



## A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo

# Welcoming a New Decade

It's not only a new year, but it's the beginning of a new decade. This is a new chapter for us that is sure to be substantial in the Saint Louis Zoo's history. Before we look to the future, however, this letter is a chance for us to celebrate the latest milestones we have reached.

Every year, we seek to be better than the year before. We continuously strive to improve the welfare of animals, and we want to make an even bigger impact on our visitors, employees, volunteers and St. Louis region. As you read about our year in 2019, from joining our community in cheering on the St. Louis Blues to victory to welcoming 5,260 new baby animals to our Zoo, we hope our dedication to excellence shines through.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank you. None of the highlights included in this letter could have happened without your support. Your love for and investments in our Zoo have helped sculpt our institution into what it is today. Every day, we work to return the favor and invest in the future of our animals, planet and Zoo community. Thank you for your commitment to our shared success.

I hope you enjoy this report and to see you at the Zoo soon.



*Cheetah*



Visitors enjoy an up-close encounter with a giraffe.

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## Whoa, Baby!



We welcomed 5,260 new babies (including invertebrates) to the Zoo in 2019. Among those were:

- Eight Chinese crocodile lizards
- A Humboldt penguin chick
- A male Somali wild ass foal, Tobias
- Two babirusa piglets, Marge and Maggie—a nod to “The Simpsons” TV show
- A female Grevy’s zebra, Gloria—as you can tell, she was born shortly after the Blues won the Stanley Cup

We also made one very big—literally and figurately—pregnancy announcement.



In October 2019, we released the news that 23-year-old Asian elephant Rani is pregnant and due to give birth this summer. An elephant pregnancy lasts about 22 months and a newborn weighs about 250 to 350 pounds.

And, as you may have guessed, our bull elephant, Raja, is the father (he turned 27 on December 27, 2019). We’re excited to have the calf join our multi-generational elephant family and are optimistic that all will go well in Rani’s pregnancy.



## Animal Care and Conservation

### Hellbender Designated as Missouri’s Official Endangered Species

On July 11, Missouri Governor Mike Parson signed Senate Bill 210, which made a number of official state designations, including making the hellbender the official endangered species for the state of Missouri. This act was sponsored by Senator Karla May and carried through the House by Representative Jeff Justus. We are thrilled about this designation as it brings awareness to this unique and important salamander.



Several Zoo staff members pose with Missouri Governor Mike Parson.

# A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo



Center for Asian Elephant Conservation



Center for Chelonian Conservation



Center for Conservation of Congo Apes

## New WildCare Institute Programs and Centers

Through the Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Institute, we help animals (and communities that coexist with them) here in Missouri and all around the world. In 2019, we announced several new programs that focus on specific conservation initiatives: the Botswana Center for African Painted Dogs, Center for Asian

Elephant Conservation, Center for Chelonian Conservation, Center for Conservation of Congo Apes, Center for the Conservation of Ecuadorian Herpetofauna, Arctic Program, Asian Turtle Conservation Program, Crocodile Conservation and Research in Cuba Program, North American Songbird Program, and the Spring Peeper Program.



Spring peeper frog

## Zoo Receives AZA Accreditation

Last September, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) announced that we received our accreditation. To be accredited, our Zoo underwent a thorough review to make certain we have and will continue to meet ever-rising standards in categories that include animal care and welfare, veterinary programs, conservation, education, and safety. AZA requires zoos and aquariums to successfully complete this rigorous

accreditation process every five years in order to be members of the Association. Our Zoo has been an accredited AZA member since 1977.

## Zoo Honored for Work in Madagascar

The Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center at the University of Missouri–St. Louis presented the Zoo and the Missouri Botanical Garden with the World Ecology Award for our conservation work in Madagascar. Representatives from our Zoo first began working in Madagascar in the 1980s with the establishment of the Madagascar Fauna and Flora Group, a consortium of zoos and other organizations committed to conservation. We continue to support conservation efforts in Madagascar through the Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Institute.

## Zoo Staff Work on Projects Through The Living Earth Collaborative

We continue to work with our partner organizations, the Missouri Botanical Garden and Washington University, on projects through The Living Earth Collaborative. Through this program, we are helping to advance the study of biodiversity to ensure the future of Earth's species. Several of our staff were called to work on grant-funded projects in 2019, including projects addressing the conservation of pollinators, Asian forest tortoises and Grevy's zebra.

