A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo

Dedication to Animal Care and Conservation Continues

The New Normal

Looking to the Future
We’re happy to leave 2020 behind…

Who could’ve imagined that we’d spend a majority of our year social distancing, wearing masks, and not being able to attend functions or visit loved ones? I would’ve never guessed that our Zoo would be empty during our busy spring season, nor that we wouldn’t be able to see our dedicated volunteers and that we’d have to quickly pivot the way we welcome guests and operate our attractions and events. It was a rollercoaster of a year.

The turbulence of this unprecedented time has reminded us what really matters. Our loved ones. Our health. The simple yet meaningful action of waving hello or checking on friends and family, even if from a distance. I think we’ll move forward from this pandemic with a greater appreciation for things we may have taken for granted—a busy day at the Zoo, for instance!

As you read this publication, you’ll get a sense of how innovative our team has had to be. Many of our events and programs had to be modified or go virtual. We also had to implement many new policies and procedures to ensure guest, staff and animal safety. Working at and visiting the Zoo is certainly different these days, but one thing has not changed at all—our dedication to animals. The animals have continued to receive the same level of excellent care.

I have a lot of hope for 2021—hope for better health and more opportunities to come together. And I hope we can start taking baby steps toward some more normalcy soon. Until then, please stay safe.

Thank you for supporting our Zoo.

Jeffrey P. Bonner, Ph.D.
Dana Brown President & CEO
A Quieter Zoo: March – June 2020

Critical Animal Care Fund

Although the Zoo is free, revenue from guest spending plays a big factor in our Zoo’s operations. When we closed, we created the Critical Animal Care Fund to ensure our animals would receive the same exceptional standard of care. Even though we are now open, we are still incurring significant expenses to care for our animals.

A look at what it takes to care for our animals:

- **$9,210**: Amount spent on medical supplies and medications in just a five-week period
- **25,000**: Pounds of hay, produce, meat and mealworms the animals eat in just one week
- **$6,864**: Amount spent on laboratory diagnostic tests in just a five-week period

Our world turned upside down when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and our Zoo had to close to the public for 90 days. The Zoo felt like a ghost town. It was strange. It wasn’t the same without our guests. Our team had to quickly pivot from our normal plans and provide as much virtual content and programs as possible so we could remain connected. We also needed to continue providing quality care to the 13,000 animals at our Zoo.

A look at the generosity of our donors who have helped us during this crisis:

- **800**: Number of donors who contributed to the Critical Animal Care Fund
- **$450,000**: Amount raised through the Critical Animal Care Fund

Donate Online
On the Frontlines
Although the Zoo had to close to the public, we couldn’t shut down entirely. There are over 13,000 animals that rely on their care teams. We’d like to highlight just a couple animal care staff who have been working at the frontlines.

Helen Boostrom
Zoological Manager of Primates

How has COVID-19 impacted your normal job responsibilities?
The animals at the Zoo receive on-site care every day, and one of the things we strive for is to still provide quality care in any situation, whether the Zoo is closed to the public or not. Animal care staff is on grounds daily to feed, clean habitats and provide enrichment to the animals, regardless of the situation - holidays, bad weather and even pandemics.

The biggest impact has been figuring out how to provide high-quality care and continue to help our Zoo guests connect with animals in a safe setting with social distancing. We’re working with other departments, like our Education Department, to find ways to connect guests with our animals using new technology. We also share our stories through social media; for example, our posts about Utamu and her path to motherhood.

What precautions have you taken in your job?
The Primate Department is used to wearing masks and gloves for certain aspects of our job, since many primates are susceptible to human illnesses, such as colds. The use of these was expanded to more situations due to COVID-19, and we also now change into different clothes at the Zoo to help prevent us from bringing germs into primate areas.

Like many animal departments, our department split itself into two teams. This allows one team to quarantine if exposed while still allowing staff with established relationships with the animals to provide care. This is especially important for situations like chimpanzee Utamu’s pregnancy where the staff’s expertise and established trust with Utamu were critical.

