NOW DIGITAL!
Greetings Zoo Friends,

It has been a little over a year since I arrived at the Sacramento Zoo, and as I walk around the zoo today, I am astonished and proud of the improvements we have made to your zoo. Zoo staff, volunteers, docents and our board of trustees have worked diligently to provide a better guest experience and an enhanced commitment to animal welfare and conservation.

Our playground was moved near the giraffe exhibit with new amenities including shaded picnic areas and fun animals to climb on such as a frog, ant, ladybug and a hippopotamus. A mob of meerkats now scurries around a man-made termite mound where you can watch them climb up high to see the entire center of the zoo. These small and dynamic carnivores have quickly become some of the most popular residents of the zoo as children enjoy sitting on the rocks and interacting with the meerkats through the glass. Another exciting update is the new education hub dubbed the Education Outpost, where our team of educators will now be able to hold an array of exciting educational programs. These two portable classrooms will serve students of all ages as they engage our staff and learn more about wildlife and what they can do to make a difference for animals and for our planet.

Finally, where there was once a row of aged bird cages, is now the expansive home for the marvelous and mysterious okapi. The okapi is a rare species that is the closest living relative of the giraffe. Sacramento Zoo is now one of only three institutions on the West Coast to care for this endangered species. Just as important as housing and caring for okapi is the work we are doing to educate our visitors of their plight in the wild and how we are working with field biologists to conserve this species in their native Democratic Republic of Congo.

As we continue to make necessary and exciting changes on our current footprint, we also continue to work with the City of Sacramento to determine the best future for the Sacramento Zoo. Our hope is to ultimately relocate the zoo to a larger footprint so we can continue to work with iconic animal species such as great apes, giraffes and big cats as well as lesser known species such as thick-billed parrots, western pond turtles and others.

For more information regarding the zoo’s potential relocation and what you can do to get involved to help provide a better home for the animals, please visit www.saczoo.org/relocation. And if you would like to show your support of zoo relocation, please feel free to join us at City Hall on May 28 at 5 p.m. when we will be presenting our case for relocation to the Sacramento City Council.

Thank you for all you do to help us create a better Sacramento Zoo!

Jason Jacobs
Executive Director
Sacramento Zoo
As a conservation organization, the Sacramento Zoo is committed to supporting wildlife conservation through financial and in-kind support. Over the past decade, the zoo has contributed over one million dollars to conservation projects worldwide. In 2018, the Sacramento Zoo contributed more than $150,000 to wildlife conservation. These funds support field conservationists, local wildlife population management, work within communities to mitigate their impact on species and help with habitat protection and restoration. In 2019, proceeds from the zoo’s Quarters for Conservation program will support CLAWS Conservancy for Lions, Tuleyome Wildlife Restoration Effort and Grevy’s Zebra Trust.

In our very own backyard alone, the zoo is making considerable strides to help species thrive in the wild. In addition to our ongoing hands-on work with the western pond turtle and California garter snake conservation, the zoo is supporting other important regional conservation efforts.
FOOTHILL YELLOW-LEGGED FROGS

The objective of this particular conservation project is to restore and save a native California species known as the foothill yellow-legged frog, and help it to thrive and repopulate in the wild. Through this conservation initiative, the Sacramento Zoo is helping with a population enhancement project in the region to increase population size and hopefully restore this species. Individually, we are working with the Rock Creek-Cresta Foothill Yellow-legged Frog Technical Group to restore foothill yellow-legged frog populations in the Plumas and Butte County areas of the Feather River, which is the only place in the world this species inhabits. This project is vital because the species is declining in record numbers due to water flow management in important breeding sites. Without intervention, this native species could become extinct in a matter of years.

TULEYOME WILDLIFE RESTORATION EFFORT

Tuleyome’s long-term plan is to restore vital habitat for black bears, mountain lions and Tule elk in the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument region that was destroyed by wildfires in 2018. Phase one of the restoration will be field assessment of the burned areas and the selection of sites that can most effectively be restored. Phase two will consist of the actual restoration work and the creation of a long-term management plan to better protect the selected sites from further wildfire damage.

