

An insider's view of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo

My ZOO

WINTER 2022

Magazine

ASIAN
ELEPHANT
RESEARCH:
**A STUDY IN
INNOVATIVE
PROBLEM
SOLVING**
P3

**EVER AFTER
WITH ELEPHANTS
COUPLE SAYS "I DO"
AT THE ZOO**
P23



A Message from the Friends Executive Director

As I look around the zoo, I am amazed and thankful for the progress we have made in the past year. One year ago, I was the brand new leader of the Friends of the Zoo with a head and heart full of dreams and ideas -- while at the same time, COVID vaccines were still on the horizon and virtually all our events were still virtual.

One year later, so many dreams and ideas for the zoo have become or are about to become reality, thanks to the vaccine and to our incredible County and Friends teams, our wonderful community and our zoo member family – including you!

We have held events we couldn't host in person last year and added many more – including our Holiday Nights evening festivities, our series of gourmet Harvest dinners from Executive Chef Dan Hudson and fun new adult classes like our Paint and Sip series and even zoo camps for grown-ups!

We have been hard at work planning a jam-packed slate of exciting events for 2022. We're featuring a new lineup of STEM-based education classes, unique events at new venues including the Helga Beck Asian Elephant Preserve, and a new way to embody our One Health philosophy right down to our food at the new café opening soon (see page 10).

I'm also thrilled to report that a very special feature for the new Animal Health Center – a Junior Veterinary Clinic that will give kids the tools to imagine careers in animal health care – will come to fruition early in 2022 thanks to a generous sponsorship from the Herbert S. and Eleanore L. Howard Charitable Foundation and the creativity of the Friends Education Committee to ensure accessibility and learning for all abilities.

The conservation work happening behind the scenes at your zoo continues to inspire us all – including groundbreaking research on elephant cognition involving our Asian elephants and our elephant team that will be used to help save wild elephants from extinction. (See next page.)

In the coming weeks, we will be working to reopen the USS Antiquities cave with several new exhibits and planning a new summer exhibit for 2022 that I cannot wait to announce. Please follow our social media and our website at rosamondgiffordzoo.org for updates!

As always, none of this could happen without the support of our zoo and member family. Here's wishing you all a happy, healthy New Year and I look forward to seeing you at the zoo in 2022!

Carrie Large

Carrie Large
Executive Director, Friends of the Zoo



Brian Kelley
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Executive Director
(315) 435-8511 x8535

Membership
(315) 435-8511 x8503 or x8537

Catering & Events
(315) 435-8511 x8543

EX OFFICIO:
Carrie Large,
Executive Director
Henry Ted Fox,
Zoo Director
Brian Kelley,
*Commissioner of
Parks and Recreation*

Birthday Parties & Event Registration
(315) 435-8511 x8589

Development
(315) 435-8511 x8518

Volunteers
(315) 435-8511 x8569

Dr. Zina Berry
Debra Cody
Ryan Elliott
Heidi Holtz
Jaime Hunsicker
Benjamin Hussong
Laura Iorio

Carl Isley
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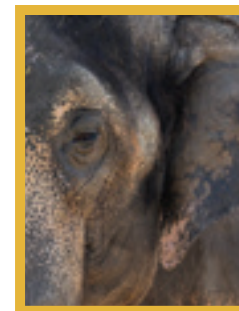
Education Programs
(315) 435-8511 x8559

Zoo to You
(315) 435-8511 x8531

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(315) 435-8511 x8539 or x8563

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ON THE COVER:
Asian Elephant, Doc
Photo by Maria Simmons

MyZoo Magazine Staff
Senior Editor/Creative Director: Maria Simmons
Writer/Editor: Janet "J" Gramza
Designer: Ryan Wood

Contributors:
Allison Angona, Kim Arnold, Sue Buswell, Christian Delmotte, Bailey Kerr, Abigail Moore

Contributing Photographers:
Janet "J" Gramza, Cassie Guerra, Sarah Kohler, Bethany Mortlock, Camille Murphy, Terri Redhead, Ashley Sheppard, Maria Simmons

Printing by: Upstate Printing

MyZoo Magazine is published by Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo. Our printing process complies with the highest social and environmental standards on the market. When you're finished with your copy, please share it with a friend or family member or recycle it.

Please direct questions regarding this publication to editor@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.

ASIAN ELEPHANT RESEARCH: A Study in Innovative Problem Solving

Not only do our amazing ambassadors educate people about their critically endangered species, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo's Asian elephants are actively engaged in scientific research that will directly benefit their wild counterparts.

When Asian elephant Kirina sees her caregivers wheeling a certain cart toward her stall in the elephant barn, she knows what to do. After months of training for a study of elephant cognition, Kirina knows she'll be asked to play a cognitive game in exchange for her favorite treat, marshmallows.

In the past year, Kirina and her herd-mates have collectively seen the research cart roll up hundreds of times, according to the scientist behind the study, animal behavior researcher Matthew Rudolph. Each time is an opportunity for the elephants to provide data on elephant cognition for Matthew to record in his study.

Once data collection is done, Matthew, a graduate student at New York City's Hunter College, will spend time crunching numbers and coding observations for a scientific paper on how elephants see the world – or rather, how they smell it.

“At the zoo and in the wild, elephants encounter new things every day – new smells, new enrichments, new sounds – and what we learn about how they process this information can help us protect wild elephants,” Matthew said. “Learning how elephants perceive their world will ultimately help us devise more effective conservation strategies for them in the wild.”

Matthew's work with our elephants is part of a fascinating body of research being conducted by the Comparative Cognition for Conservation Lab, or CCC Lab, at Hunter College and The Graduate Center.



ANIMAL UPDATES

African Cape porcupines Bristle and Holley were successfully introduced on July 17, and on December 3 they became first-time parents! The pair produced two porcupettes – **female Fennel (left) and male Nettle (right)** – the first births of this species at the zoo. Porcupettes are born with soft quills that harden after a few days. Cape porcupine pairs are monogamous and both parents care for the young. The new family is on exhibit in the Social Animals Building.



CREATURE FEATURE: TOUCH- ME-NOT STICK INSECTS

AT THE
ROSAMOND
GIFFORD ZOO:
28 Touch-Me-Not Insects



Irwin the Rhinoceros iguana has retired off exhibit.

Irwin, 36, has been a popular ambassador for his species but prefers quieter quarters and less activity as he ages. He will continue to receive top-notch care and daily enrichment in his golden years.

A male green jay was transferred to the Saginaw Children's Zoo in Michigan on September 24.

Five Touch-Me-Not stick insects have hatched at the zoo, the offspring of eight acquired from the Toledo Zoo this past summer. They will serve as ambassador animals in zoo education programs. (See Creature Feature on page 5.)

One male and six female Black Welsh Mountain sheep were acquired on October 5. They represent a threatened species of Heritage Breed livestock that originated in Wales and was prized by spinners for its naturally black wool.

Female Amur leopard Mina, 2, was transferred to the Brookfield Zoo in Brookfield, IL – also known as the Chicago Zoological Park – as part of the Species Survival Plan for her critically endangered species.

Male Amur leopard Rafferty, father of Mina and her brother, Milo (now at the Lee Richardson Zoo in Garden City, KS), is back on exhibit at the Zalie and Bob Linn Amur Leopard Woodland. It is hoped that he and the twins' mother, Tria, may produce more cubs in the future.

A male Northern tree shrew, Turmeric, was acquired from the Peoria Zoo in Peoria, IL, on October 28. Northern tree shrews are native to the rainforests of Southeast Asia and resemble long-nosed squirrels, although they are not rodents. This species is a new addition to the zoo!