What do you want guests to know about the Zoo amid this pandemic?
We miss the direct interactions with guests. My favorite aspect of the job is sharing stories about the animals and hearing our guests’ experiences. But from the animal care side, keeping guests and animals safe is the first priority, and by limiting my exposure to people and keeping my bubble small, I am helping keep the animals in my care healthy.
How has COVID-19 impacted your normal job responsibilities?

My job responsibilities include working as both a quarantine keeper and a pathology technician.

As a quarantine keeper, we provide care to new animals arriving at the Zoo and sick animals that require hospitalization. An animal’s time in quarantine usually includes a wellness exam, monitoring overall health parameters and welfare, and diet transition when appropriate. Quarantine itself requires a level of biosafety protocols, but COVID-19 has increased these precautions, especially for animals that have been identified as at risk of exposure to COVID-19. For example, we have coveralls/scrubs, masks, gloves, and shoes/shoe covers designated for specific rooms. For a period of time, especially during lockdown last year, the amount of animals within quarantine decreased as restrictions on travel were in place, affecting animal shipments. But because my duties include animal care, a quarantine keeper still needed to be on grounds daily (we have three quarantine keepers). At times when quarantine was empty, we were able to help other animal departments that needed assistance with coverage due to COVID.

Along with one other pathology technician, I also work with the Zoo’s staff pathologist and veterinarians to investigate why an animal has died. This includes assisting with or performing necropsies (animal autopsies), under the supervision of a pathologist or veterinarian. In addition to working with Zoo animals, the pathology department monitors diseases in native wildlife populations on Zoo grounds. I also help process any samples collected from the necropsy to be reviewed for histopathology (study of diseases in tissue) or sent out for further testing. Most of these duties require us to be on grounds. The pathology team is a smaller department, so we have been able to socially distance easier than other departments. A challenge due to COVID has been working with other laboratories to get testing completed. COVID has affected everyone, and communication has been delayed within institutions.

What do you want guests to know about the Zoo amid this pandemic?

The Zoo has been very supportive throughout the pandemic. The safety of employees and guests is always a priority. The Zoo employees all care about each other and want to do everything they can to protect their colleagues.
The New Normal: June 2020 – Present

After three months of being closed to the public, we reopened on June 13, 2020. Our Zoo operations needed to drastically change to help keep our guests, staff and animals safe. Although our “new normal” may not always be ideal, a visit to the Zoo is a fun and safe way to reconnect with animals and nature.

Focusing on Safety

Reopening the Zoo was no small task. Logistically, it was much easier to close the Zoo than to reopen it. Here is a look at actions we took to make the Zoo as safe as possible before reopening.

- 3,400 Masks provided to Zoo staff
- 600 “I’m Smiling Under This Mask” buttons
- 528 Number of safety-related signs installed around the Zoo
- 400 Gallons of hand sanitizer purchased
- 37 Temperature guns purchased for staff use
- 304 Units of Plexiglas installed
- 110 Sanitizer dispensers purchased
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### Focusing on Safety

- **3,690 ft.** Pavement tape placed to promote social distancing
- **1/3** Capacity at which the Zoo has operated since reopening
- **$207,000** Amount spent on COVID-19-related modifications and materials before reopening, including cleaning products and PPE (personal protective equipment)

### A Shift in Operations

The pandemic also changed how we provide service to guests. From requiring reservations to promote social distancing to selling masks in gift shops, we had to adjust our operations to fit a COVID-19 world.

- **1,411,267** Number of free daily reservations booked from June 13 to December 31, 2020
- **291,868** Guests who rode the Emerson Zooline Railroad, complete with Plexiglas to help ensure social distancing
- **1,018** Responses to reopening-related surveys, sent to Zoo staff and volunteers
- **12** Portable handwashing stations installed
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### The Parties Must Go On

Zoo events are some of the most fun ways to connect to the community. For many, coming to events like Boo at the Zoo and Wild Lights are a tradition. While some events had to be cancelled, we were able to host others virtually or in a modified way to promote social distancing.

