

An insider's view of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo

My ZOO

FALL 2021

Magazine

**ANIMAL
HEALTH
CENTER**
TO OPEN
THIS FALL
P3

**TENDING A
SEAHORSE
NURSERY**
P6

**ZOO ANIMALS
PARTICIPATE IN
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A Message from the Friends Executive Director

It has been an amazing summer at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo and we look forward to an amazing fall and winter as well!

Topping the list of exciting developments, the new Animal Health Center at the zoo is preparing to open as I write this message! This 20,000-square-foot zoological medical center and visitor

education space exemplifies our One Health philosophy in action.

The One Health viewpoint honors the connections linking animals, humanity and our planet – and we are so grateful to the many donors who have supported it by contributing to our One Health | One Mission capital campaign to outfit the Animal Health Center with state-of-the-art medical equipment. Thank you for giving our veterinary staff and animal care teams the tools they need to provide the best possible healthcare to our animals and advance research to conserve endangered species in the wild. (See story on page 3.)

Looking forward, we have lots of fun activities planned that will bring light and laughter to the zoo in the coming weeks. Our favorite fall activity, Zoo Boo, returns this year for four weekends in October after a year off. We love the spectacle of entire families dressing in costume to trick-or-treat at the zoo, and we can't wait to see you! (See events on page 18.)

We will also be offering a new seasonal experience for the 2021 holiday season – Holiday Nights! On Friday and Saturday nights in December, the zoo will be illuminated with festive displays of lights inviting visitors to take an after-hours stroll, warm up by the fire and enjoy hot chocolate, holiday music and entertainment. We hope you can join us one of these Holiday Nights!

Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy this Fall issue of *MyZoo Magazine*, including feature stories on the new Seahorse Nursery exhibit coming to the USS Antiquities Cave (opening soon) and our zoo's participation in an important trial of the new Zoetis COVID vaccine for animals (See story on page 9).

As always, we are thankful for your membership and support for your zoo. May the upcoming season of giving and gratitude provide wonderful memories for you and yours.

Carrie Large

Carrie Large
Executive Director, Friends of the Zoo



ON THE COVER:
Andean Bear, Bjorn
Photo by Maria Simmons

ROSAMOND GIFFORD
ZOO
AT BURNET PARK
Ted Fox, Director

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Please direct questions regarding this publication to editor@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.

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Animal Health Center to Open this Fall



After years of planning and a full year of construction, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo's new Animal Health Center is poised to open its doors and begin seeing feathered, finned and furry patients and educating people about animal healthcare.

Major donors to the health center got a sneak peek inside the facility at a special recognition event on Thursday, September 16, allowing them to see significant spaces they sponsored and speak with zoo officials about the work that will take place there.

The exterior of the 20,000-square-foot health center is nearly complete and workers are currently finishing the interior, including animal treatment and exam rooms, diagnostic testing areas, surgical suite, ICU/nursery, labs, nutrition kitchen and more. The health center will be the largest zoological medical center in New York state outside of the Bronx Zoo when it opens later this fall.

"We have been talking about this health center for 15 years, so to see it come to fruition is just a dream come true," said Rosamond Gifford Zoo Director Ted Fox. "This facility will allow the zoo's animal care team and our Cornell Veterinary partners to provide the best health care possible to every animal in our care, show the public more of what we do and hopefully inspire future animal care practitioners."

Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahon said the new health center will offer a wonderful opportunity for the public to see animal health care in action during their zoo visits. The new Animal Health Center has expansive windows looking into treatment rooms, surgical suite, nursery/ICU, animal nutrition kitchen and research lab so visitors can experience more of the work that goes on behind the scenes for animal care and welfare at the zoo.

"Our world-class zoo now has a world-class zoological medical center," McMahon said. "This new facility will give our community a front-row seat on the amazing work that happens right here on behalf of animals at our zoo and across the globe."

ANIMAL HEALTH CENTER OPENING... continued on pg. 8



ONE HEALTH | ONE MISSION

The One Health | One Mission campaign for the new Animal Health Center at the zoo has passed the \$600K mark toward our goal of \$1.1 million!

Donors have contributed a total of \$650,931.07 -- leaving \$449,068.93 left to raise to equip the health center with all the state-of-the-art medical tools it needs to be the best zoological medical center in the region.



