



Heart of the Oregon Zoo



 OREGON
ZOO
FOUNDATION

The Oregon Zoo—**your zoo**—is launching an ambitious and inspiring campaign to create wild and engaging new habitats and invest in our crucial education, conservation and animal welfare programs.

Together with your kind and generous support, our **Heart of the Oregon Zoo** campaign will:

- Welcome polar bears back to our zoo with **Polar Passage**
- Expand and rebuild **Primate Forest**
- Enlarge and renovate our **Rhino Habitat** for critically endangered rhinos
- Enrich animal welfare right now and into our bright future
- Support critical conservation projects here in the Pacific Northwest and around the world
- Invest in vital education programs



Please, join us on this Heart of the Oregon Zoo tour! As you read these stories, I invite you to reflect on where your heart is in our zoo, and how you can become part of the story!

Welcome to the heart of your Oregon Zoo!

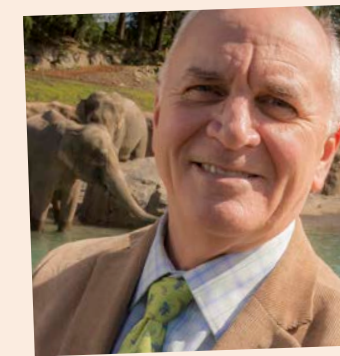


Julie Fitzgerald, Executive Director

Our zoo is a place for people. People like you and me.

The Oregon Zoo reflects a tradition of strong community involvement across generations. Today, our zoo is a place to learn firsthand about wildlife—and about the realities of our natural world, right here in our own back yard. Our world today has challenges: deforestation, climate change, competition for habitat. I believe it is a privilege and a responsibility for the people of Oregon today to stand up and stand together to support our zoo. Our zoo is a place to celebrate the joy and delight of nature. To every one of our neighbors—including you—I want to say this: let's imagine what is possible and let's work together to make our dreams come true.

Today, my heart is at the entrance to our zoo, where I see people come in with excitement and curiosity as they start their day at the zoo. Today, I am welcoming you!



Dr. Don Moore, Zoo Director

I was that kid showing up at Sunday school with a toad in my pocket. When you ask me about my favorite animal, all I can say is that it's the last one I was with and the next one I'm going to see. But the reality today is that animals on this planet have declined by 90% in our lifetimes. We're in the 6th extinction, right now. Human beings have a deep responsibility for stewardship of the planet. That doesn't mean dominance, that doesn't mean a planet that is a red desert or a snowball but a green, living planet with fascinating organisms from tiny frogs to giant polar bears.

My heart is with our staff who are doing an incredible job caring for species here in our zoo and helping save their wild relatives around the world.