The zoo acquired a pair of Victoria crowned pigeons, a new bird species here. A female arrived from Zoo Miami on November 29 and a male from the Columbus Zoo on December 7. These beautiful birds are blue in color and have large lacy crests on their heads. They will go on exhibit in the Diversity of Birds aviary early in 2022.

A female helmeted curassow, another new bird species, came to us from White Oak Conservation preserve in Florida on November 30. This endangered species from South America is a large terrestrial bird with a bluish grey casque on its head that resembles a helmet.

Monty the green tree python has retired off exhibit. He is 18 years old and still enjoying good health and great care. His former exhibit in the Social Animals wing has become a new habitat for our prehensile-tailed skink, Seinfeld.

Fourteen male feathertail gliders arrived on December 7 from the Columbus Zoo. These tiny marsupials are the smallest gliding mammal in the world, able to glide up to 70 feet. Their feather-like tail acts as a rudder during flight and serrated toe pads help them climb virtually any surface, including smooth-barked trees and even panes of glass. They will go on exhibit in Adaptations of Animals in early 2022.

IN MEMORIAM

One of our two guinea hogs, Gus, passed away on November 1 at age 14. Gus and his brother, Briggs, came to us as piglets in 2007 and have been popular residents of the Domestic Animal Barn at the zoo. They were considered elderly for pigs, and Gus had been suffering from congestive heart failure in recent months. He is survived by Briggs, who was the subordinate pig and is actually fine with being his own boss. Gus was a guest favorite and will be dearly missed.



FUN FACT:

When stick insects lay eggs, they put them in hard-to-reach places to protect them from predators. The eggs closely resemble seeds and are small enough to fool potential egg-eaters.



The Rosamond Gifford Zoo has acquired some extremely interesting insects from a fellow AZA-accredited institution, the Toledo Zoo! We received eight Touch-Me-Not stick insects that will serve as animal ambassadors in our zoo education programs.

These insects are known for being masters of disguise because of their appearance and use of camouflage. The Touch-Me-Not stick insect is native to Borneo, where they are listed as vulnerable due to habitat destruction, human interruption and the use of pesticides in their habitat. Their main food source is wild berry bramble and ficus leaves.

The Touch-Me-Not stick insect measures only 3 to 5 cm., or 1 to 2 inches long. Their large spines protect them against their common predators, lizards and birds. Touch-Me-Nots are brown with males having some orange coloring on their bodies. They are mostly found in lowland forests on surrounding leaves. Although they are wingless, their prickly appearance can be daunting to predators. Stick insects also have the amazing ability to regenerate any limbs lost to predator attacks!

At the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, we now have 28 Touch-Me-Not insects – the eight from Toledo have already had twenty babies hatch out! Look for them at zoo education classes and conservation events at the zoo.

There and at sites around the world, Dr. Joshua Plotnik and his team of Ph.D. and Masters' students are studying the evolution of complex cognition across a range of species – from elephants and giant pandas to pangolins and turtles -- and asking how behavior and cognition can apply to endangered species conservation.

Among their study subjects are Asian elephants, for good reason – they are known to be highly intelligent, they are in grave danger of extinction in the wild and one of their greatest threats is human-elephant conflict, a potentially solvable problem but one that has not really been explored from the elephants' point of view.

Until now. The term "human-elephant conflict" describes the results of conflict among humans over how to deal with wild elephants in their range countries. For example, farmers in Thailand don't want elephants eating their crops, but the government doesn't want elephants being injured or killed. Outside organizations have their own ideas of how to intervene. The conflict among these different viewpoints means elephants face varying management techniques depending on who they interact with.

The situation worsens the more elephant habitat is cleared for agricultural use. Even after parts of their habitats vanish, elephants keep coming back in search of food, frequently causing major crop damage, devastation and conflicts that result in hundreds of fatalities annually – both elephant and human.

Conservationists and farmers in Thailand have tried many methods of "conflict mitigation," including planting barrier crops to block their main crops from view, setting aside easement portions of their crops for elephants, interspersing hot chili peppers, and the old stand-by, electric fencing to keep elephants out. But sooner or later, an elephant will find a way in, and others will follow.

"Elephants are great problem-solvers because they're so smart," Matthew said. The CCC Lab began asking: how are elephants solving problems like getting through fences?

Research by Dr. Plotnik and team indicates it's not with their eyes. While humans get most of their input from vision, elephants use their trunks and ears for most of their decision-making.

Our zoo's collaboration with the CCC Lab began with a study on Asian elephant innovation and problem-solving. Ph.D. student Sarah Jacobson designed an elephant-proof puzzle box – a multi-access steel box with compartments the elephants had to figure out how to open to find food.

They found that, as Sarah titled her just-published paper, "Persistence is Key" – meaning the most persistent elephants were most likely to innovate to open all the compartments.



Some of our elephants behaved predictably for their personalities, said Rosamond Gifford Zoo Elephant Manager Ashley Sheppard. The zoo's eldest Asian elephant, Siri, "would solve the first puzzle right away, but as they got tougher, she would give up," Ashley said, noting that Siri's attitude is, "I like to do things on *my* terms."

Also as expected, food-motivated Kirina would keep trying till she found the treat. But bull elephant Doc surprised the team with his persistence, Ashley said. "We figured that Doc would not be that interested, but he ended up wanting to participate," she said.



Cognition – cog•ni•tion

/käg'niSH(ə)n/ – noun

1. the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses.
2. all forms of knowing and awareness, such as perceiving, conceiving, remembering, reasoning, judging, imagining and problem solving.
3. a result of this; a perception, sensation, notion or intuition.

In examining the data, researchers must take into account that elephants in our care have the luxury of being able to spend time persisting at a task – while wild elephants may not. But the upshot is, the most difficult elephants to "mitigate" could be the most persistent.

How might this apply to mitigation strategies in the wild? For one thing, it means that relying on the same solutions long-term won't work with the most persistent elephants. "I would say, 'Variety is key,'" Ashley explained. "This research shows that you won't be able to use the same mitigation technique forever. You may have to keep changing it up. Humans have to be persistent, too!"

Dr. Plotnik suggested that individual elephants' particular personality traits, and even groups of traits, can inform humans' choices about which mitigation strategies to use and when.

"We do not yet know which personality traits correlate, but, just as an example, perhaps bold, innovative elephants that don't fear novelty respond differently than shy, less innovative, more fearful elephants to particular mitigation strategies," he said. "This, in theory, could mean that we could tailor mitigation toward, or schedule certain mitigation, for particular individuals."

Ashley is listed as a co-author on the upcoming puzzle box paper, and the entire elephant team has been instrumental in Matthew's current study of how their sense of smell plays a role in elephant behavior.

Matthew said the many months of working with them have made the RGZ elephant team his "second family."

"The elephant team here is amazing," he said. "They are as interested in the research as we are, and they are always making suggestions and

working in partnership with us on what is a very time-consuming process. Their knowledge and expertise is the greatest resource we have. Together we devise strategies, overcome obstacles and bring these studies to completion."

Zoo director Ted Fox said the zoo is committed to assisting with elephant research including efforts to develop a vaccine for EEHV, the deadly herpes virus that killed the zoo's two youngest elephants in December 2020.

He said one of the most important findings of the CCC Lab is that no study will help elephants survive if it takes only the human point of view.

"As we learn more about elephants in our care and the ways we can help them be healthier, we also have to focus on stabilizing the lands in their native ranges so they can be protected," Ted said, "Ultimately, we hope, by the people who live there."