ANIMAL UPDATES

Three sets of male-female Turkmenian markhor twins were born at the zoo this past summer and received flavorful names per our zookeepers' "herbs and spices" naming theme for this year's zooborns. Poppy Seed and Wasabi were born to female markhor Dorothy on June 6, Clove and Sesame were born to her herd-mate Rose on June 13, and Cayenne and Saffron were born to a third Golden Girl, Blanche, on September 7. All three sets of twins were fathered by our male markhor, Thor.



Male turkey vulture Vic was humanely euthanized on April 16 after a decline in health due to aging. He was over 40 years old.

A female black and white ruffed lemur, Andapa, arrived on April 26 from the Henry Vilas Zoo in Madison, WI, to be introduced to our male, Kinte, per the Species Survival Plan for their critically endangered species.

Two Gooty sapphire ornamental tarantulas arrived at the zoo on May 9. These iridescent blue tree spiders are a critically endangered species native to Gooty, a town in Central India.

A baby banded gila monster hatched at the zoo on May 21 – the first of this vulnerable species to hatch in our care!

Four baby neon day geckos, two marbled tree frogs and eight whitebelly reed frogs arrived at the zoo on May 25.

Four-year-old Andean bear Bjorn arrived from the St. Louis Zoo on June 3. Bjorn is an extremely active young bear who has taken over the Andean bear habitat, including making nests in his favorite trees.

A male patas monkey, Mac, arrived on June 15 from Safari West Wildlife and Safari Park in Santa Rosa, CA, to join our troop of patas monkeys.

A female white-lipped deer fawn, Juniper, was born at the zoo on June 21 to mother deer Tashi and father Stag.

Eight Touch-Me-Not stick insects arrived from the Toledo Zoo on June 29. They will be part of the zoo's outreach collection of animals that participate in zoo education programs.

Two male Sichuan takin that were born at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in 2019 and 2020, Windsor and A.C., were transferred to the Hemker Park Zoo in Freeport, MN, on July 12.

Two male white-lipped deer that were born at the zoo in 2018 and 2019, Chomper and Colden, also were transferred to the Hemker Park Zoo on July 12.

Male golden lion tamarin Picante was humanely euthanized on July 13 due to chronic renal failure. He was 15 years old.

A new female Giant Pacific octopus, Salty, took up residence in the zoo's Giant Pacific Octopus exhibit on July 15.

A new male golden lion tamarin, Dourado, arrived at the zoo from the Kansas City Zoo on August 3 to be a companion to our female GLT, Elsie.

The zoo's one remaining guanaco, Gilbert, was humanely euthanized on August 31 due to age-related illnesses. He was 26 years old.

Male snow leopard Ozzy moved to Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo on September 2 as part of the Species Survival Plan for his critically endangered species.



Seahorses on the Move!

Four male and eight female lined seahorses were transferred to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo on July 8.

Three male lined seahorses were transferred to the Riverbanks Zoo & Garden in West Columbia, SC, on July 20.

Twenty female lined seahorses were transferred to Disney's Epcot on August 31.

Three male and six female seahorses were acquired from the South Carolina Aquarium on September 8 to add biological diversity to our seahorse breeding program.

**What's with all the seahorse movement?
See our Seahorse Nursery story on page 6!**

CREATURE FEATURE: ANDEAN BEAR

AT THE
ROSAMOND
GIFFORD ZOO:
1 Male, Bjorn



FUN FACT:

Andean bears have a pseudo-thumb or “false” thumb that functions as an extra digit to help them hold onto tree limbs and aid with eating. They are not related to the other species with this feature, red pandas and Giant pandas.

The Andean bear, also known as the Spectacled bear, is the only bear species in South America. These 180- to 340-pound animals sport thick coats that are usually either black or brown, and each individual has its own distinctive whitish, cream, beige or ginger-colored markings on its head, throat and chest. They are arboreal – meaning they spend a lot of time in trees – and are generally solitary outside of breeding season.

Andean bears live in the forests, shrublands and grasslands of the tropical Andes Mountains. They are excellent climbers and often build tree platforms or “nests” where they rest and feed. Their diet is omnivorous, consisting of fruits, palm trees, bromeliads and some mammals, including rabbits, mountain tapirs and free-ranging domestic cattle. Andean bears usually live to about 20 years in the wild, but can live up to their early 30s in human care.

Unfortunately, the Andean bear population is declining, making them a Vulnerable species. Some of their main threats are illegal poaching and climate change. According to the IUCN Red List, around 90 percent of Andean ecosystems have been transformed in some way by human activities. There are many conservation efforts in place to aid in the protection of Andean bears.