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## Looking to the Future

### Strategic Planning

We embarked on developing plans for the future of the Saint Louis Zoo and the Saint Louis Zoo North Campus with strategic planning. Several months and many hours went into shaping these plans and tactics for the future. We received input from our volunteer leadership, key leaders from Zoo staff and strategic partners from throughout the community.

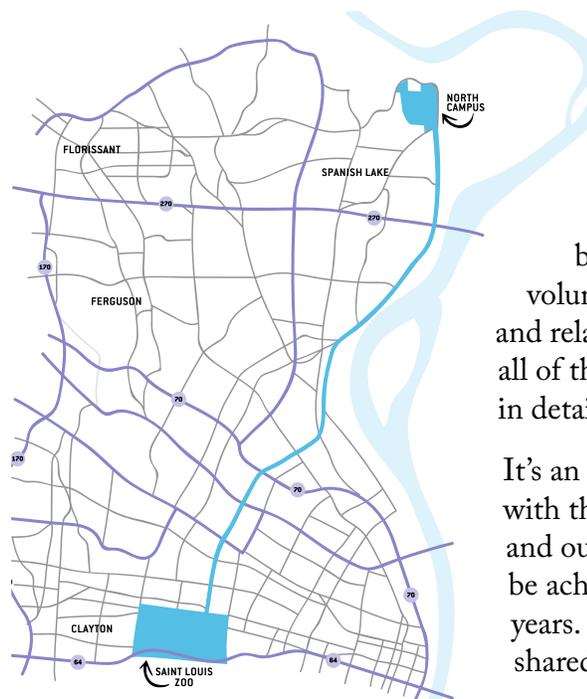
When shaping these plans, we articulated the leadership role the Zoo aspires to maintain through the excellent management of the animals in our care. We were able to create clear distinctions of what the visitor experience will be at the Zoo versus that at the North Campus. We created goals related to the Zoo's work in wildlife conservation. And finally, we specified that the Zoo's educational plans will be enhanced through inclusion and diversity efforts, and we will ensure a full complement of educational experiences at the North Campus.

The Zoo will continue to be a worldwide leader in the expertise of architecture for the care of animals in zoos as well as enhancing the visitor connection to those

animals. Of course, strategic planning also included specific plans to preserve our goal of having the Saint Louis Zoo and the Saint Louis Zoo North

Campus be two of the best places to work, serve and volunteer. The financial resources and related tactics needed to maintain all of these plans were outlined in detail.

It's an ambitious plan, and we hope with the support of the community and our dedicated staff, all of it will be achieved over the next several years. Specifics from the plan will be shared more widely in 2020.



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Guests check out an activity station at the open house.



Guests share their thoughts about the future of the North Campus.

## Joining the North St. Louis County Community

Ever since we knew a campus in Spanish Lake would be possible, we've been committed to being part of the north St. Louis County community. Since we acquired the Saint Louis Zoo North Campus, it's been our priority to meet and listen to residents in the surrounding area. In August 2019, we hosted a large open house and mailed out over 8,000 invitations to Spanish Lake residents. We had a great turnout and were pleased to talk to so many of our new neighbors.

In addition, Zoo staff, as well as teams from the AmeriCorps VISTA program and the Community Innovation and Action Center at University of Missouri-St. Louis, worked closely with the surrounding north St. Louis community in a Participatory Asset Mapping project.

## Zoo Announces Primate Canopy Trails Exhibit

One of our biggest animal welfare objectives is to get our monkeys and lemurs outside; currently, we have only a few outdoor habitats for select species. Last May, we announced our plans for Primate Canopy Trails, which is projected to open in 2021. The new exhibit will be adjacent to the Primate House and will provide spacious, outdoor habitats for all our monkeys and lemurs. Our Facebook post announcing this exhibit was our top-performing post in 2019, reaching 909,180 people.

This project will help ascertain what the community needs as far as educational programming in and around the North Campus as it develops. During their research, these individuals met with residents all over the community. They met people at apartment complexes, churches, youth programs and more. They also made it a priority to meet with communities that speak English as a second language. Overall, the team engaged with 5,111 community members through events, listening sessions, focus groups and surveys.