These projects, along with funding to support the nearby Cosumnes River Preserve and projects to save local threatened species such as the tri-colored blackbird and the sandhill crane are just a few ways in which the Sacramento Zoo works to save species in the wild.

For more information and a complete listing of the zoo’s conservation work, visit www.saczoo.org/conservation.

Certified California Naturalist Nate Lillge in the middle of the zoo-funded post-wildfire study at the Silver Spur Ranch in the heart of the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument. You can see a hillside covered in new grasses and wildflowers, and evidence of the Pawnee Fire burn in the background. Credit: Mary K. Hanson, Tuleyome.
Shortly after Coconut the snow leopard was born in May 2018, the Sacramento Zoo’s animal care team noticed that he had abnormal eyelids. This birth defect, called eyelid agenesis or eyelid coloboma, causes a section of the eyelid to be missing and abnormally shaped. The eyelids perform an important function in protecting the surface of the eye from injury or drying out. Abnormally shaped eyelids can cause fur to rub against the eye surface, leading to irritation and damage.

The veterinary team at the Sacramento Zoo worked with Coconut’s keepers and UC Davis veterinary specialists in ophthalmology to determine the best plan for treating Coconut’s eyelids. As just a young cub, Coconut began receiving lubricant eye drops to prevent injury to the eye surface by fur protruding from the abnormal eyelids. Coconut’s keepers also began a training program to get him used to (and even get excited about) receiving eye medications and having his eyes regularly examined by giving him treats.

By Jenessa Gjeltema, DVM, Dipl. ACZM

Coconut’s name, sponsored and selected by Coconut’s Fish Café in Sacramento, California, was chosen by the owners as a legacy to their late house cat who was also named Coconut. Daniel Oney, owner and chief operating officer said, “We see the partnership with the Sacramento Zoo and Coconut the snow leopard cub as an exciting way to keep Coconut’s legacy alive and well while supporting the work of the Sacramento Zoo at the same time.”
The veterinary team at the Sacramento Zoo and the ophthalmology team from UC Davis used Coconut’s training to help monitor his eye health while they began planning a surgical procedure to correct the problem. Because Coconut appeared to be able to close his abnormal eyelids enough to protect the eye, the focus of his treatment was on permanently removing the fur and eyelashes that were constantly irritating his eyes to make him more comfortable.

Drs. Ray Wack and myself, Jenessa Gjeltema, veterinary specialists in zoological medicine, provided expertise in how to perform anesthesia for the procedure safely while the veterinary ophthalmologist team from UC Davis, led by Dr. Brian Leonard and Dr. Kathryn Good-Koehler developed a plan for how to remove the fur and eyelashes. Several UC Davis veterinary residents and students eager to learn from the experience also participated in the procedure. During the surgery, the ophthalmologists used cryosurgery (application of very cold temperatures) to carefully destroy hair follicles at the locations where these hairs were protruding into Coconut’s eyes.

Following the procedure, Coconut was given medication for pain and eye drops to make him as comfortable as possible during his recovery. He was monitored carefully by the veterinary team during healing. Following his recovery, Coconut’s keeper, Erin Dougher, was visibly pleased with the results and said that, “Coconut now holds his eyes open much wider after his surgery, probably because he is more comfortable now that the hairs have been removed.” Coconut’s procedure was considered a success. He will continue to be monitored by the team, and at his next routine preventive health examination, his eyes will be fully reevaluated for any remaining or regrown hairs that may require a second treatment to resolve.

