



A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo

“I Bet You Didn’t Know...”

The Zoo Year in Review

People seem to notice when something big happens at the Zoo, but we often overlook some very important milestones. For example, in 2006 the Zoo brought in a pair of highly endangered horned guanans – the first time in the history of American zoos that these truly remarkable (and truly, well, *unique-looking*) birds have ever been on display. People noticed the birth of cheetah cubs (the first litter in 14 years), but probably aren’t aware of the fact that 2006 marked the fourth time we have successfully bred Armenian vipers, *and we are the only zoo in North America to have ever bred this species*. On December 29, royalty arrived at the Zoo with the hatching of a king penguin chick. And for the first time ever, we “branched out” with a baby tree kangaroo at the Emerson Children’s Zoo. Of course, everybody knows about the birth of Maliha, our strapping 341 pound baby Asian elephant. She struggled a little to gain weight early on (I bet many of us wish we had that problem), but is now over 400 pounds. What many people may not be aware of, however, is just how endangered Asian elephants are in the wild.

To put it in perspective, imagine squeezing an elephant into a seat at our beautiful new baseball stadium. Funny mental image, huh? But here’s the sad news. If every Asian elephant left alive in the wild bought one ticket to the game, it wouldn’t even be a sellout.

The Zoo continues to grow and develop. 2006 saw the installation of the magnificent *Animals Always* sculpture and plaza that graces the main entrance to our park. Meanwhile, the new Orthwein Animal Nutrition Center is rising out of the ground and will be completed this year. The old commissary in its entirety would fit in the freezer of the new building. Why is the freezer so big? *In 2006 we fed 64 tons of frozen fish to our animals!* I bet you have no idea how many insects we feed to our animals – I know I didn’t. Let me paint another mental image.

In 2006 we fed over 924,000 mealworms and almost 240,000 crickets to Zoo animals. If laid end-to-end, they would stretch from the base camp at Mount Everest to the summit and all the way back down.

A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo

Page 2 of 3

I think people love to see the 17,913 animals in our collection but don't often think about what it takes to keep them healthy. Of course, 13,049 of them are invertebrates (read "bugs") and don't require the same extensive care as, for example, mammals. Still, our veterinary staff entered 9,174 medical records on 1,778 individuals, representing more than 400 different species. They averaged two fecal exams a day (yech!), two blood sample analyses a day, and saw an average of one patient an hour.

In 2006 we wrote 1,660 prescriptions for over 200 different drugs. At a standard co-pay of \$20, our Zoo animals would be out \$33,200. Fortunately, we cover 100% of their medical plan.

All of those animals live someplace here on the grounds. In fact, there are 77 buildings on the grounds of the Saint Louis Zoo, covering a total of 400,000 square feet. Those 77 buildings have about 2,000 things that engineers refer to as "building components" - pumps, compressors, boilers, ozone towers, and so on - that require regular maintenance. In 2006 we completed 4,541 work orders here on the grounds. Of course, that number doesn't include on-going efforts like snow removal or special efforts like removing fallen trees and limbs from the two horrible storms we experienced during the year. Just clearing our pathways is a chore, especially since the *Zoo has nearly 7.5 miles in sidewalks and paved paths* on our campus.

To illustrate how much area we have under roof at the Zoo, imagine a city block that is 300 feet long and 152 feet wide. Now imagine a building with a footprint occupying half of that city block. The building would have to be 17 stories tall to equal the buildings that comprise the Zoo.

A lot of people walk through the gates of the Zoo. In fact, in 2006, *2,917,218 visitors came to the Zoo with just over 45% of them coming from more than 50 miles*

away! The average visitor spent \$6.47 per person, generating earned revenues of \$18.8 million, a new record for the Zoo. Meeting the needs of those visitors isn't easy. In 2006, we parked 342,921 cars - an increase of 18,198 vehicles over last year. Those visitors ate 138,960 hot dogs, drank over 85,000 gallons of soda, and bought 139,665 plush toys.

