as a public service by the Milwaukee Sentinel . . . Milwaukee is good news to us.

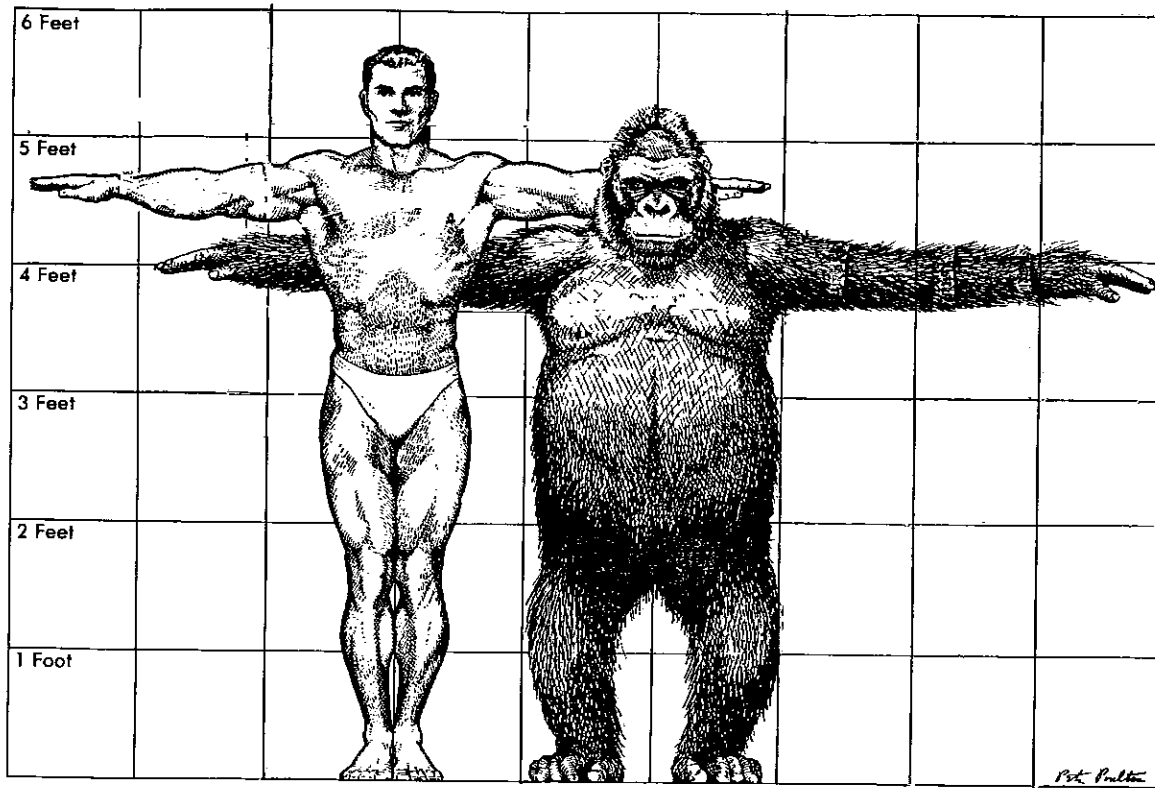


The Zoological Society thanks Milwaukee's two G R R E A T Newspapers, the JOURNAL and the SENTINEL, for their past and continued support, both financial and editorial.

This full page zoo boost appeared in both papers on the following dates:

THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL Sunday, March 11, 1979

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL, Monday, March 12, 1979



This carefully executed scale drawing of a muscular, well proportioned athlete and an adult male lowland gorilla is the work of Peter Poulton. Hereunder are shown their physical statistics compared to those of Samson's which obviously are, to a degree, eyeballed. Milwaukee's best tailor would have a fit trying to fit the Best Gorilla at Terra's wedding.