For more information on the Comparative Cognition for Conservation Lab, please visit cconconservation.org.



Scan the QR code to see Mali as she explores and navigates the puzzle box to find her treats.



Gaining on the Goal to Outfit the New Animal Health Center

The "One Health | One Mission" campaign to outfit the new Animal Health Center at the zoo with state-of-the-art diagnostic and medical equipment has raised a total of \$814,000, leaving Friends of the Zoo just \$286,000 away from its \$1.1 million goal.

Friends of the Zoo Executive Director Carrie Large said she is hopeful the campaign will get there by the time the zoo holds the grand opening for the health center in the coming weeks. The zoo planned to open the health center by the end of 2021, but materials and supplies delays pushed the official opening date.

"Our remaining goal of \$286,000 may seem like a lot of money, but compared to how far we've come, this target is well within our reach," Carrie said. "If we received \$1 for every person who visited the zoo in 2021, we would be there."

Zoo Director Ted Fox said the Animal Health Center is 95 percent complete, and animal care staff are already training on new technology, including a Del ceiling-mounted X-ray machine gifted from the Friends of the Zoo capital campaign, new sterilizers and lab equipment.

"We are very close to being able to welcome our visitors into this beautiful new building to see and learn about all the advances in animal health care we are putting in place," Ted said.

The county and the zoo designed the health center with an eye for public education and transparency – literally. Expansive windows will offer views into treatment rooms, surgical suite, nursery/ICU, animal nutrition kitchen and research lab.

Volunteers will be trained to be able to describe to visitors what takes place in each of these areas, what types of equipment, procedures and protocols are in use and what animals are being examined, treated and cared for in real time. Video technology in exam, treatment and operating rooms will allow us to record procedures to display on TV monitors in the zoo lobby, and other locations outside our facility so we can continue to educate even when there are no procedures taking place.

A Junior Veterinary Clinic that young people can take turns "staffing" during their visits to the health center is expected to open in February, allowing future animal health care providers to imagine and experience their future careers.

Please help us to the finish line!
Make your donation of any amount at
[justgiving.com/campaign/rgz-animal-health-center](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/rgz-animal-health-center).



Syracuse P-Tech Students Create 'Under the Sea' Aquarium for Holiday Nights

On a cold and rainy December morning, a group of city high school students from the P-Tech program at the Institute for Technology at Syracuse Central worked in shifts to install an amazing piece of art and engineering -- a 64-foot long "Under the Sea" lighting display for the zoo's first Holiday Nights events.

A total of 40 students teamed up for weeks to design, engineer, build and wire the display of eight giant sea creatures as part of their studies in electrical, digital and mechanical engineering. Another 20 students from the Corcoran High School welding program assisted in cutting the animals shapes out of steel.

The display turned the zoo's former peafowl exhibit into a huge aquarium full of twinkling marine animals including a starfish, manta ray, shark and clownfish.

"The displays the P-Tech students have designed are phenomenal!" said Friends of the Zoo Executive Director Carrie Large. "They did research on the animals and their features, then engineered a light exhibit for all of us to enjoy. We look forward to having this partnership with the school and seeing the students' designs come to light every year!"

Several of the students brought their families to Holiday Nights to see the results of all their hard work light up the zoo courtyard. The ITC P-Tech program has already offered to participate in Holiday Nights again next year.

Carrie said the partnership is the perfect example of Friends of the Zoo's goal to forge relationships between the zoo and the surrounding community that benefit the community and the zoo's conservation education mission.

"One of our key missions is to help inspire conservation-minded youth to lead for tomorrow," she said. "With this project, five teams of eight students each had to use teamwork, communication skills, STEM skills and project-based learning with tools like AutoCAD to create large-scale LED images of sea creatures."

"In the process, they learned about their chosen animals, including killer whales, sharks, dolphins and sea turtles and how these creatures are threatened by problems like global warming. That is exactly what our zoo is trying to accomplish every day."



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR MOST RECENT DONORS!

The Herbert S. and Eleanore L. Howard Charitable Foundation donated \$50,000 toward the Junior Veterinary Clinic at the Animal Health Center

The Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation contributed \$75,000 for the operating room at the new health center.



ONE HEALTH | ONE MISSION





Bye-Bye, Jungle Café Hello, Honey Bee Café!

What's the buzz about the café construction at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo? We're busy giving the former Jungle Café a major upgrade with a fresh, healthy menu and a new name: the Honey Bee Café!

The Jungle Café closed on March 16, 2020, with the rest of the zoo due to the COVID-19 lockdown. While the zoo was the first in the state to reopen on May 23, 2020, the café stayed closed -- at first due to health protocols and, later, a purposeful push to include the zoo's food services in our One Health mission.

"We want to support the One Health tradition of healthy, organic and sustainable as best we can, and the Jungle Café was not serving that purpose," said Friends of the Zoo Executive Director Carrie Large. "When we had to shut down, we took that opportunity to look at how to better serve our guests and our mission."

Friends of the Zoo Food and Beverage Director Chuck Anthony and Executive Chef Dan Hudson imagined a new café without deep fryers and with fresh, local, nourishing food and updated design to make it easier for guests to enjoy a good meal at the zoo.

"We explored how to build a healthy, fast, casual concept and settled on made-to-order salads and sandwiches that appeal to all ages," Chuck said. "At the café, we want to move away from carnival food like pizza and French fries and move toward fresh and healthy."

On a trip to Myrtle Beach, SC, with her family, Carrie encountered a place whose honeycomb backdrops felt appealing. "I just loved the design, so I told Chuck and he said, 'Why not call it the Honey Bee Café?' It was an 'Aha!' moment, because it allows us to tell why we do everything we do here, right down to our food."

The honey bee theme will:

- call out an organic food source related to pollination and the food chain
- highlight an upcoming addition to the zoo: beehives that will produce honey on-site
- spark education about the importance of honeybees, including their role in elephant conservation!

Chuck and Carrie were already sold on the theme when they learned Chef Dan had prior experience as a beekeeper! Obviously it was meant to "bee!"



The new café is slated to open in early 2022 will offer:

- **A new coffee bar** featuring Café Kubal coffees and a full-service barista making espressos, lattes, cappuccinos, iced coffees and more, with an outdoor walk-up window in warm weather.
- **New technology** allowing guests to order food via app or QR code and pick it up wrapped and ready to go. You will be able to order your coffee while driving to the zoo and it will be ready when you arrive.
- **Eco-friendly food packaging**, biodegradable cutlery and no plastic straws, in keeping with our conservation mission.
- **All seating outside** of the main café to cut down on crowding.
- **A children's menu** with made-to-order sandwiches like turkey and grilled cheese, white-meat baked chicken nuggets and fresh sides like pasta salad, fruit cup or whole apple. (Hot dogs and burgers will still be available at the Courtyard Café, but fried food will go extinct.)
- **More local offerings** such as Beak & Skiff apple cider, Dinosaur BBQ sauces and Byrne Dairy chocolate milk.
- **More vegetarian**, vegan and gluten-free options.
- **Member discounts** on every food or beverage purchase – another reason to join or renew your membership at the zoo!

Stay tuned to the zoo website and social media for updates on this bee-utiful addition to the zoo!

Honey Bee Hives at the Zoo

The staff picnic area behind the zoo was a beehive of activity one day this past summer, as members of our animal care team hammered, drilled and glued wooden boards and slats together to make two large hives to be installed at the zoo.