As we develop the North Campus, we will continue to work with residents of the region and community partners, as well as Zoo staff, volunteer leadership and donors. We will also continue to be transparent with our latest North Campus developments.



An aerial rendering of the future Primate Canopy Trails exhibit.

# A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo

## New at the Zoo in 2019



Roby the sea lion gives Louie, the Blues' mascot, a big kiss.



Guests check out the new Ray's Snack Shack restaurant.

### Zoo Sings "Gloria"

Throughout the Stanley Cup playoffs, we showed our team spirit. Animal care teams treated the animals to a variety of St. Louis Blues-themed enrichment, from puzzle feeders for the primates and elephants to a makeshift ice rink for the king penguins. And on several occasions, Louie, the St. Louis Blues' mascot, made an appearance at the Judy and Jerry Kent Family Sea Lion Sound. And to top it off, Zoo New England, with which we'd made a friendly wager, turned its bear habitat at the Stone Zoo into a St. Louis Blues bear habitat!

### First-Ever Zoo Bier

To the delight of beer lovers and Zoo supporters, we announced a partnership with Urban Chestnut Brewing Company. The first beer of this partnership was Grizzly Ridge Kölsch, which debuted last June at ZOOFARI presented by Wells Fargo Advisors. For every case of beer sold, Urban Chestnut donates \$3 to the Zoo. There were 1,740 cases sold in 2019, equaling \$5,220 for the Zoo's animal care and conservation efforts. We are working on a new beer in our partnership beer series with Urban Chestnut, which will debut this summer.

### Allergy-Friendly Restaurant Opens at the Zoo

Last April, we opened Ray's Snack Shack, which features an allergy-friendly menu for our visitors. Ray's Snack Shack serves items that are free of gluten, tree nuts, dairy and more. The restaurant showcases many Zoo favorites, including chicken strips, soft pretzel bites, nachos and Dole Whip frozen treats. Ray's Snack Shack is open every day during our summer season. The restaurant's top-selling item of 2019 was pineapple Dole Whip (4,966 sold.)



The Zoo and Urban Chestnut announce our beer partnership at Centene Grizzly Ridge.

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Kids enjoy the decorations at Halloweekends.

## New Fall Event Debuts: Halloweekends

We introduced a new Halloween event that allowed visitors to enjoy two whole weekends of free spooky fun—Halloweekends presented by SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital. During Halloweekends, which attracted 60,000 visitors, the Zoo was bedecked with family-friendly Halloween decorations and offered seasonal treats, costumed character meet-and-greets, exclusive discounts, and special pumpkin enrichment treats for the animals. This replaced the former one-day Spooky Saturday event.

## Record-Breaking Numbers

In 2019, we had the most successful U.S. Bank Wild Lights our Zoo has seen to date. We saw a record attendance of 80,250 guests, as well as unprecedented ticket revenue (\$694,453) and on-site visitor revenue (\$373,413). These numbers include attendance and revenue from Sensory Night at U.S. Bank Wild Lights. In addition, we celebrated record sponsorship revenue of \$85,000.

We also celebrated several philanthropic gifts to the Zoo in 2019. Our Endowment Fund, which provides an annual stream of support for Zoo operations, animal care, staff and more, hit a record high of over

\$75 million. We also had a record of 1,203 Marlin Perkins Society members, representing gifts of \$2,381,898. The Marlin Perkins Society is our upper-level gift club for those who contribute an annual gift of \$1,000 or more.



Visitors enjoy the light displays at U.S. Bank Wild Lights.

## New Inclusion Services Available for Visitors

Thanks to generous contributions from Fusion Interpreting Services and Lighthouse for the Blind, we were able to provide American Sign Language interpreters at Jungle Boogie presented by Mid America Chevy Dealers and on select days of the First Bank Sea Lion Show. In addition, audio describers were available at the Sea Lion Show and at our Safari Walking Tours. Audio description gives people who have impaired vision a more complete picture of the experience; visitors can put on an earpiece to listen to a narrative of what is happening during their adventure.

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Williams Family Solar Pavilion at twilight.