In 2006 the Zoo visitors used enough toilet paper to stretch from the front gate to Chesterfield and back, and from the front gate to Jefferson City and back, and from the front gate to Washington, DC and back - with a fair amount of toilet paper left over.

People visit for a variety of reasons, including special programs like US Bank Wild Lights. In fact, Wild Lights set attendance and revenue records this year and Jammin' at the Zoo set a new attendance record. But they also come for private parties and facility rentals. The Zoo facilitated 520 private parties in 2006 that were attended by over 78,000 people. Facility rental income topped \$2.2 million for the first time, compared to a previous record \$1.6 million. 2006 saw the most successful A Zoo Ado ever. More importantly though, our visitors reported that overall they had a great experience.

Our satisfaction ratings are still outstanding. In 2006, 93% of our visitors reported their experience was excellent or very good. Any politician in America would love to have ratings this high!

People come from far away, in part, because the Zoo is still ranked number one in the nation. Awareness of the Zoo is high, in part, because so many stories in the media feature our Zoo. Those stories get aired or printed in a wide variety of places. I bet you have no idea how many places those stories appear. For example, in 2006 the Zoo was featured in eight stories that aired on BBC. We Americans don't listen to BBC much, *but the rest of the world does!*

A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo

Page 3 of 3

In 2006 the Zoo placed 2,174 print stories in publications with a total circulation of 436,102,405 – that’s a lot of people reading about the Zoo. Our radio and TV stories totaled over 800, reaching 58 million HUTs (Households Using TVs) across the nation – and that doesn’t count our “At the Zoo” show, which aired every Saturday during the year, plus we had two prime-time specials!

None of this would be possible without a strong support base. Our membership went well over 36,000 households and membership revenues exceeded budget by over \$100,000 in 2006. More importantly, our Marlin Perkins Society passed the million dollar mark for the first time in the Zoo’s history. In terms of fundraising, we are less than \$100,000 shy of our \$5.3 million goal for the Orthwein Animal Nutrition Center.

Between 2000 and 2005 the Zoo’s net assets (excluding depreciation expenses) have grown by \$62 million (or 55%). Over that same time period, revenues grew by \$16.3 million and expenses grew almost as much - \$15.9 million.

In the end, everything we do, we do for one simple reason – *because we care about animals and their future!* The Zoo’s conservation efforts, through the WildCare Institute, reached to far ends of the Earth in an effort to preserve wild things and wild places. When anthrax struck the Grevy’s zebra population on northern Kenya, our Zoo was there. In 2006 we coordinated an inoculation effort that resulted in the vaccination of almost one-third of the planet’s remaining zebra. We were featured in AZA’s Top 10 Conservation Projects of 2006, including 400 American burying beetles that were bred here in the Zoo and released back to the wild. When we first started the WildCare Institute, it was all based on proceeds from the Mary Ann Lee Conservation Carousel and an incredible endowment

gift from the Zoo Friends. *Now, in 2006, for every dollar we spent, we raised an additional dollar from outside sources.*

Education programs were up 28% over 2005, for a total of 2,087 programs that served 299,000 people. That’s equal to 90% of the population in the City of St. Louis! Or in other words, participants spent 2.38 years in educational programs at the Zoo in 2006.

Our tag line, *Animals Always*, is more than just a slogan to the people who work here, volunteer their time, or visit. We try to make every experience as educational as possible and to reach as many people as possible with our conservation message. That’s why we made the Monsanto Insectarium free in 2006. That’s why our Education Department has promised to double attendance at our wildly popular Camp Kangazoo in 2007. That’s why our dedicated corps of 1,161 volunteers donated over 80,000 hours of service to our institution. And that’s why we have worked so hard to extend our impact outside of the fence – to Forest Park, to the Bi-state region, and to the many field sites where Zoo staff work so tirelessly.

I hope you’ve enjoyed reading a little bit about what the Zoo has done in 2006 and hope even more that you’ll continue to stay an active member of the Zoo family in 2007. Thank you for your support and involvement.

Have a great and fulfilling New Year!



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