Polar Passage

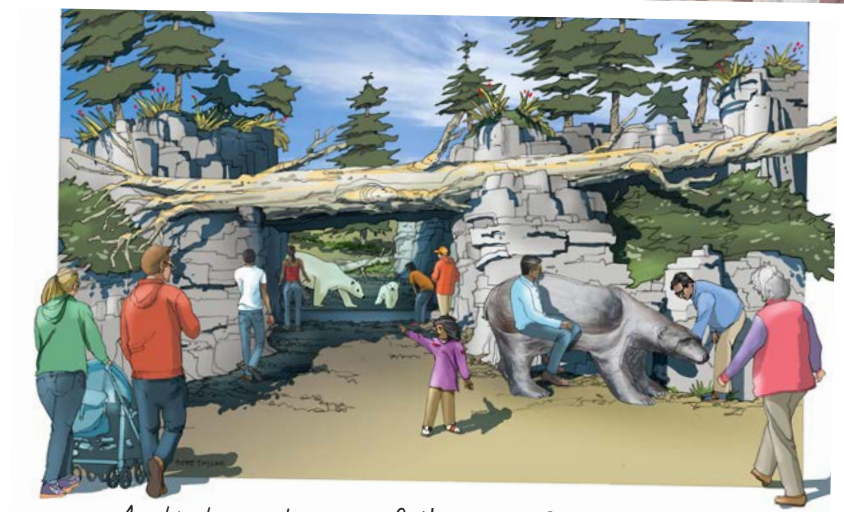
Amy Cutting, Curator, North America

Have you ever seen a 10-week-old polar bear? It is ridiculously adorable. And yes, that's the official scientific term! But what I really love about polar bears is their intelligence. They are so clever. In the wild you see cubs sledding, wrestling and playing tug-o-wars. In zoos, those smarts, curiosity, and creativity translate into playful behaviors well into their geriatric years. I am also fascinated by the diversity of behaviors they can apply to different situations. I've watched a big, tough and intimidating polar bear suddenly become incredibly gentle and attentive to her cub. My favorite example was when a female pushed her 8-week old cub to the fence line in front of me so she could go for a swim. It was like she was saying, "Hey, make yourself useful and watch this for a minute, will you? I'm trusting you."

Polar Passage is built on studies about what we know polar bears need in a zoo environment. Our saltwater pools will have variable depths, plus a variety of water courses and beach habitats with deep, shallow and moving water to support the bears' healthy fur and skin. And we'll also have a flake ice machine constantly dropping snowy ice into the habitat. Elevated areas will allow them to survey and smell their neighborhood. We believe in providing an environment where bears make meaningful choices all day long: digging, resting, swimming, socializing, relaxing... whatever behavior they prefer.

In the Arctic, you cannot deny the scientific evidence that ice is retreating and polar bears are really in dire straits. This species has already adapted to be on the edge of what a mammal can tolerate for seasonal fasting. Longer ice-free periods, created by climate change, are pushing them to the brink of extinction.

Unlike some species, who are threatened by actions a world away like deforestation, polar bears are directly impacted by our everyday choices. Making this critical link for our guests is the ultimate tool to motivate behavior change and collaboration to save this species.