The hives will be positioned on the perimeter of the Helga Beck Asian Elephant Preserve this spring, and the plan is to populate them with bees that will eventually produce honey that can be used in the new Honey Bee Café.

The hives also will serve as a tool to educate zoo guests about Asian elephant conservation efforts, including the use of beehive "fences" to prevent elephants from raiding crops or invading villages in their range countries. Look for graphics and info about this project on the overlooks at the preserve in 2022!

Catering at the Zoo's Gourmet Harvest Dinner Pairing Series – a Huge Success!

When Friends of the Zoo Food and Beverage Director Chuck Anthony brought on Executive Chef Dan Hudson in early 2021, their vision was to put the Rosamond Gifford Zoo on the map of CNY's best dining experiences. Chuck knew the right ingredients and a top-notch chef could make food the main event at zoo functions, with animal appearances icing the cake.

The launch of this fall's Gourmet Harvest Dinner Series of food and beverage pairings proved it. Their first three events sold out and left diners asking for more.

"We wanted to bring pairing dinners to the zoo to showcase Chef Dan's talent and raise our game," Chuck said. "The main objective to pairing wine or beer with food is to enhance the dining experience. Chef Dan has an incredible knack for finding these relationships and creating unique flavor experiences. We always have a representative from the winery or brewery in attendance -- so you learn about the dish, the beverage and a bit about our animals. The dinners themselves are part foodie, part social and part educational."

This winning combo wowed patrons at the harvest dinners in October, November and December. The first paired South American inspired cuisine with Meiomi wines; the second, Bell's Big Cat Dinner, paired carnivore-inspired courses with Bell's Brewery beers and the third was a Penguin's Sustainable Seafood feast with Kim Crawford wines from New Zealand.

"This is a format where Chef Dan really shines, and the feedback we've received has been very rewarding," Chuck said. "As guests were leaving, several felt compelled to approach Chef Dan and say things like, 'Out of this world,' 'Enchanting,' and 'Best dinner I've ever had!'"

In response, Chuck and Chef Dan are challenging themselves to offer a feature dinner every month. **Stay tuned to the zoo's website, rosamondgiffordzoo.org, and our Facebook page for details!**

Save the Date!

Our next Gourmet Dinner Pairing is January 21, 2022



Save the Dates

Take a 5K walk/run through the zoo to benefit animal care and conservation. Play 18 holes of championship golf at historic Bellevue Country Club. Party with our penguins! Raise a cup of craft beer or wine – or sample several – amid animals on evening exhibit. Enjoy gourmet food and drink stations, live music and a champagne toast on a beautiful autumn evening in the courtyard. These and many more events await you in the upcoming months. Best of all, each of these events help your zoo pursue its key mission of animal care, conservation and nature education.



Zoo Run Run Saturday, April 23

Get out and get moving on behalf of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo with our first-ever 5K zoo run! Walk or run – all levels are welcome. Build your team and support the zoo's mission.



Asian Elephant Extravaganza Saturday, August 20

This annual event celebrates Asian culture and honors the Rosamond Gifford Zoo's Asian elephant herd. The many activities planned for the event include elephant demonstrations, cultural performances, games, puppet shows and more.



Fall Conservation Ball Friday, September 23

Join us for an evening of fantastic food, mesmerizing music and your favorite animals all to benefit animal care at the zoo and conservation in the wild. Highlighted by a sunset toast and a live auction of the best animal experiences – this is an evening you will not want to miss!



Zoo Boo Weekends in October

Enjoy one of the zoo's most beloved family events with a safe, fun, "kooky-not-spooky" daytime Halloween celebration. Wear your costumes and bring your treat bags for this hauntingly awesome event!



Holiday Nights Fridays and Saturdays in December

Celebrate the season with Holiday Nights at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo! Sing along with holiday carolers, visit with Santa, gather around and warm up by glowing fire pits with family and friends, enjoy festive lighting, ice sculpture carving, animals, and much more!



Noon Year's Eve Saturday, December 31

Join us for our annual New Year's Eve celebration that keeps bedtime in mind – complete with a dance party, noisemakers, countdown to noon and a juice toast!



Party for the Planet Saturday, April 23

Join the zoo's annual Earth Day celebration featuring endangered animal demonstrations and keeper talks, puppet shows, green building and "flora-for-fauna" garden tours. Featuring conservation stations and eco-partner booths with fun activities and tips on ways to help protect the planet.



Tee Off FORE the Animals Charity Golf Tournament Monday, June 20

Experience 18 holes of championship golf on a gorgeous course with zoo animal greeters to enhance your day. Enjoy a continental breakfast, lunch on the links and a delicious awards dinner at Bellevue's elegant clubhouse. Compete for challenging and fun awards. Get your team together now!



Penguin Palooza Sunday, July 10

Kids of all ages will enjoy this ice cream extravaganza and incredible array of activities, entertainment, ice cream samplings, kid-friendly foods, fun music, face painters, keeper chats and more!



Brew at the Zoo Friday, August 5

Make plans now to attend one of the most anticipated events of the summer. More than 100 tastings of craft beers, wines and other adult beverages, live music performances throughout the zoo and a great gathering of food trucks, plus animals on exhibit. This is one party not to be missed!

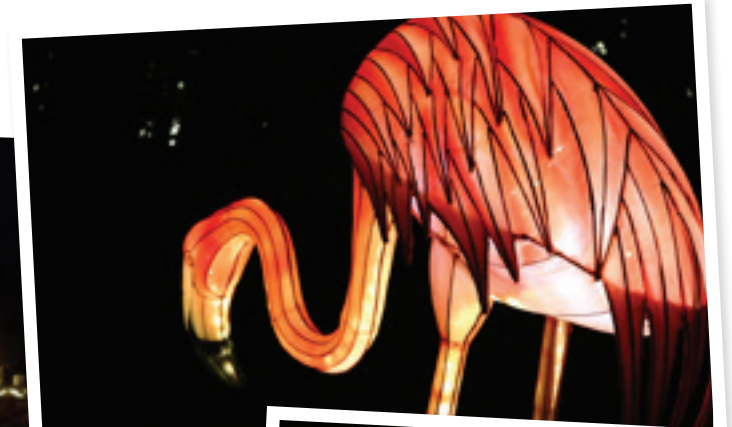
HOLIDAY NIGHTS WARMED HEARTS

Thanks to everyone who came out to our first Holiday Nights at the zoo and the many volunteers, performers, school and community groups who contributed to make each evening unique, fun and special!

These festive after-hours evenings invited our community to gather in the zoo courtyard on December weekend nights and enjoy hot cocoa and s'mores around the fire pits, ice-carving presentations, roving entertainers and holiday carols from different CNY groups each night. Thanks to our zoo staff, we were able to have our Domestic Animal Barn and Social Animals Building open after hours and have animal ambassadors come out to greet our guests.

A Holiday Nights highlight was the Under the Sea lighting display of colorful twinkling sea creatures that turned our summer Komodo dragon exhibit into a dazzling winter aquarium scene. This display was created from concept to design to engineering to installation by students from the P-Tech program at the Syracuse City School District Institute of Technology with assistance from the Corcoran High School welding program. (See story on page 9.)

We look forward to adding more lighting displays, performances and partnerships when we do it again next year! **Congratulations to Sharmin Marie Brown and Ed LeBlanc on their engagement! We are proud to be a part of their love story.**



Scan QR Code for event information or visit rosamondgiffordzoo.org/events



EDUCATION PROGRAMS



Wild Beginnings

Want to try EdVenture Academy but your child is too young? Join the education team for a three-week program tailored just for little ones aged **12 months to 3 years**. Each themed class includes animal biofacts, nature-themed sensory play, a story and an opportunity to see an animal up close! Young ones will explore with their senses and develop language and motor skills in the process during this early learning adventure.