As a zoological veterinarian, I am very proud that through the Sacramento Zoo’s partnership with UC Davis, we were able to work together as a team to provide Coconut with the expert care he needed. 🐾

The Sacramento Zoo’s partnership with UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine allowed Coconut to receive the best treatment plan with several specialists in veterinary medicine participating in this important procedure.
Thanks to a generous sponsorship from Jiffy Lube, the zoo renovated a portion of the Small Wonders habitat to house a mob of meerkats. New features include enhanced rockwork and most notably a seven-foot tall artificial termite mound. Meerkats are social animals and take turns serving as sentry. The sentry finds a high point and keeps a sharp eye out for birds of prey, jackals, leopards and other predators. The sentry will sound the alarm which sends the other meerkats scurrying for cover. The zoo’s termite mound allows our mob of five to cover various shifts as sentry and oversee activities within the center of the zoo.

This lively mob of five meerkats made their debut in November, capturing the hearts of zoo staff and visitors alike. Be sure to stop by their new exhibit, located near the Tall Wonders giraffe habitat, and watch them burrow, nap and keep lookout on their termite mound.

Special thanks to:
Over the past several months, the zoo’s animal care and facilities staff have been working tirelessly in an effort to bring a rare and endangered species to Sacramento: okapi. As a result of months of planning, visits to zoos across the country and collaboration with zoos and keepers alike, the Sacramento Zoo is now proud to be the only zoo in Northern California to house this incredible animal.

**Okapi are extremely rare.** It is believed that there are less than 25,000 individual okapi left in the world. This amazing and elusive animal is only found in the dense rainforests of central Africa, specifically in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the second largest country in Africa. Okapi are listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) due to habitat loss and poaching.

The only living relative of the giraffe, okapi are distinguished by their velvety dark brown coat, with black-and-white striped legs and hindquarters, similar to that of a zebra’s markings. Just like giraffes, okapi are hoofed mammals with a prehensile tongue that allows them to pull bark and leaves off the tall trees that make up their diet.

Two male okapi, Mo (short for Molimo) and Forest, made the long journey from the Denver Zoo to Sacramento in late November. After a brief quarantine period to monitor their health, both okapi are now enjoying their brand-new exhibit, snacking on vegetation and enjoying the sunshine.

Thank you for helping us bring okapi to Sacramento!
The okapi exhibit, completed by the zoo’s very own in-house facilities team, consists of a barn, two large and lush pastures and an observation deck. As the zoo looks toward potential relocation, the okapi barn was designed so it could be disassembled and moved to another location if the need arises. To mimic the dense rainforests where they are found, zoo staff chose the tree-lined pathway between the Reptile House Lawn and Australian Outback as the ideal location for this species known as the “forest giraffe.”

As part of our commitment to the care of okapi, the Sacramento Zoo supports the Okapi Conservation Project which is dedicated to saving this endangered species by partnering with people within the Democratic Republic of Congo to focus on wildlife protection, agroforestry and community assistance.

This ambitious endeavor would not have been possible without the support of the Sacramento community. Proceeds from the zoo’s 2018 Wild Affair gala, as well as generous donations from individuals, foundations and corporate businesses made this project a reality. Thank you for helping us bring okapi to Sacramento!

RECENTLY, the zoo added even more residents to the okapi exhibit – a pair of black crowned cranes! This impressive species of bird now share a space with Forest. Siouxsie, the female, and Kiwi, the male, are both one-year-old and arrived at the zoo in early April.

meet MO & FOREST!
BEHIND-THE-SCENES TOURS
[ AT THE SACRAMENTO ZOO ]

The Sacramento Zoo is excited to announce our latest program: behind-the-scenes tours of some of the most exclusive areas in the zoo! Ever wondered what it takes to care for the animals at the zoo? Or are you interested in just getting a little bit closer to your favorite animals? Regardless of the reason, our new behind-the-scenes tours are sure to offer you and your family a unique glimpse of the Sacramento Zoo.

HOOVES AND HORN
The animals roaming the savanna and forests of Africa are beautiful and fascinating creatures. This tour will take you behind the scenes of the zoo’s hoofstock area where you can gaze up into the eyes of a giraffe from the keeper walkway and talk about the care and keeping of some of the hoofed animals at the zoo. You might even be lucky enough to hand feed a bongo!