Artist rendering of the new Polar Passage

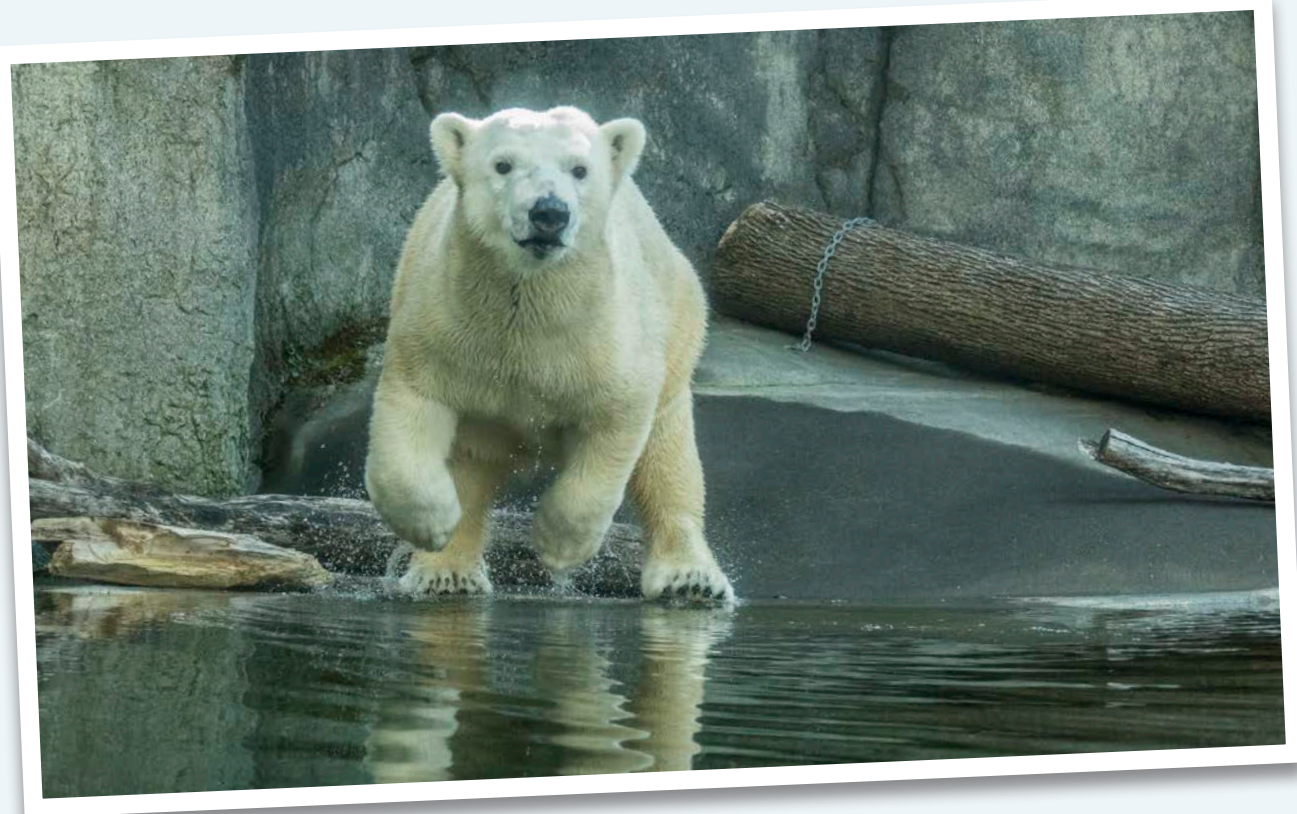


Rob Erickson, Donor & Volunteer Oregon Zoo Foundation Board Member

I grew up in a small town and we had 50 acres of woods behind our home. I spent hours as a kid discovering nature in my back yard. I remember at 9 years old my aunt brought back a book from the San Diego Zoo. I'd never been to a zoo and I was fascinated by the whole idea of interacting with wildlife like that. Both my sons have been involved in the Oregon Zoo their whole lives.

My eldest still remembers having an overnight at the zoo and watching the keeper get the orangutans ready for their bedtime routine. My son later described in vivid detail how the animal had looked at him as he walked toward his bed. It is that feeling of connection, of understanding, that makes our zoo so vital. Zoos inspire.

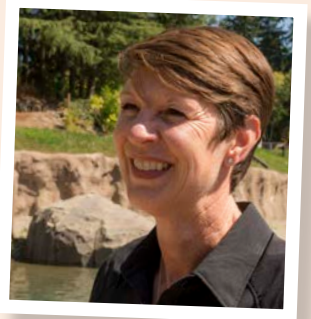
It's what we do. I am so enthused about the entire zoo and our future, including the renovation and expansion of Primate Forest and Rhino Habitat, as well as the new Polar Passage. I am thrilled to be a Polar Passage donor! My heart is in Polar Passage and I can't wait to see these engaging and captivating bears in our zoo. This is a community treasure and our impact goes way beyond these walls.



Conservation

Sheri Horiszny, Deputy Director

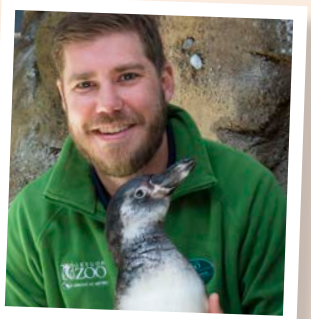
I got into conservation biology because I realized that species I love might be extinct before I even finished a veterinary degree. I work in a zoo today because it's so delightful to be surrounded by so many people coming here by the millions, who are yearning for ways to make a difference for our planet.



Right now, there are stories we need to tell about the state of our planet and the fate of wild animals we love. Here in the zoo, we need to create the right habitats to provide an enriching life for the animals in our care. And we also need to tell the stories about what we can all do, every single day, to make a difference for animals in the wild.

Travis Koons, Animal Curator

Getting condors back to the skies of Oregon gives me goose bumps. Since 2004, we've been hatching, raising and releasing them from our remote Jonsson Center for Wildlife Conservation.



Our amazing project is centered on getting condors ready for their life in the wild, so we want the chicks to have as little association with humans as possible. We have multiple processes to conceal our role including remote observations and feedings via "magic food doors".

In partnership with the Yurok Tribe and with US Fish and Wildlife we identify release sites and slowly we are bringing this incredible species back. I'm proud to work on other crucial conservation projects with a range of native butterflies and the endangered Western Pond Turtle. My heart is with the people here—our staff and our guests—together, we're all here to do right by the animals in our care and in our state.