9:15-10 a.m. | 10:30-11:15 a.m.

Colorful Creatures

Wednesdays, January 5, 12 and 19

Red, yellow, blue, green and all the colors in between! Join us for an eye-catching program for our youngest learners as we explore a kaleidoscope of creatures.

Animal ABC's

Fridays, February 4, 11 and 18

It's as easy as 1-2-3! Did you know there's an animal for every letter of the alphabet? Well, this animal-inspired program is guaranteed to make learning the alphabet so much more fun!

Tuition per 3-week session

Members: \$30 per child/adult pair

Non-members: \$45 per child/adult pair

\$15 per additional child in same session

Edventure Days

Thursdays, January 6-February 3 | 10-11:30 a.m.

Ages 3-7 plus caregiver

Join the Education Team for a five-week learning series that provides a unique opportunity for you and your child to learn more about the animals at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo. This small group class will consist of stations for learning, experiencing, and creating and utilize our outdoor classroom, weather permitting!

Members: \$100 per child/adult pair

Non-members: \$125 per child/adult pair

\$75 per additional sibling child

Kids' Night Out

Friday, January 14

Friday, March 11

5:30-9 p.m. | Ages 6-10

Looking for a night out? Drop your kids off at the zoo to party like an animal! Kids will enjoy pizza on arrival, meet animals up close, tour the zoo after hours, make crafts and play games throughout the night.

Members: \$30 | Non-members: \$35

EcosySTEM Explorers

(formerly Edventure Academy)

Learning Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics has never been more exciting! Join us for a hands-on approach to connecting to the animal world.

Ages 6-8 | 10 a.m.-noon

Ages 9-12 | 2-4 p.m.

What Are You Blubbering About?

Saturday, January 8

Ever wonder how some mammals like whales, seals and polar bears stay warm in the cold ocean? Learn all about this important adaptation that helps warm-blooded animals survive the chilliest weather conditions. Create blubber of your own and determine if it will help keep you warm.

Bizarre Animal Behavior

Saturday, February 12

Did you know that a Damara mole rat can run as fast backward as it can forward? Or that Humboldt penguins can shoot their poop great distances? Discover your inner zoologist while studying some of the most fascinating animals at the zoo. Observe interesting and bizarre behaviors and record them using ethograms.

Animal Engineers:

Bodacious Bird Builders

Saturday, March 5

Can you construct a better nest than a bird? Test your building skills using seemingly ordinary materials. Explore different types of birds and the homes they build using materials we find outside. You may get a bird's eye view of what it's like to be an animal engineer!

Beasts and Beats

Saturday, April 2

Did you know that an elephant can hear through its feet? Or that fish hear through ridges in their bodies? Explore all the fascinating ways animals hear and the effects music can have on animal behavior. Keep your "ear to the ground" and test your hearing against some of the animal kingdom's best listeners.

Bug Biodiversity

Saturday, May 14

How healthy is the environment you live in? Explore your inner wildlife biologist by examining the biodiversity of bugs and other small invertebrates. Using a homemade bug vacuum, you will conduct your own local biodiversity survey to collect as many species of bugs as possible.

Tuition per session

Members: \$20 per child

Non-members: \$25 per child

\$15 per additional child in same session

NOTE: This program requires drop off with waiver on file.

Wild About Theater!

Join us for a new collaborative program with RedHouse Arts Center and Open Hand Theater! Throughout this 6-week program, youth ages 10-15 will learn theatrical skills such as improv, teamwork, design, stage presence and basic puppetry. Using the different exhibits at the zoo and the animals for inspiration, participants will also work as a group to write, design and perform an original show in the zoo's outdoor amphitheater on the last day of the program. Class is taught by Open Hand's Caitlin Friedberg in conjunction with zoo education staff. No prior knowledge or experience is required, just an interest in playing with, exploring and learning new skills while being a little silly in the process!

Six-week session on Sundays, January 9, 16, 23, 30 and February 6 and 13

11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Members: \$300 per child

Non-members: \$320 per child



New! Teen Night at the Zoo

AGES 13-17

Friday, January 28 | 6-8 p.m.

Is your teen looking for an energizing and educational way to network with peers? This program comes packed with trivia, games, challenges and more! Let's not forget an abundance of animals to guarantee a fun-filled night at the zoo. Pizza party included!

Members: \$30 per teen

Non-members: \$35 per teen

Family Twilight:

Monkey Around with Mom Paired

Primate Painting

Friday, May 6 | 6:30-8 p.m.

You'll go bananas for this paired painting experience with your child! Celebrate our very own animal mothers here at the zoo while channeling your creative side. It will be more fun than a barrel of monkeys!

Members: \$30 per child/adult pair

Non-members: \$40 per child/adult pair

ADULT PROGRAMS

Adult Zoo Camp

Why should kids have all the fun at zoo camp? Join us for programming exclusive to a more mature audience! Enjoy arts and crafts, making enrichments, meeting animal ambassadors and more. Immerse yourself in an elevated animal experience guaranteed to inspire your inner zoo camper. **18 and over only.**

All sessions 9 a.m. - noon

Amazing Animal Care

Saturday, January 22

Ever wonder what is needed to provide superior healthcare for our animals here at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo? Find out how the new Animal Health Center will help your zoo become one of the leading institutions in animal care and welfare.

Conservation Connection

Sunday, March 13

Do you know what a Species Survival Plan is? How many stud books the Rosamond Gifford Zoo manages? Discover what our zoo is doing to help save some of the planet's most endangered species. Learn why we are among the top 10 percent of all North American wildlife exhibitors accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA).

Energizing Enrichment

Sunday, May 22

Enrichment is just as important as veterinary care and proper nutrition, helping animals engage in behaviors typical of their species. Create an animal enrichment that will promote physical and mental stimulation for the animals here at the zoo!

Tuition per session

Members: \$50 | Non-members: \$60

Perfectly Paired Paint-N-Sip

Thursday, February 10 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Okay, lovebirds, this event is for you! Join us for a wild evening of paired painting, light refreshments, raffles, an animal ambassador and more! Come alone, bring a mate or travel with a herd. Complimentary light refreshments include wine and beer (limit of 2 drinks per person). **21 and over only.**

Flights & Feathers Paint-N-Sip

Thursday, April 7 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Put a feather in your cap for constructing and creating a house for a fine-feathered friend while enjoying light refreshments, raffles, an animal ambassador and more! Come alone or bring a group. Complimentary light refreshments include 1 flight of wine or beer (limit of 1 flight per person, 5 tastings per flight). No carpentry skills needed. **21 and over only.**

Individual Member: \$55 | Individual Non-member: \$60

Member pair: \$100 | Non-member pair: \$110

Member group (4): \$180 | Non-member group: \$200

Register online today at: rosamondgiffordzoo.org
For details, Call (315) 435-8511 x8559 or email education@rosamondgiffordzoo.org



ONE DAY ZOO CAMPS FOR AGES 6-11

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Camp

One-Day Camp for ages 6-11

Monday, January 17

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Join us for this exciting one-day camp! Campers will tour the zoo, see animals up close, play games and make awesome crafts. Pizza party lunch included!

Members: \$55 per child

Non-members: \$65 per child

School Break Zoo Camps

Join us for one, two, or all five days as we explore the zoo, play games, make crafts, and meet animals up close! Topics will vary each day!