REPTILE HOUSE
Calling all lovers of lizards, snakes and frogs! The tour of the Reptile House will take you behind the scenes of the zoo’s Reptile House to see some of the more than 40 reptile and amphibian species at the zoo! From antivenin to turtle hatchlings and everything in between, you will learn about everything it takes to care for reptiles, amphibians and more.

FEATHERED FRIENDS
Avian enthusiasts will love this tour! This exciting experience will take you throughout the entire zoo to learn about some of the zoo’s most treasured feathered residents! Your tour will start in the zoo’s kitchen where you will meet up with one of the talented bird keepers and learn about the animals’ diets and how they are prepared. You will then accompany keeper staff for an afternoon feed-out, assisting with the feeding of multiple species, even going into some of the exhibits with the birds – a true opportunity to get up close!

SNOW LEOPARD – COMING SOON!
Snow leopards are beautiful, fascinating and often elusive creatures. The snow leopard tour includes learning about these large cats and finding out about the quirks and personalities of each of the Sacramento Zoo’s three snow leopards. Your guide will then take you behind the scenes to meet with a zookeeper to see one of the adult snow leopards up close and learn what it takes to care for them. You will end with an experience you will never forget: seeing a training session up close and possibly even getting a chance to assist with feeding one of the cats!

Visit www.saczoo.org/behindthescenestours for more information and to register today!
When you walk around the zoo, it’s easy to differentiate the newer exhibits from the older ones. As with many zoo improvements, a lot of zoos around the country have started to move toward glass-fronted exhibits when possible to provide an uninterrupted view of an animal’s habitat, while also allowing guests to get as close as possible to the amazing animals living inside.

Here at the Sacramento Zoo, we owe the credit for our glass-fronted exhibits to one man: David Sexton, founder and owner of River City Glass. From the glass-fronted window you visit when you enter the Member’s Entrance of the zoo, all the way to the inside view of the aardvark’s mound, River City Glass has made quite the mark on the Sacramento Zoo. David has been a zoo visitor since he was a young child, and then went on to take his children to visit the zoo as they were growing up. As he puts it, he’s “always had a special connection to the zoo.” So, we decided to ask him why, and what makes it so important for him to give back.

Q: What was the first exhibit you helped the zoo with?
A: It’s been quite some time, but I believe it was the original chimpanzee exhibit. One of the first exhibits at the zoo to have a glass front.

Q: Did you grow up in Sacramento? What is your connection to the zoo?
A: I was actually born in Vallejo but spent most of my childhood in Dixon. It was when we moved to Dixon that I first visited the Sacramento Zoo. Then, after my time in the service, I moved to Sacramento and shortly after started my business.

Q: What made you first donate to the zoo?
A: Well, someone asked! And I was happy to help. It’s important for me to help when I can.

Q: What exhibits have you worked on at the zoo?
A: The first was chimpanzee. We have done some glass replacement at the Reptile House, we did the glass at giant anteater, red panda and the turtle exhibit next to it, Small Wonders, North American river otter and the Dr. Murray E. Fowler Veterinary Hospital.

Q: That sounds like all the glass in the zoo!
A: Just about.

Q: What is your favorite animal?
A: My favorite animals are the red panda and the big cats. And my wife and I sponsored a carousel animal: the hippopotamus.

Q: Is there anything special you want to share with our readers?
A: I just think this place is a real treasure. I love coming in the mornings, when fewer people are at the zoo, and just getting away. My employees love visiting with their families too, and they love to come help when we work on an exhibit. This place is a real jewel for the area.
Most recently, the zoo has solicited David’s expertise regarding an exciting new improvement to the zoo: a glass-fronted lion exhibit! The zoo’s facilities department will begin by creating an opening in the adjacent former tiger exhibit, creating a space that will double the current exhibit space for the zoo’s resident lion pair: Kamau and Cleo. Once the opening has been created, the front of the exhibit will be completely torn down and replaced with a glass front, allowing an uninterrupted view of the lion pair in their new, expanded exhibit. This endeavor is very exciting and showcases the zoo’s commitment to animal welfare by giving these majestic animals more space to roam and bask in the afternoon sun. The project is expected to be complete by the end of summer! Stay tuned for updates on the zoo’s website and blog.