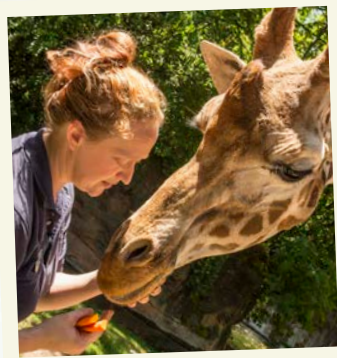
Primate Forest

Asaba Mukobi, Senior Keeper

Growing up in Uganda, I did not see a chimp until I was 20 years old, and that experience is still common for kids today. I return to Uganda every year with an NGO I founded, so more Ugandan kids can see and value animals in the wild.

The scary truth is that with serious threats to their habitat, wild chimp populations have declined by 80% over 25 years. Without our help, it's hard to imagine where they will be in 20 years. Our new Primate Forest will mean more people inspired to take action to help save this species.

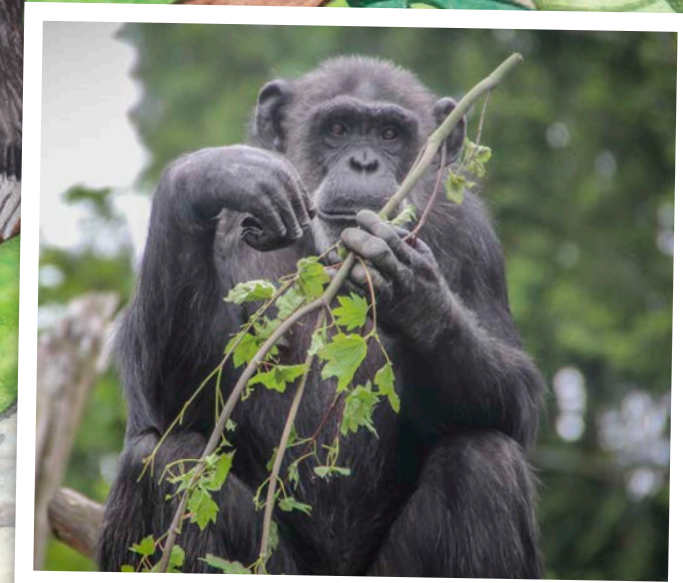
You can see that we share 98% of the same DNA as chimps by the way they behave and interact. If you give a banana to a goat she will just eat it whole. A chimp will dust it off, peel it, sit down and eat it one delicious bite at a time. I once followed a group of 30 chimps in the wild to observe their wild behaviors. They live in little cliques within larger groups, spending most of their time searching for and eating food. They love to climb and climb! Our new habitat will allow them to express all these natural, wild behaviors. I can't wait to see a chimp 30, 40 feet up—they will be able to see the whole zoo and will just love that.



Becca Van Beek, Curator, Africa

When you see chimps interacting, you recognize their behaviors in your own family, like two teenagers fighting over the same bathroom! The first time I made a great ape laugh was one of the coolest experiences of my life. I can't wait for you, our guests, to be able to learn about each chimp, and develop your own ideas about them. For example, we all know that Delilah loves bracelets so if the volunteers make a bracelet for her she'll wear it every day for a week!

My heart really lies with continuing to support our keepers and the conservation projects they are so passionate about—helping them learn and collaborate as they do their best work.





Rhino Habitat

Bob Lee, Curator

Rhinos are critically endangered. They are losing the battle for survival in the wild. But here, we have daily opportunities to create magical moments to connect people with animals.

When I hear guests remarking on the horn, the skin, the lips, or how an animal weighing thousands of pounds can move so fast, I know we're connecting. Our guests can get up close to the rhinos and keepers at the new training wall area. They'll see a rhino eating, using the top lip almost like a finger to pull food into its mouth, while big rhino ears are scanning everywhere.