Winter Break- Monday, February 21- Friday, February 25

Spring Break- Monday, April 11- Friday, April 15

AGES 3-5: Monday, Wednesday, Friday – morning or afternoon

Morning session: 9 a.m. - noon,

Afternoon session: 1 - 4 p.m.

Members: \$28 per child per day

Non-members: \$38 per child per day

All campers MUST be potty-trained to attend this camp!

AGES 6-9: Monday through Friday

Sessions: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Members: \$45 per child per day

Non-members: \$55 per child per day

AGES 10-12: Tuesday and Thursday

Sessions: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Members: \$45 per child per day

Non-members: \$55 per child per day

Pre-registration is required; a minimum number of participants is needed to run all programs.

Sessions fill fast, sign up today!

Register online at rosamondgiffordzoo.org/learn/zoo-camps.

Questions? Call the education department at

(315) 435-8511 x8559 or

email zoocamp@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.

SUMMER ZOO CAMP

Don't forget to register your child for Summer Zoo Camp!

Week-long day camps for children ages 3-16.

Campers tour the zoo, meet keepers and animals up close, play games, make crafts and participate in many more fun activities.

REGISTRATION FOR MEMBERS BEGINS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2 AT 9 A.M.

Registration for Non-members begins March 16

rosamondgiffordzoo.org/learn/summer-zoo-camp



MYZOO JR.

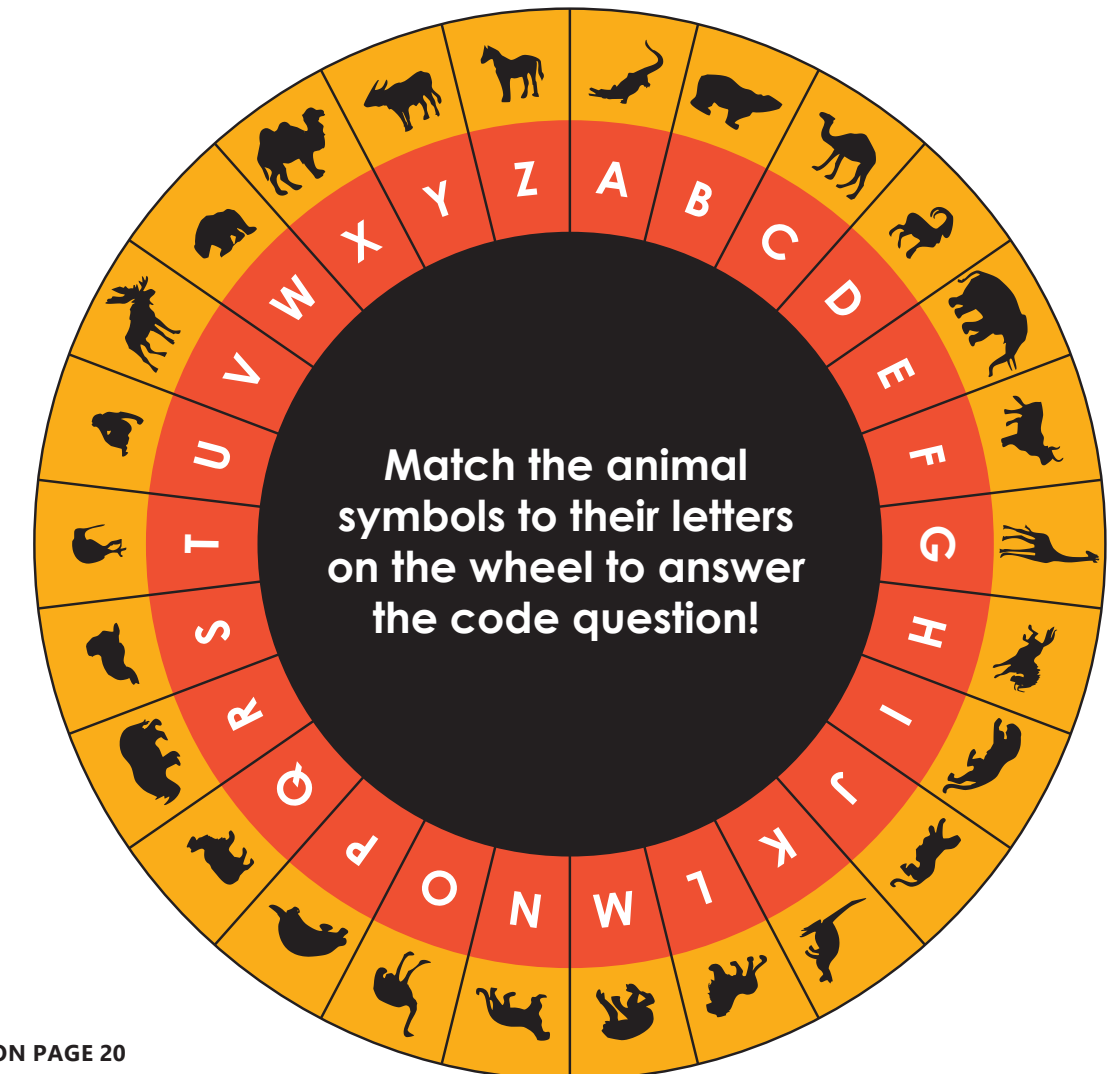
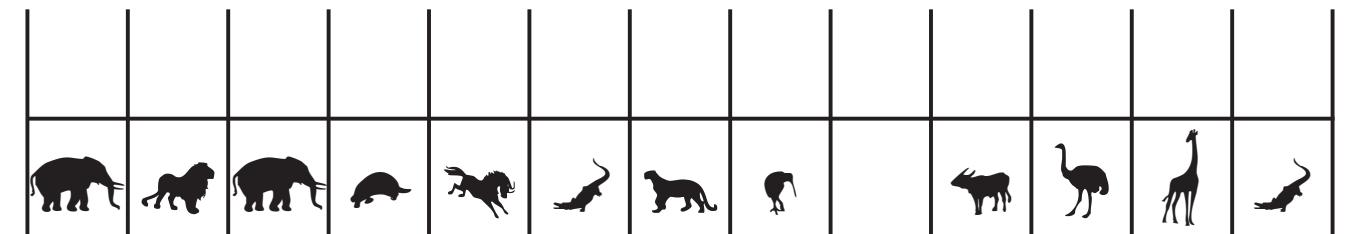
ENIGMATIC ELEPHANT CODE

Did you know that elephants can solve puzzles?

Our Asian elephants have been part of a study of elephant problem-solving skills that asks them to figure out how to open compartments in a steel box to find treats inside. See if you can figure out the puzzle below, called a Cipher.

CLUE:

We give our elephants puzzles to keep their minds healthy.
How do we keep their bodies healthy as well?



ANSWER: ON PAGE 20



Memorial Bench Program: A Place to Remember Loved Ones Who Loved the Zoo

Therese Heins was a unique person who saw miracles in flowers and sunsets and recognized signs from the universe. She was giving, humble and unaware of her natural ability to light up a room. A single working mom, she raised three girls who didn't know they were poor and turned potentially monotonous chores into magical occasions. Routine trips to the supermarket were invitations to dance in the aisles.

When her girls were grown, she got a job at New Process Gear that erased her debts. When the plant closed, Therese went back to school at 50 to become a nurse. She loved sharing her baking talents with her children, grandchildren and co-workers, never ignored a phone call and gave freely of her time, energy and love without expecting anything in return.

So when she was diagnosed with late-stage cancer last year, Theresa had difficulty accepting help from her large family – be it a home-cooked meal, a financial gift or even a visit to spend time with her. “She was not OK with placing a burden on anyone,” her daughter Tracy Gardiner wrote in her eulogy, “even if that’s not how it was viewed.”