	<u>MAN</u>	<u>AVERAGE GORILLA</u>	<u>SAMSON</u>
Height	5'-9"	5'-3"	5'-4"
Weight	185 lb.	344 lb.	500 lb.
Chest	46"	54"	70"
Sitting Height	36"	40"	42"
Span of Arms	70"	93"	96"
Wrists	8"	12"	13"
Forearm	14"	16"	17"
Arm Muscle	15"	18"	20"

special note:

BRING YOUR FAMILY TO THE ZOO EGG SAFARI FOR CHILDREN 0-10 --- APRIL 7, AT 9:30 A.M., ZOO RESTAURANT. MR. & MRS. RABBIT WILL BE PRESENT.

cooperation

EINE HAND WASCHT DIE ANDERER (ONE HAND WASHES THE OTHER)

This picture of an Eastern big-eared bat — *Plecotus rafinesquii*, in a Tennessee cave, is the camera work of Dr. Merlin D. Tuttle, Curator of Mammals, Milwaukee Museum, who gave it to me for use in *Animal Talk*. This was in return for my giving him the complete article, "All That Was Known About Bats in 1874," reproduced from my copy of "JOHNSON'S NATURAL HISTORY ILLUSTRATING AND DESCRIBING THE ANIMAL KINGDOM" which appeared in *Animal Talk* as a serial. Merlin is one of the world's leading authorities on the bat or *Die Fledermaus*, as we say in opera.

The Zoo and the Museum have other ways to perform deeds to each others benefit. Upon any Zoo animal's death, the Museum staff has immediate access to the remains and may take possession of any or all of its parts except under certain conditions prescribed by national and state laws as they may relate to the cause of death. Recently Edward Green the Museum's Art Director in charge of exhibit design and construction did a diorama landscape painting at one-eighth scale to be used in re-decorating the interior of one of our monkey exhibits.



look alike

WHICH ONE IS COUSIN TO A DOG?



What's the same or similar?

HABITAT: Wooded areas near water; usually live in hollow trees, less often in rocky crevices or underground dens.

SIZE: Body - A=20', B=24' ... Tail - A=6', B=12' .. Weight - A=20#, B=25# .. Both hibernate in winter and lose up to half of fall weight.

FUR: A=yellowish brown, brown-black tips B=iron grey-black tips. The fur of the northern animals is very durable and was once very popular.

FACE: Black "bandit" patches on cheeks and around eyes.

DIET: Small rodents, fish, crustaceans, frogs, toads, acorns, fruits and vegetables. Highly undesirable in farm areas, they can cause serious crop damage to corn, melons, sugarcane and to vegetable gardens and fruit orchards. They also raid poultry yards and rob bird's nests.

GESTATION: About 65 days **LITTER:** A = 5 to 12 ... B = 2 to 7.

LIFESTYLE: Nocturnal; live alone or with temporary family. Males are bigamous; female monogamous. During mating season a restless male will, in one night, wander up to 7 miles seeking a female.

What's the difference?

RANGE: A - originally Japan, northern China and eastern Siberia; by migration thru out Russia and most of Europe; now scarce in Japan because of hunting and eradication. B - North and Central America; not found in altitudes above 800 feet, in evergreen forests or in arid areas.

FEET: A - has dog feet ... B - has separate human-like fingers and toes and can use hands skillfully.

TAIL: A - has short bushy tail ... B - has longer ringed tail.

RELATIVES: A - is a RACCOON DOG and is the only member of the dog family that hibernates. B - is a common RACCOON and is a member of the Bear family. Each is a different species.

A pair of Raccoon Dogs are exhibited in the Small Mammal House.

NEW MEMBERS

PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 1, 1978 THRU FEBRUARY 28, 1979

REGULAR MEMBERS

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 MR. & MRS. J. AREY & FAMILY
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 MRS. NANCY H. BALCHER
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 MR. & MRS. F. MICHAEL BRENNAN
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of MILWAUKEE COUNTY

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\$15 Annually

CITY _____ ZIP _____

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\$100 Annually

INVITED BY Picnic DATE 1979

LIFE
\$1,000

Please mail application and remittance
to the Secretary, 1001 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, Wis. 53226

SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER BEFORE OUR 6/21/79 PICNIC (WHICH IS FOR MEMBERS ONLY)