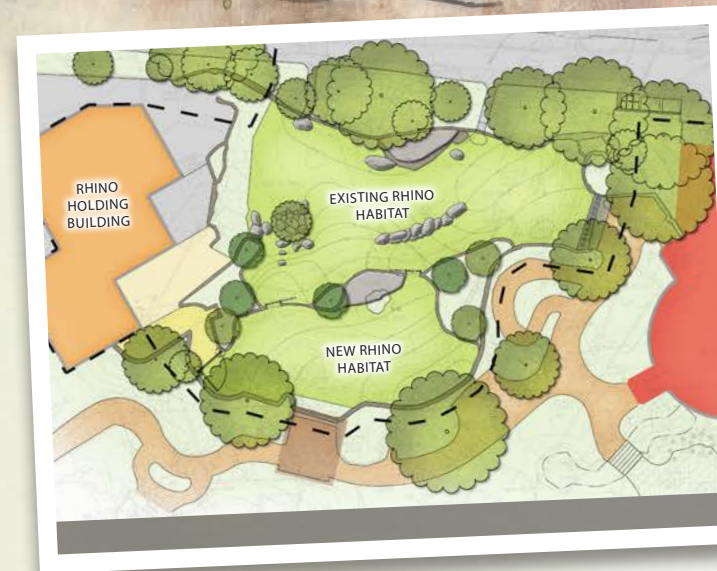
In a space more than twice what we had before, the habitat will let rhinos be rhinos, like dipping into the mud wallow to cool off and to protect their skin from sun and insects!

Through personal experiences and connections to animals, our zoo guests can start becoming tomorrow's conservation leaders. I was inspired to do this work visiting a zoo as a kid.

I remember watching an elephant reach out to its keeper and thinking, "I didn't know elephants squeaked! That's just the coolest job in the world." I wrote to a bunch of zoos, including the Oregon Zoo, and I got the kindest letter back from Mike Keele, a legend in the field.

He encouraged me to get a degree, some experience and never lose my passion for animals. That changed my life. A few years later, I jumped at the chance to come and work for Mike here at the zoo and I've been here ever since. What a generosity of spirit!

My heart is with our guests. When you create that spark, when you see that fire has been lit and you know you are helping develop future leaders, there's nothing better.