## Williams Family Solar Pavilion Opens

When guests visited Starbucks for their morning lattes or Candy Crossing for their free sample of fudge, they were able to enjoy their treats at the Williams Family Solar Pavilion. This structure opened in June 2019 and is located behind both shops. The structure itself is built with Corten steel and covered in delicate and elaborate etchings of freshwater flora and fauna. The deck overlooks our North Lake and is a perfect place to relax.

## Proposition Z at Work

We have been able to invest new funds received from the community through the Prop Z sales tax initiative in several projects. Here are some highlights of how we invested sales tax revenues entrusted to us from the community.

At the Saint Louis Zoo North Campus, we've addressed staffing and made detailed plans for the future resident animals that will be cared for at the Conservation and Animal Science Center. We also hired a new director and named a new curator. In addition, new staff from our Architecture & Planning Department were put into place and are hard at work. This is a start to creating a public safari experience for future guests and building a future for large populations of endangered species that will call the North Campus home.



Construction on the Emerson Zooline Railroad tunnels.

At the Saint Louis Zoo, we've used sales tax revenue to make much-needed improvements for our animals and visitors. The major projects include the demolition of the old Sea Lion Arena to allow space for the future Primate Canopy Trails exhibit and work on repairing and replacing the Emerson Zooline Railroad tunnels. Some of the original tunnel work dated back to 1963 and was long overdue for repair. Another project made possible with Prop Z funds was the construction of elevated platforms for the animals in Big Cat Country.



Demolition of the old Sea Lion Arena.

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## Celebrating Zoo Careers

### Dr. Eric Miller and Jack Grisham Retire After Decades of Service

Last year, two champions for conservation retired from the Saint Louis Zoo. Eric Miller, DVM, was Director of the WildCare Institute. He also served as Senior Vice President of Zoological Operations in his Zoo career. Jack Grisham served as Vice President of Animal Collections. He started his career in animal care as a mammal keeper and then worked his way up to Zoologist and Assistant Curator of Mammals before his role as a vice president.



Dr. Eric Miller



Jack Grisham



Dr. Lisa Kelley



Dr. Luis Padilla

After Dr. Miller and Grisham retired, we were proud to announce that they were succeeded by Lisa Kelley, Ph.D., and Luis Padilla, DVM, respectively.

### Welcoming Our New Director of Animal Health



Dr. Sathya Chinnadurai

New to the Zoo team is Sathya Chinnadurai, DVM, Director of Animal Health. In his position, Dr. Chinnadurai provides strategic direction and guidance to the Animal Health department. Before the Saint Louis Zoo, he was an instructor in zoological medicine at the University of California, Davis, and he was a senior staff veterinarian at Brookfield Zoo.



Michael Macek, Dr. Jo-Elle Mogerman, Bill Houston, Martha Fischer

### Introducing New Zoo Positions

With the acquisition of the property in Spanish Lake, we created new leadership positions that are specific to our two establishments: the Saint Louis Zoo and the Saint Louis Zoo North Campus.

Michael Macek, Chief Operating Officer since 2016, was promoted to Saint Louis Zoo Director. Macek will provide overall vision, leadership and support for the Zoo and its core zoological and operational activities. Jo-Elle Mogerman, Ph.D., joined us from the Shedd Aquarium to be the Saint Louis Zoo North Campus Director. She is responsible for the operations of the Conservation and Animal Science Center and the Wildlife Adventure Park at the North Campus.

In charge of animal care operations are Bill Houston, General Curator of the Saint Louis Zoo, and Martha Fischer, General Curator of the Saint Louis Zoo North Campus.



American bald eagle

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## Conclusion

Because of you, we had a great year at the Saint Louis Zoo! With your help, we raised awareness for animals like Missouri's Ozark hellbender, engaged many more visitors and St. Louis community members in our conservation mission, and planned for the future so that people can enjoy our Zoo for years to come.

The story of our Zoo is one of deep affection—generations have come here for over 100 years. We are proud that we are not only part of St. Louis' history, but also, the history of your family.

I wholeheartedly thank you for your support of the Saint Louis Zoo.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey P. Bonner, Ph.D.  
*Dana Brown President & CEO  
Saint Louis Zoo*



*Asian elephant*