When Therese passed away at age 63 in June, her daughters were faced with the decision of how to honor her in a way that fit her personality. The cemetery was out – Therese was the opposite of somber. They started looking for opportunities to place a memorial bench at a place Therese loved that her kids and especially her grandkids would enjoy visiting to reminisce about her while also having fun.

When they learned of the Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo’s Memorial Bench program, they felt they had the answer. Therese loved taking her kids and their kids to the zoo and even volunteered here in the early 2000s, Tracy said. She also felt a connection to the Chilean flamingos at the zoo because she had lost a brother who loved flamingos so much that they became a “family mascot,” Tracy said. Coincidentally, Theresa passed away on June 23, Pink Flamingo Day.

The family consulted with Friends of the Zoo Development Director Heidi Strong and chose a location for Therese’s bench in the courtyard of the new Animal Health Center with a view of the Waterfowl Pond and flamingo house. It will say, “In Memory of Therese Heins. Love you bunches!” – the way she always signed cards and notes.

Her daughters felt good about their choice, but it wasn’t until two weeks later that they got confirmation from their mom. Going through her house, they found a Post-it note where Therese had jotted down her answer to a security question. The question: “What is your favorite place to visit?” Her answer: “The zoo.”

“We have purchased her bench for the 10-year term, but we know we’ll continue to renew it every 10 years for as long as we can to keep her memory alive,” Tracy said. “She wouldn’t want us to make a fuss about her, but to have a special place where we can visit and reflect, she would love that.”

To donate a Memorial or Tribute bench at the zoo, please contact Development Director Heidi Strong at (315) 435-8511 x8518 or email at hstrong@rosamondgiffordzoo.org. For more details on the program, visit rosamondgiffordzoo.org/memorial-benches.



Therese Heins with grandchildren Everett and Seren Gardiner



ECONOTES

New Year’s Resolution: Living and Giving GREEN

During the winter months our area may be covered in snow, but that doesn’t have to stop you from living GREEN this holiday season. Sustainable or “green” living means reducing your carbon footprint on the natural environment for the good of all creatures and our planet.

When you practice the 3 R’s – reduce, reuse and recycle – you are taking steps toward living green.

Over the holidays, many of us accumulated a lot of new stuff, along with the packing and wrapping materials it came in. Annually, Americans throw away an estimated 38,000 miles of ribbon (enough to wrap around the planet AND tie a bow) and \$11 billion worth of packing materials. Let’s all resolve to change that by relying on the 3 R’s in our living and our giving!

Here are tips for reducing waste heading into the New Year:

- **When you get new stuff, donate your surplus!** Bring clean, wearable clothing, gently used toys and working household items to the Rescue Mission, Goodwill or Salvation Army rather than sending them to the landfill. Donate used blankets and towels to the SPCA or your local animal shelter.
- **Make sure to recycle wrapping and packing materials** from those new and exchanged gifts. You can recycle paper without metallic, foil or glitter on it via your community recycling program. Wrapping paper, tissue paper, boxes, ribbons and bows can be reused.
- **Plastic bags and wrap, electronics, batteries, packing peanuts and even holiday lights can be recycled** at many local stores and supermarkets.
- **Your retired Christmas tree can be recycled** into mulch via your community recycling program. The zoo also accepts holiday trees that are still in good shape to use as enrichments for our animals! (Email us at info@rosamondgiffordzoo.org to inquire.)
- **Visit the zoo website at rosamondgiffordzoo.org and check out the Conservation tab for our Preservation Pointers and Ways You Can Help practice sustainability year-round!**

Wherever you are throughout the year, you can give the gift of recycling. Check with your local recycling program to see what they accept. Donate or reuse the rest to reduce your carbon footprint. Let’s have the only footprints we leave be in the snow!



Adopt a Humboldt Penguin

Senior Keeper Special \$55

Package includes:
A certificate of adoption,
4x6 color photo of a Humboldt penguin,
animal fact sheet, 12" animal plush,
an adopt parent gift, copy of *MyZoo Magazine*,
and listing on adopt parent board for one year.

Adopt an Animal online at syracusezooevents.org/shop
Looking to adopt another animal at the regular rate?
Call (315) 435-8511 x8563 or email giftshop@rosamondgiffordzoo.org



Adopt an Animal

MYZOO JR. ANSWER
Secret Code: Elephant yoga



Conservation in Action at The Curious Cub Gift Shop

The Curious Cub Gift Shop has a great new line of gift items that directly help threatened and endangered animals in the wild!

As an Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) accredited zoo, we dedicate a portion of our sales to conservation projects working to save species in the animals' native habitats -- and we are always looking for new ways to truly support our conservation mission.

Introducing our new "Conservation in Action" line of attire and gifts! For each of these special T-shirts, hoodies, hats and gift items you purchase, we will donate 100 percent of proceeds to specific conservation projects on the ground in the range countries of endangered animals that need our help most.

Each month, our sales of Conservation in Action items will go to a different conservation cause, like the Red Panda Network's "Plant a Red Panda Home" project to reforest hundreds of acres of red panda habitat, the International Elephant Foundation's horse patrol teams to prevent elephant poaching in Africa, the Snow Leopard Trust's work to protect snow leopards, and many more.

Look for our attractive new "Conservation in Action" items and the signs designating the conservation projects they will benefit at The Curious Cub shop at the zoo and online at syracusezooevents.org/shop.



Can't come to the zoo?
Scan the QR code to visit our online store or go to syracusezooevents.org/shop



Congratulations to Kahssia, Lisa and Jamie for earning a spot to showcase their products at The Curious Cub Gift Shop!



210 Teas, Kahssia



The Memorable Image, Jamie



Yellow Table Studios, Lisa

The Curious Cub Gift Shop Welcomes WISE Women's Products



Jamie Redmond started collecting toy animals that inspired her to create a line of photo greeting cards. Lisa Loftus began making educational activity kits for her daughters during the COVID pandemic and now sells them as a "mompreneur." Kahssia Hills grew up with a love for the teas brewed in her grandmother's kitchen and ended up starting her own loose-leaf tea business.

These three local women will have their products featured at The Curious Cub Gift Shop at the zoo this spring and summer through a partnership with the WISE Women's Business Center in Syracuse. WISE, which stands for Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship, is a support center for women entrepreneurs in Syracuse.

As part of a mission to engage with and support all segments of our community, we are excited to connect with WISE WBC to spotlight local women-owned businesses at the zoo gift shop.

WISE held a contest that produced six finalists for a public vote this past fall. Jamie, Lisa and Kahssia won space for their wares at The Curious Cub. Their products will be introduced one at a time in March, April and May, then remain in the store through summer.

201 Teas

Kahssia Hills is a technology analyst who describes herself as "an achievement of the Syracuse City School District and Syracuse University's iSchool (with a little help from OCC)." Her new business started as a "quarantine project to fill the free time I suddenly had on my hands," she said.

She decided to turn a love for tea inherited from her late grandmother into a business. "My grandmother's kitchen served as a cooking space, daycare, conversation forum, hair salon, nurses office, personal getaway ... everything," she said. "Anyone who stepped foot there would agree, 'something to drink' was synonymous with sweet black tea."

Kahssia created a line of flavorful tea blends with names like "Don't Worry 'Bout It Sweetheart," "Housecoat" and "Damn, Gina" -- a phrase from the 90s sitcom "Martin." Though the WISE WBC Accelerate: Business Plan course, she developed a business plan whose future goals include a brick-and-mortar store. She named her business 210 for her grandmother's house number.

