

I don't need to tell you that 2020 was a year like no other. The pandemic affected every aspect of the Zoological Society's mission, from conservation to education to Zoo support. However, out of disruption and crisis come reflection, resilience and innovation. I am proud of our staff for persevering in the face of challenging conditions. Through their determination, along with the extraordinary support of our Board, donors and volunteers, the Society continued to fulfill our mission.

In collaboration with the Milwaukee County Zoo, we made sure our community had a safe place to reconnect with the wild and natural world and each other. After the Zoo closed for a few months in spring, we were thrilled to help welcome members and visitors back. Our Communications, Marketing and Membership staff was vital in answering questions in person and over the phone. Our Education Department worked hard to create virtual programming that debuted in fall 2020. The entire staff made the transition to working from home admirably, doing what they needed to do to keep the Society running.

Of course, the pandemic affected our finances as it did for all nonprofits. We had to cancel our camps and classes in spring and summer 2020 and several fundraising events, including our annual gala. But our staff came through again, creating our first-ever virtual fundraiser, It's a WILD World, in September 2020. The event raised \$350,000 from more than 1,000 registered participants. We also received forgivable PPP loans. That revenue combined with strategic budget cuts has allowed the Zoological Society to

maintain its solid fiscal position. We plan to emerge from this time stronger than ever.

As I write this, I see light at the end of the tunnel. Many Wisconsin residents have been vaccinated, and we look forward to a time when we can gather in larger groups and hold events with fewer restrictions. Now and always, we will prioritize the health and safety of our stakeholders. I am so happy the Zoo was there for people during this trying time and will continue to be a community jewel for generations to come. We are grateful to our supporters for helping make that possible.

Sincerely,

Godilsibson

Jodi Gibson

**Zoological Society President & CEO** 

# CEO'S LEILER

Photo by Peter Zuzga

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**2020 ANNUAL REPORT** 

**EDITOR: STACY VOGEL DAVIS & KATIE KRECKLOW** 

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER: JESSIE KINSEY** 



## THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

spent 2020 charting a blueprint for its future, researching and planning ways to bolster biodiversity in southeastern Wisconsin, across the Midwest and around the world.

THE DEPARTMENT AIMS TO BE A HUB FOR BIODIVERSITY in southeastern Wisconsin by connecting, collaborating and advocating to preserve species and habitats and taking concerted conservation action. One way we can do that is by advocating and preserving pollinators, including the:

- Rusty-patched bumble bee
- Poweshiek skipperling butterfly
- Monarch butterfly
- Little brown bat



The Society continues to ADVOCATE FOR GLOBAL CONSERVATION. Auriana Donaldson, conservation programs coordinator, serves as secretary of the Association of Zoos & Aquariums' Bonobo Species Survival Plan.® The Conservation Department also has worked with the Education Department to better integrate the Society's education and conservation work.

To learn more about the Conservation Department's efforts, read "Blueprint for Conservation" in the winter 2021 issue of Alive magazine.



CONSERVATION





## HUMBOLDT PENGUIN CONSERVATION:

In October 2019, curator Alex Waier traveled to Peru to participate in a Humboldt penguin population and habitat viability assessment. Researchers, government officials, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders met for a week to discuss the penguins' conservation status and develop an action plan.



# INSTALLATION OF A MOTUS WILDLIFE TRACKING SYSTEM ANTENNA TOWER:

Once operational, the antenna on the roof of the Zoofari Conference Center will join a network that tracks migrating birds, insects and bats, providing data about migration routes, habitats and timing that will help conserve species.

CONSERVATION AROUND THE ZOO



### **IGUANA CONSERVATION IN THE**

CARIBBEAN: Keeper Stacy Whitaker traveled to Grand Cayman Island to work with the Grand Cayman blue iguana, while area supervisor Dawn Fleuchaus (above) went to Jamaica to assist in Jamaican iguana conservation. Read more about Fleuchaus' experience in the November-December 2020 issue of Wild Things.

**ONLINE EDUCATION** for animal care and veterinary teams, including classes in animal behavior and aquarium veterinary care

### YELLOW-BACKED DUIKER SSP:

Keeper Jessica Biggins traveled to Dallas for a breeding and transfer planning workshop of the Yellow-backed Duiker Species Survival Plan®.

ZOOLOGICAL VETERINARY MEDICINE RESIDENCIES at the Zoo's Animal Health Center



**CONSERVATION AROUND THE ZOO** 



Due to the pandemic, the Society was forced to cancel inperson classes, camps and Kohl's Wild Theater performances
starting in March 2020. During spring and summer, the
department planned and prepared for the launch of
ZOOCONNECT, virtual programming offered to schools
and families, in October 2020. The department also spread
our education message by assisting the communications
staff with social media posts, creating videos, activities and
informative blurbs about animal adaptations, exploring
nature, and other animal and conservation topics.

# HERE ARE SOME OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2020:

 The Zoological Society and Alaska Sealife Center were awarded a \$29,000 grant to enhance the ANIMAL CONNECTIONS CONTINUUM, a Zoological Society school program that focuses on empathy. The partnership will allow fourth-grade students to draw connections between the ecosystems of the Great Lakes and the world's oceans.