Artist rendering of the Rhino training wall



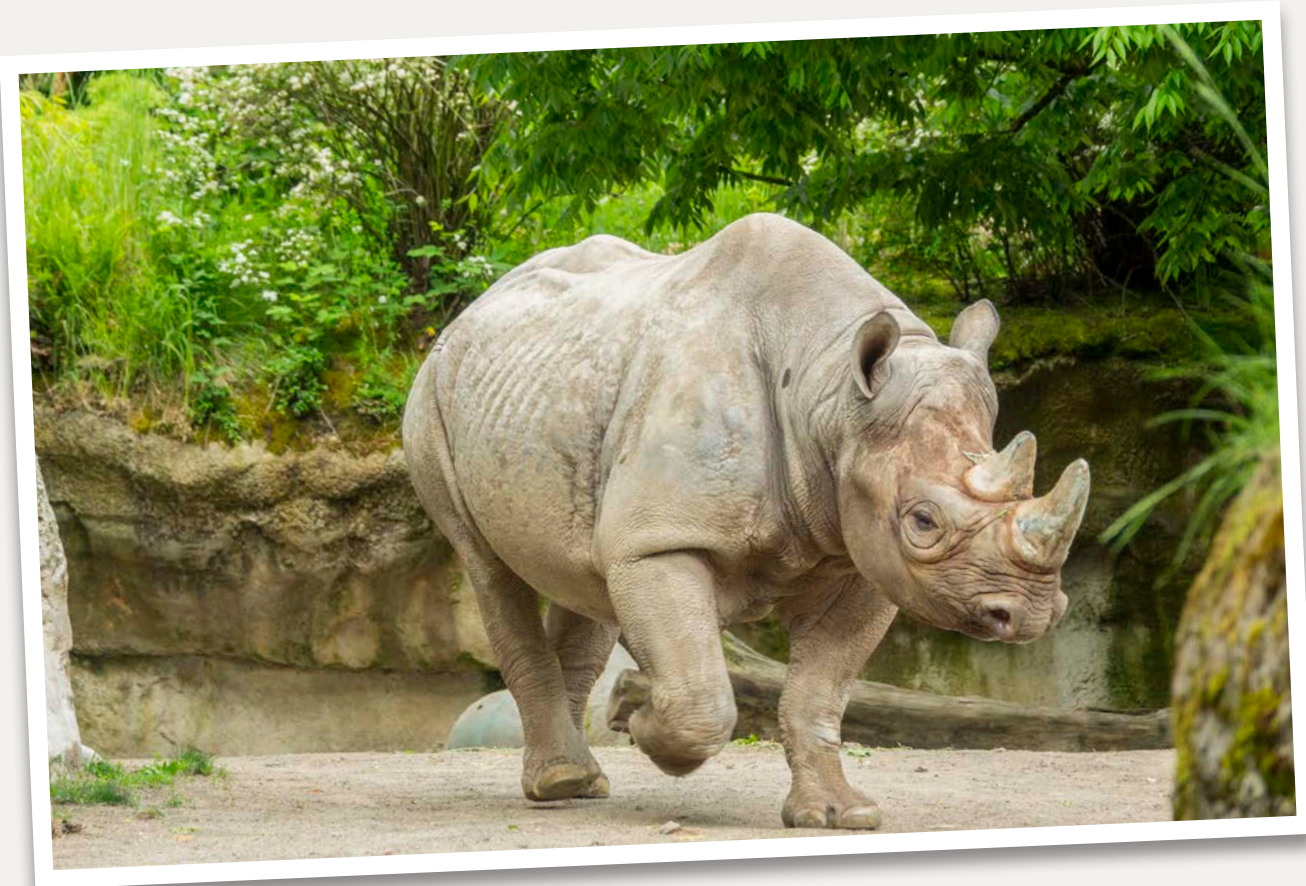


Tracey Clark, Donor & Volunteer Oregon Zoo Foundation Board Member

My husband and I have been involved for over 40 years. We started bringing our daughter when she was just a baby. Our family has watched the zoo evolve from cages and enclosures to world class habitats. Now our granddaughter continues our family tradition of visiting and supporting the Oregon Zoo.

We're strong supporters of the zoo and its commitment to naturalistic habitats. At the new Rhino habitat, this means providing the rhinos with a mud wallow and timed feeders so they will forage for food as they would in the wild. By adding more space for rhinos and interactive viewing opportunities for guests to see rhinos up close, the zoo can help build awareness of the plight of wildlife in their home ranges.

Our zoo is a place of learning—a place to inspire change. My heart holds dear our elephants, lions and the returning rhinos. Actually, my heart is with our entire zoo because it's part of my family's story.



Inspiration, Learning and Action

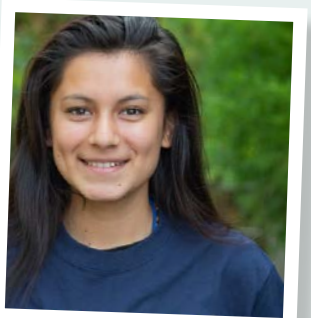
Grant Spickelmier, Manager, Education Program

Every kid I see experiencing and discovering wildlife and nature for the first time here, exudes an unmistakable energy. It's that excitement and curiosity that will spur them on to learn more, care more and take action to help. Everything we do in education is underpinned by building on this innate sense of wonder for the natural world. My heart is with the people who visibly light up from their experience connecting at the zoo. It's why we're here!



Kenia, Zoo Animal Presenter (ZAP) Teen

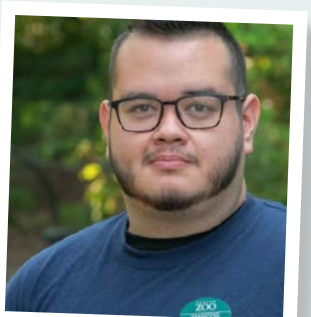
I grew up in a very urban environment and I know what it's like as a kid to not feel connected to nature. Today, as a ZAP teen, I'm doing what I love, helping kids fall in love with camping, hiking and with the natural world. When I tell little kids really cool facts about animals and nature and I see that spark in their eyes, I feel like I'm making a difference. Kids learn through experience, and this is such a positive way for them to learn and explore the world and bring what they know back to their family or school.