- **493** Number of participants in virtual Camp KangaZoo
- **14,040** Minutes of virtual Saint Louis Zoo Preschool
- **59,282** Number of masks sold in Zoo gift shops
- **561,910** Number of individually wrapped food items sold
- **1,273,890** Lights at U.S. Bank Wild Lights

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The Parties Must Go On

$465,000+
Amount raised from A Zoo Ado presented by Wells Fargo, hosted virtually

3,087
Number of participants who virtually participated in the St. Louis Children’s Hospital Make Tracks Through the Zoo 5K

Working to Help Keep You Safe

Did you know we have staff whose positions are completely safety-focused? They have always worked to ensure guest, staff and animal safety. Throw COVID-19 into the mix, and they’ve had one busy year! Here the two Zoo staff members behind all our safety operations.

240
Apples given to the animals at our new fall event, Autumn with the Animals*

100
Pumpkins at Boo at the Zoo presented by SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital*

25,000+
Number of Zoo member and donor reservations for preview events before the Zoo reopened to the public

5,934
Reservations for our new adults-only event, Night at the Zoo presented by Mid America Chevy Dealers

*Apples and pumpkins donated by Eckert’s Country Store and Farms

Domini Montgomery
Safety & Risk Management Director

Nick Blaes
Safety & Risk Management Coordinator

How has COVID-19 impacted your normal job responsibilities?

COVID-19 has added additional job responsibilities on top of our everyday safety and risk management tasks. We have health screening forms, contract tracing, symptom monitoring and more to tackle as a result of the pandemic, in addition to our overarching goal of keeping guests and staff safe while working and/or visiting Zoo grounds.

What have been some of the most challenging aspects of establishing protocols amid this pandemic?

We’ve had several challenges. We have to be sure to communicate all new policies and procedures internally. We also struggle with mask compliance among guests. Another important factor to consider that poses a challenge to everything right now, including new protocols and completing job duties, is COVID fatigue and mental health.

What do you want guests to know about the Zoo amid this pandemic?

We are doing everything we can to keep our staff, animals and guests safe, and safety remains our top priority. We want to remain open, and remaining open safely is a team effort. It’s important that guests understand they play an important role in this effort, too! Please, wear a mask over your mouth and nose when on campus, regardless of whether or not you’re indoors or out. Please be mindful of other parties, and maintain social distancing from those outside of your household bubble. We’ve reopened with the guidance of the City and with safety in mind—please respect our signage and new policies. And just know, we are so happy to have you back!
Dedication to Animal Care and Conservation Continues

Despite the health-related challenges thrown at us, our dedication to animal care has never wavered. Throughout this pandemic, essential personnel have continued to show up for work and provide care for the animals under the same high standards we have always maintained.

Conservation work has continued as well through the Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Institute, including releasing several species back to their native habitats. Through the Saint Louis Zoo Institute for Conservation Medicine, staff work to help ensure people and animals remain healthy, which includes the study of zoonotic diseases (COVID-19 is an example of such a disease). Although this pandemic has presented new challenges, our Zoo and our partners remain dedicated to conserving animals here and around the world.

New at the Saint Louis Zoo

896
Number of new babies born in 2020, including a male Guereza colobus monkey (named Teak) born on February 3 and a female baby chimpanzee (named Raven) born on October 28

7
Number of eggs laid by our 60-year-old ball python. She hadn’t been with a male in more than 15 years, so it was quite a surprise!

35
Number of new arrivals to our Zoo, including our new capybara, Aspen. These animals came to our Zoo from other accredited institutions.
### Animals Released into Native Habitats through the WildCare Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Addax released to the wild in the Ouadi Rimé-Ouadi Achim Wildlife Reserve in Chad via the Saharan Wildlife Recovery Center and its partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,938</td>
<td>Number of prescriptions for 866 different animals</td>
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<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Number of American burying beetles released at the Taberville Prairie Conservation Area in Missouri via the Center for American Burying Beetle Conservation and its partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,724</td>
<td>Fecal samples processed</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,000+</td>
<td>Number of hellbenders released into their native Missouri rivers via the Ron Goellner Center for Hellbender Conservation and its partners</td>
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### A Charitable Gift for the Carnivores

In 2020, Kevin Beckmann provided a leadership contribution of $3.5 million to the Saint Louis Zoo Association, with $1 million designated to name the Cheetah Savanna habitat in River’s Edge. Thanks to this expansive area, cheetahs can rotate through their public-facing habitat from multiple habitats that are located behind the scenes.