EDUCATION







- In collaboration with the Milwaukee County Zoo, WE HOSTED OUR FIRST TEENS GROW GREENS
  apprentice. The apprentice, a student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, supported the Zoo's Horticulture Department and planned and implemented gardens behind the Karen Peck Katz Conservation Education Building. Read more about the program in the winter 2021 issue of Alive.
- For the first time, KOHL'S WILD THEATER opened two new outreach shows in the same season, "Welcome to the Zoo!" and "Leona Lionheart Saves the World." "Welcome to the Zoo!" received more performance requests than any show in KWT history.

EDUCATION

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY SUPPORTS the Milwaukee County Zoo through cash and in-kind services. Half of all revenue raised by the Zoo Pass membership program goes to the Zoo in unrestricted funds to support the day-to-day operations of the Zoo. The Society provides additional funds through its procurement of sponsorships for Zoo attractions and events. The Society also provides graphic design, information technology and direct project support and operates Zoo Pride, a volunteer program that serves the Society and Zoo.

The Zoo closed for several months in 2020 at the start of the pandemic. OUR GUEST SERVICES STAFF WAS INVALUABLE during this time and afterward, answering questions for members about their passes, the Zoo's opening status and new procedures once the Zoo reopened. Zoo Passes were extended for four months to make up for the time the Zoo was closed.



Hippopotamus amphibius

#### Hippopotamus basics:

In the lakes, swamps, and slow-moving rivers of sub-Saharan Africa.

- grass and aquatic veget
- males average 3,500-5,000 pounds females average 1,500-3,100 pounds.

#### Hippos are in trouble...

Hippos were once found in wetland habitats all across

Today, hippos are largely restricted to national parks and other protected areas.

As hippo populations decline, African wetlands are suffering because hippos are critical to wetland ecosystems

habitat loss (both wellands and grazing lands)

retaliatory killing for crop-raiding and attacks on fishermen

illegal hunting for meat and ivory in the canine and incisor teeth

#### Here's how we're helping ...

The Milwaukee County Zoo is working to protect hippos in Africa. The Zoo financially supports the Uganda Conservation Foundation (UCF). UCF pariners with the Ugandan Wildlife Authority to build and equip marine ranger stations to reduce poaching of hippos

## HERE ARE SOME OTHER WAYS THE SOCIETY SUPPORTED THE ZOO IN FISCAL YEAR 2020:

- Our **ZOO PASS PROGRAM** continues to serve nearly 39,000 member households and experience strong member retention and loyalty. The membership program allows us to give more than \$1.5 million in direct cash support to the Zoo.
- Our ANNUAL APPEAL raised more than \$95,000 to support Society and Zoo conservation efforts.
- 500 ZOO PRIDE VOLUNTEERS contributed more than 21,000 hours of service to the Zoo and Society.
- Our CREATIVE DEPARTMENT created dozens of signs and graphics for the new hippo habitat in addition to its regular sign and marketing support and more than 250 new signs around the Zoo in the aftermath of the pandemic.



ZOO SUPPORT





We held our first-ever virtual fundraiser, IT'S A WILD WORLD, in September to replace several fundraisers that were canceled due to the pandemic. The event featured local TV meteorologist Lindsey Slater as the evening's emcee. Guests were able to go behind the scenes with some of the animals, play a game with Kohl's Wild Theater and saw why the Zoological Society needs continued support to fulfill their mission to conserve, educate and support. The fundraiser was a smashing success, raising more than \$350,000 from more than 1,000 registered participants.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

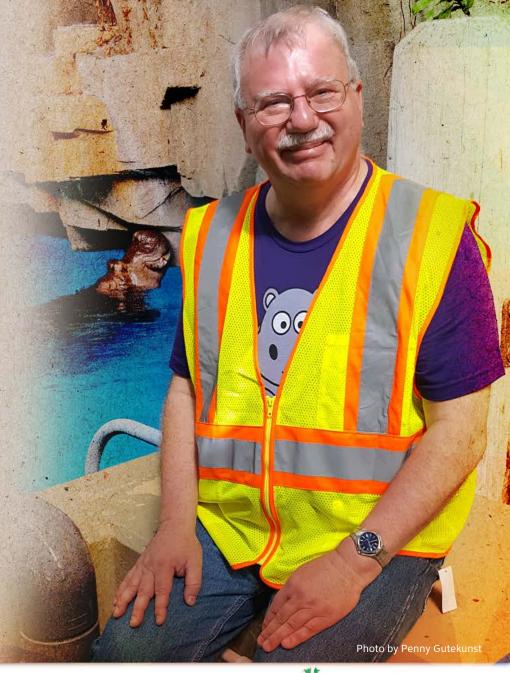
# IT'S A WILL WORLD

Despite the pandemic, the Zoo finished construction of the DOHMEN FAMILY FOUNDATION HIPPO HAVEN on time and on budget in late spring. It opened to the public in June, and visitors have loved seeing Happy the hippo underwater with only 3 inches of glass separating them from a 6,000-pound hippo.