As a Latina, I'm also proud to be an example to kids, a kind of role model in my own family and the Latino community. My niece wants to work at the zoo now too!

Marcos, Zoo Animal Presenter (ZAP) Teen

In my back yard, there was a creek and we would go there all the time after school to try and catch crawdads or fish. I thought all kids did that! Jobs in construction or cleaning houses are common, but I never thought I could get one about connecting to nature. My mom was proud when I told her I had gotten this job! It's the best feeling to see a kid expand how big they know the world to be.



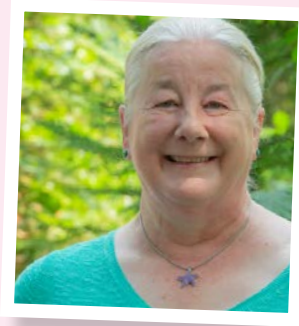
They may only know their own town or neighborhood to start, but then they go home knowing about animals in Africa or the Arctic.

My heart is with the animals, seeing them happy and interacting with each other.

Your Heart Of The Zoo Stories

Laurie Christensen, MD, Donor & Volunteer Oregon Zoo Foundation Board member

I've lived my whole life within a few miles of our zoo. I was eight years old when Packy was born and it was the story of our time! He was the first elephant born in North America in 44 years. Kids from all over brought their piggy banks to school to raise money to keep him here. I'm so pleased about the new habitats and seeing a whole new generation of people come to the zoo and fall in love with it—it's like reliving my own wonder and awe.



Animals and their stories stay alive because of our zoo. I also feel good knowing that as part of supporting the zoo I'm also supporting projects to help wild animals, in their range countries, as much as we can. My heart is with all the other members, donors, staff, volunteers and zoo lovers who are all trying to make the world a better place.

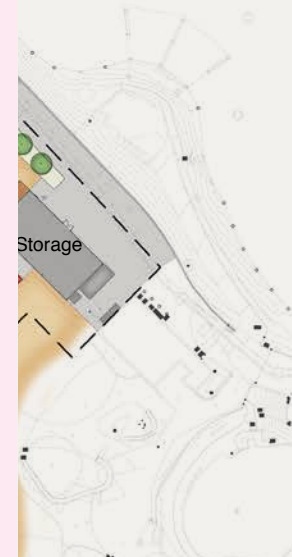
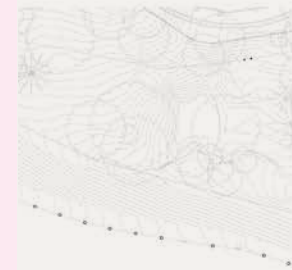
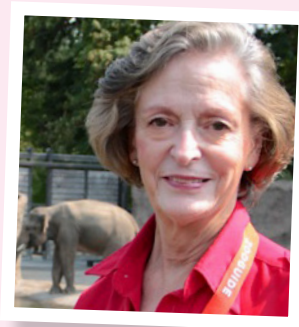
Raimund Grube, Donor & Volunteer Oregon Zoo Foundation Board member

It's always been part of my core belief that the best catalyst for learning, throughout our lives, is when you discover and see for yourself—when you learn enough to be curious and ask your own questions, that's how you discover your own passions. I'm proud that all our education programs are rooted in a real sense of wonder and discovery. I feel that right now we are in such a strong position to make a positive impact locally and globally. My heart is with our zoo as a window to the world and an example of the interconnectedness we have with animals and their habitats, and the importance of conservation and continued education.



Barbara Wegner, ZooGuide, Donor & Volunteer Oregon Zoo Foundation Board member

I've been a volunteer ZooGuide since 2005 because this zoo is near and dear to my heart. Kids ask me the best questions—it makes my jaw drop! And I just love it when kids and people of all ages ask me: "What can I do?" I'm excited to help our guests learn more about the choices we can make, the ways we can all take action to help animals. And I have to say that I see first hand, every single day, just how fabulous our keepers are. What they do is a labor of love. They are completely dedicated to giving our animals the loving care they need and deserve.



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