In addition, Mr. Beckmann provided $1.5 million to endow the position of Curator of Carnivores. This endowment will provide support for the leadership position that oversees the Zoo’s carnivores. This is the sixth professional position to be endowed at the Zoo. Also, there was $1 million in support for an important wildlife conservation initiative.

We appreciate the generous support and leadership of Kevin Beckmann at the Saint Louis Zoo and in our community.

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<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>878</td>
<td>Trafficked radiated tortoises in Madagascar examined by Institute for Conservation Medicine staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>953</td>
<td>Number of whole blood samples processed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
<td>Vultures in South Africa examined by Institute for Conservation Medicine staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161</td>
<td>Students who participated in a virtual turtle tracking project with Institute for Conservation Medicine staff</td>
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Looking to the Future

It’s a new year, and I think we’re all optimistic for better times to come. Although the road ahead is uncertain, we can start to see the light ahead. We have many new ventures coming up, all of which further our animal care and conservation mission.

Primate Canopy Trails

This 35,000-square-foot outdoor expansion of the Primate House will open in the summer of 2021. This exhibit will provide outdoor habitats for our monkeys and lemurs, and it will allow guests to see primates like never before.

Emerson Dinoroarus

Opening in April 2021, this new exhibit will feature 15 different groupings of animatronic and stationary dinosaurs. Dinoroarus will give us a chance to talk about difficult topics like extinction and how some predecessors of dinosaurs, like turtles and crocodiles, are still with us, as well as how some descendants of dinosaurs, like birds, still grace our lives.
Saint Louis Zoo
WildCare Park

In December 2020, we announced the name of our 425-acre north St. Louis County property – Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Park. We also announced a generous gift from longtime Zoo supporters, the Kent family, to name the Kent Family Conservation and Animal Science Center, which will be located at the WildCare Park.

The WildCare Park features two different components:

- **The Public Experience**
  Guests will enjoy a unique outdoor adventure that sends guests on a safari through herds of animals roaming wild over gently rolling grassy meadows and through native forests.

- **The Kent Family Conservation and Animal Science Center**
  Thanks to a leadership gift from Judy and Jerry Kent and their family, conservationists will work to sustain populations of endangered species, conduct research and engage in applied conservation programs.

The Zoo also is studying the native animals and plants that live in and around the property. The first step in those efforts are biodiversity studies. Currently, there are eight areas of study: bats, birds, coyotes and foxes, invertebrates/pollinators, plants, reptiles, amphibians, and water quality of lakes and streams.

We estimate a public opening as early as 2026 for the WildCare Park.

We owe gratitude to many people who have helped establish the WildCare Park. Volunteers campaigned for us when Proposition Z went before St. Louis County voters. The Staenberg Group, a real estate development firm, generously gifted us with their time and expertise during the property acquisition process. Residents in north St. Louis County provided us with valuable insight as our new neighbors. We’re grateful for the support of our community who have helped make this dream a reality.

**Thank you for supporting our Zoo.**

- **Cameras used for WildCare Park Canid Conservation Initiative:** 15
- **Photos of wildlife taken for the WildCare Park Canid Conservation Initiative:** 32,000
- **Samples taken for an aquatic turtle study at the WildCare Park:** 727
Our Mission

The mission of the Saint Louis Zoo is to conserve animals and their habitats through animal management, research, recreation, and educational programs that encourage the support and enrich the experience of the public.

Photos by Sarah Carmody, Christopher Carter, Laurie Chrisco, Kari Frey, Ray Meibaum, David Merritt, JoEllen Toler, Megan Turner and Robin Winkelman