On your next visit to the zoo, be sure to admire the glass-fronted Dippin’ Dots station near the gift store; David and his crew donated the glass for that last summer. As you stroll past the red pandas, sleeping lazily on the tree branches, thank River City Glass for the uninterrupted view you have of those adorable little faces. Walk past Small Wonders of Africa and see the aardvark asleep on her back, and watch as the Wolf’s guenon touches the glass, daring you to do the same. Stroll past the North American river otters and watch as they scamper along the exhibit’s perimeter, trying to catch up to you. Thanks to David and the crew at River City Glass for their continued support of the zoo’s animals, all of this is possible, and we are grateful to them for all of it, every single day! 🦊
MONTHLY EVENTS

WELLS FARGO WEDNESDAYS
First Wednesday of every month: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Bring your kids to the Sacramento Zoo for free the first Wednesday of every month thanks to the generosity of Wells Fargo! Up to four kids, ages 2-11 will be admitted for free with a paid adult.

NATURE EXPLORERS
Last Saturday of each month: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Get wild about nature at the Sacramento Zoo! Enjoy a new way for young nature explorers and their grown-ups to investigate the wilderness in their own backyard.
Activities are free with paid admission to the zoo.

MAY

18 Wine & Brew at the Zoo
Saturday: 5 to 8 p.m.
Enjoy samples of local wine and beer from some of your favorite wineries and breweries.
Zoo closes early at 1:30 p.m.

20 Senior Tea & Tours
Mondays: 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Have a pleasant cup of tea and a guided tour of the Sacramento Zoo! Designed for seniors ages 55 and over.

28 City Council Meeting – Zoo Relocation & Expansion
Tuesday: 5 p.m. at City Hall
Join the Sacramento Zoo during this meeting with the Sacramento City Council to present our case for a new, expanded Sacramento Zoo. Your support is critical to our success.
**JUNE**

**3** Summer Camp begins
*Monday: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.*
The Sacramento Zoo offers full-day and half-day camps throughout the summer. Your children will learn about animals and nature while enjoying a fun and exciting atmosphere that will never feel like school.

**8, 14, 21**
*Family Overnights*
*Fridays & Saturdays: 5:30 p.m. to 9 a.m.*
See all the nighttime zoo has to offer at these fun-filled educational family overnights. Includes a tour of the zoo, story time, crafts and more!

**16**
*Father's Day BBQ*
*Sunday: 11 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.*
Bring dad or granddad to the zoo for a BBQ to celebrate Father’s Day! Lawn games, activities and other family fun especially for the dad in your life!

**22**
*Celebrate! Giraffe Day*
*Saturday: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.*
Come help us celebrate and conserve the world’s tallest animals for World Giraffe Day, the longest day of the year! Find out more about these gorgeous gentle giants and how to help them through crafts, games and educational keeper chats.

**JULY**

**4 & 5**
*Half-Price Days*
*Thursday & Friday: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.*
All the fun at half the price! Visit the zoo on these days in July and enjoy the zoo at half the price of regular admission. Visit saczoo.org for prices and additional dates throughout the year.

**6, 12, 20, 26**
*Family Overnights*
*Fridays & Saturdays: 5:30 p.m. to 9 a.m.*
See all the nighttime zoo has to offer at these fun-filled educational family overnights. Includes a tour of the zoo, story time, crafts and more!

**25**
*Member Evening*
*Thursday: 5:30 to 8 p.m.*
The whole zoo is open for this after-hours event! Bring your own picnic dinner or pick up something tasty at the Kampala Café and enjoy the zoo at this members-only event.

Visit saczoo.org for more information and to register
Saying goodbye to beloved giraffe, 
GOODY 
9.15.1998 – 5.7.2019 

This issue of Maagizo is dedicated to our beloved giraffe, Gudrun, affectionately known to staff and visitors as “Goody.”