The Memorable Image

Vermont native Jamie Redmond is a photographer and designer. She started making vintage-inspired postcards for her Master's thesis -- but it was her penchant for engaging animal figurines that sparked her Animal Tales series of photo cards with witty captions and relatable back-stories.

Jamie uses toy animals including a frog, a bear and a T. Rex as characters for her greeting cards, which she describes as "Stories that fit in your hand, laughs that fit in an envelope, and warm-fuzzy feelings that last."

Yellow Table Studio

Lisa Loftus is a graphic designer and Syracuse native who got creative when the pandemic shut down her go-to activities for entertaining her two daughters, now aged 3 and 5.

"We couldn't go out to places like the zoo or the library, but I wanted them doing things that were engaging and educational," Lisa said. "I started looking in my cupboards and Googling things to do -- anything to get away from the screens!"

Her first project was a homemade lava lamp using household items -- oil, food coloring and Alka-Seltzer. Her second was a make-your-own pinecone bird feeder. Then came hot cocoa bombs and tie-dye soap.

Lisa launched her Etsy shop in October 2020 as Yellow Table Studio, after the plastic table her kids use for crafts.

Look for these products at The Curious Cub Gift Shop from March – September 2022!

Welcome Members—To 2022!

We want to give a very warm welcome to our 2022 members! Whether your membership was a gift this holiday season or you have chosen to join or renew, we are excited to have you with us for the coming year and grateful for your support!

Rosamond Gifford Zoo membership has made a few changes over the last few months, and we are happy to provide you with new ways to enjoy your membership.

Zoo members will now receive member pricing on:

- all ticketed events and programs
- new food and beverage discount at concessions
- this discount can also be applied and enjoyed at our new Honey Bee Café—coming soon! (See page 10)

We look forward to seeing you at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo!

2022 Member T-shirts are here!

This year's member T-shirt design features Naga, our Komodo dragon! Our beautiful Naga joined the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in 2019 and has been a visitor favorite ever since. Naga can be seen on exhibit in her indoor habitat in the Social Animals wing during the winter months and in her outdoor space overlooking the zoo courtyard on warm summer days.

Be sure to stop by the membership desk and redeem your FREE T-shirt—an exclusive perk for our zoo members! Members may purchase additional shirts for just \$10 each.



Meet our Assistant Membership Manager



Ciara Tracy joined the membership department in 2017 as a membership associate and quickly thrived in her position. She also volunteered in the zoo's domestic animal barn and worked as a sales lead in the zoo's Jungle Cafe. Her work performance and dedication to the zoo led her to a full-time management opportunity with her home department – Membership—and we are excited to have her on our team! Please join us in welcoming her aboard!

Save the Dates for Spring 2022 Events!

**Breakfast with Bunny
Sunday April 3 and April 10**

**Easter Brunch
Sunday April 17**

**Mother's Day Brunch
Sunday May 8**



CATERING AT THE ZOO

In November 2019, Brian Bruckner of Syracuse emailed the Rosamond Gifford Zoo with an engaging proposal.

"I am looking to propose to my girlfriend," he wrote. "She LOVES elephants. I was wondering if we could work something out where she gets an up close and personal visit with them and maybe have one of the elephants give her the ring."

We responded that while we don't let our elephants handle engagement rings, we do offer behind-the-scenes elephant encounters (for a donation) and our team would be happy to help.

We asked him to tell us about himself and his intended, Kelly Warcup. "We have two dogs together and we live in Solvay," he wrote back. "We've been together about 2 years now and I can't imagine a day without her."

Three weeks later, Brian and Kelly arrived at the elephant barn for a meet-and-greet with Asian elephant Siri and her keepers. Brian had purchased a Build-A-Bear plush elephant whose birth certificate said, "Will You Marry Me?" and the date, December 9, 2019.

The couple got to meet Siri, pet her, feed her jellybeans and ask her keepers all about elephants and their care. At the end, Brian dropped to one knee, gave Kelly her gift and popped the question. She said "Yes."

On their way out, they asked about the zoo as a wedding venue. Catering at the Zoo Event Coordinator Stephanie Deibler gave them a tour of our banquet facilities.

"Right then, we knew we wanted to have our wedding at the zoo," Kelly said. "We are both big animal people, so we wanted to do something animal-related for our big day."

They set the date for September 25, 2021, which gave them plenty of time to plan a wedding while fortunately avoiding the 2020 pandemic

Ever After with Elephants

Syracuse couple becomes first to say "I Do" at Asian elephant overlook

closures. They had a ceremony planned for the zoo courtyard, but about a month before, CATZ announced a new event venue – the main overlook at the Helga Beck Asian Elephant Preserve.

Stephanie Deibler and Catering at the Zoo Sales Manager Stephanie Brooks shared the news on the Catering at the Zoo Facebook on August 13. As soon as they did so, Stephanie Deibler said, "I have a bride who loves elephants who I am going to call next!" Kelly, who had just seen the post, beat her to it.

"As soon as we heard we could get married with the elephants, it was a done deal," Kelly said. "And it was the best decision we could have made."

Brian and Kelly say "I do" with elephants in view



"It is so cool to be able to say we were the first couple to get married in that space," Brian added.

Saturday, September 25 was sunny and 74, perfect wedding weather. By 5:30 p.m. their guests arrived and the bridal party assembled down the walkway to the overlook. Minutes later, five Asian elephants paraded out of the barn and across the green expanse.

"Everyone watched in awe, and one of the elephants came over to our bridal party and hung out with us," Kelly said. "While we were getting married, everyone including me and Brian could turn their head an inch and see elephants. It was absolutely magical."

After the ceremony, they had a cocktail hour in the zoo courtyard with Hoffmann's two-toed sloth Araña as greeter, a bar and appetizers among draped high-top tables and guest access to the indoor zoo. At 7 p.m. they moved to the banquet room for gourmet food, music and dancing on the beautiful outdoor patio.

"I cannot say enough about the entire Catering staff," Kelly said. "I don't know if I could have asked for a more perfect wedding. Everyone thought it was beautiful, everyone loved the food and they thought it was so cool that it was at the zoo and incorporated elephants!"



Learn more about booking your wedding or other event with Catering at the Zoo, email events@rosamondgiffordzoo.org, call (315) 435-8511 x8543 or visit cateringatthetoo.org,



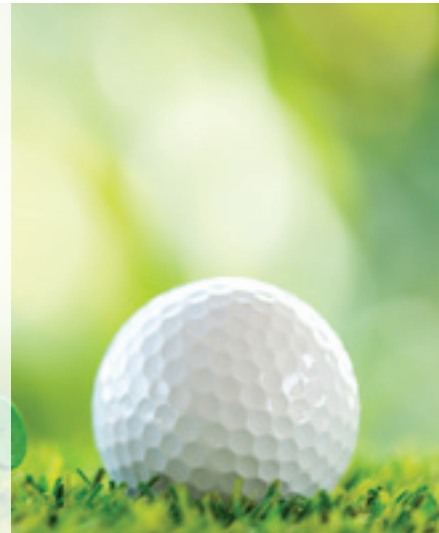
ROSAMOND GIFFORD ZOO

**SATURDAY
APRIL 23**



**TEE OFF
FOR THE ANIMALS**

**MONDAY
JUNE 20**



Save the Dates!

See page 12
for these and other
exciting events!



**FRIDAY
AUGUST 5**



*Fall
Conservation
Ball*

**FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 23**