The hippo habitat completes the second phase of Adventure Africa, which is transforming 25% of the developed footprint of the Zoo. In May 2019, new elephant and African hoofstock areas opened. Phase three, soon to be in the design stage, includes a new rhino habitat and central pathway through the Zoo.

The Zoological Society and Milwaukee County are sharing the costs of Adventure Africa. The Society is raising \$25 million for its portion through our Window to the Wild Capital Campaign. As of Sept. 30, 2020, the campaign has raised nearly \$19.9 million.

The hippo habitat was made possible by Bob Dohmen and the Dohmen Family Foundation. They were one of the first and largest donors to the capital campaign, giving \$5 million toward the exhibit. The gift reflects Bob Dohmen's lifelong love of hippos and commitment to the Milwaukee County Zoo. We are grateful for his generosity.



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**Zoo Pride Endowment** 

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The Simba Circle is a special group of donors who have included the Zoological Society of Milwaukee as a beneficiary of a planned gift through a will, charitable trust, retirement plan or life insurance policy. Gifts, once received, become a permanent asset of the Zoological Society's endowment fund. Each year, earnings from these gifts, along with other contributions to the fund, strengthen the Zoological Society's capacity to fulfill its mission. We gratefully acknowledge their legacy of support.

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Gerald & Donna Gerndt Dr. Michelle Graham Cindy & Dale Gray Beverly & Marty Greenberg Jay & Sharon Grenia Philip & Tara Gull Family Mary Kay & Jonathan Gundlach Penny & Bill Gutekunst Elizabeth Hafemann Jim & Sandy Hanus Flaine Heckman John & Jeannie Heindel Makinon Herbert \* Dianne & Robert Herzog Bill & Barb Hess Susan M. Hess Heyse Family Brian & Robin Higgins Family Jason & Amy Hoffman LaVonne Horgan Kurt & Kari Janavitz Dr. Sarah & Jeffrey Janz The Jaszewski Family Mardy Johnson Family Rachel J. Jones Trish Kagerbauer Cindy Kanzleiter Family Mary E. Kazmierczak Jen & Eric Key Scott Kimball Bridget & Mark Kirkish Renée & Ron Kloet Dr. Patrick Knapp & Dr. Kristi Tolzman-Knapp Linda Knee Carole Knoblich Tom & Wendy Komula Arthur C. Kootz Foundation Connie & John Kordsmeier Benedict & Lee Kordus ◆ Korsi Family Karen & Bernard Kubale Katherine Kuehn & Tim Habben

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Tonia Wallner

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Anne Wandler

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Mark & Pat Westen
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Carol J. Zimprich
Dr. Nathan & Mrs. Lisa Zwagerman



## SERENGETI CIRCLE

The Serengeti Circle is our valued group of corporations, foundations and individuals that support the Milwaukee County Zoo and Zoological Society of Milwaukee through major gifts, grants and sponsorship of special events, traveling exhibits, education and conservation programs, and attractions at the \$2,500 level and above.

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Wintrust Commercial Banking at Town Bank

WITI FOX 6

Woodland Park Zoological Society

**Ziegler Family Foundation** 

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Zoological Society of Milwaukee County Annual Report Financial Results
Consolidated with Subsidiary

Per audited financials

CII	PPC	PT	2	DE\	/FN	ME
		M		174		

MEMBERSHIP DUES	
from all Zoo Pass and Platypus Circle members	. \$4,879,330
CONTRIBUTIONS	
toward projects, specific programs and support	\$1,244,915
SPECIAL EVENTS/PROGRAMS/SPONSORSHIPS	
including animal sponsorship, Zoo Ball, education,	
Society and Zoo special events, and sponsorships	\$1,372,691
GRANTS	\$1,149,208
INVESTMENT INCOME - NET:	\$774,900
TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE	\$9,421,044

## COST OF SUPPORT & REVENUE

(SUPPORT SERVICES)

(SUPPORT SERVICES)	
MEMBERSHIP DUES	
Expense of providing benefits to all Zoo Pass	
and Platypus Circle members	\$1,527,920
SPECIAL EVENTS/PROGRAMS	
Expense of providing and promoting Society	
special events/programs	\$304,302
TOTAL COOT OF GUIDDODT & DEL/ENUIE	
TOTAL COST OF SUPPORT & REVENUE	
(Support Services)	\$1,832,222

#### **EXPENSES**

DIRECT PROJECT COSTS	
Expenses relative to projects and specific programs\$3	3,601,200
ZOO SUPPORT	
Direct cash and in-kind support to the Milwaukee	
County Zoo, including expense of providing, promoting and supporting education, graphics, special-exhibit	
projects, and Zoo special events\$6	3,962,202
RESEARCH/CONSERVATION	
Expenses relating to state, national and international programs	ADDE
supporting species preservation	\$58,497
GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER	
Expenses relating to daily Society operations	\$1,141,657
TOTAL EVERNICES	1762 556
TOTAL EXPENSES\$1	1,703,556
TOTAL COST OF SUPPORT AND EXPENSES	3,595,778