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo recently welcomed Bjorn, a young, agile and energetic Andean bear with tons of personality! Bjorn is 4 years old, weighs 250 pounds and stands 6 feet tall when he rears up on his hind legs. Be sure to stop by his exhibit on your next visit to the zoo!



Parents and students from the Westhill School District PTO spent a day making papier-mâché animals that were painted by our summer ZooGuides to resemble colorful creatures. Scan the QR code to see what happened when Bjorn the Andean bear met his papier-mâché unicorn full of treats!



New Seahorse Nursery exhibit shows how we rear baby seahorses!

Rosamond Gifford Zoo Leads in Lined Seahorse Propagation

Seahorses are among the most unique fish on the planet. Besides their appearance resembling tiny mer-horses, they have prehensile (grasping) tails that they use to hang onto coral reefs, tiny fins that can beat up to 50 times a second to propel them through water and eyes that work independently of each other.

But their most fascinating adaptation is probably that in seahorses and their pipefish cousins, it's the male who gets pregnant, incubates the eggs in a pouch on his belly and gives birth to hundreds of babies at a time!

In the wild, a lot of seahorse babies – called “fry” – perish before they can reproduce. (That’s the reason many animal species produce lots of babies.)

At the zoo, our aquarists remove the small fry as soon as they’re born and many go to other accredited zoos and aquariums in the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA).

Seahorse propagation has been happening behind the scenes at the zoo for many years – but now our visitors will be able to see it in action! Our renovation of the USS Antiquities cave includes the addition of a Seahorse Nursery exhibit to give guests an up-close look at how we raise baby seahorses.



Aquarist Leisje Meates feeds seahorse fry an early stage of brine shrimp - aka “sea monkeys” – which also are raised at the zoo.

“All species of seahorses face threats, from people collecting wild-caught specimens for the pet industry as well as pollution and ocean warming,” said Leisje Meates, an aquarist and herpetologist at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo.

“Our zoo is literally one of a handful of institutions responsible for breeding and placing seahorses through the Species Survival Plan,” she added. “We thought it would be neat to let people see all the things we are doing behind the scenes, from growing their food to feeding them at least three times a day.”

The zoo has a breeding group of Lined seahorses composed of three males and three females. Keepers keep an eye on the males, who gain a “puffy” appearance when their due date approaches.

“When the babies come out, we carefully remove them one at a time using a pipette,” Leisje said. “We don’t want to net them because they are too tiny and fragile.”

The fry are reared in a series of tanks that are tended to throughout each day. Seahorse Fry Tank A houses babies under 3 months old and less than an inch long. The aquarium team grows brine shrimp to feed to seahorses and jellyfish, and the first stage of brine shrimp – aka sea monkeys -- are fed to the youngest seahorses. Seahorse Fry Tank B contains seahorses that are 4 to 6 months old.

“We start feeding the babies within the first 24 to 48 hours of hatching out, and as they get bigger we feed them bigger types of brine shrimp,” Leisje said. “When they are first born, we feed them five or six times a day, and as they get older it decreases to three or four times a day.”

“We also clean the tanks every day. We use a tiny siphon to collect all the debris and do a water change, which can be tricky because they have such a high metabolism and eat so often.”

At age 4 months, the babies are entered into the Zoological Information Management Software (ZIMS) used by other accredited zoos and aquariums to share animal info. AZA institutions that want seahorses can then request them for free. AZA facilities do not profit from the animals they raise, so the receiving zoo or aquarium just pays for transportation of the new animals.

How do you transport seahorses? FedEx! Animal care staff put 3 or 4 seahorses into a clear plastic bag half full of water and half full of pure oxygen, so they won’t run out of O₂. They double bag and twist tie it, place it in a Styrofoam cooler with padding in the bottom, pack crumpled paper around it and put the cooler in a cardboard shipping box.

“We also put a Cryopak gel pack in the cooler to maintain temperature,” said Leisje. “This makes sure they don’t get too hot during transport, which never takes more than a day and usually less than 24 hours.”

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo has shipped as few as 5 seahorses and as many as 20 at a time to such varied institutions as the Toledo Zoo, the Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium, the Tennessee Aquarium, the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center, the Texas State Aquarium and Disney.

Leisje came up with the idea to make the Seahorse Nursery a public exhibit so zoo-goers can see all the care that goes into these diminutive sea creatures. “I love being able to do all the care and knowing that they will go to facilities that will help educate the public,” Leisje said. “And that education will hopefully help their status in the wild.”

Lined seahorse

(Hippocampus erectus)

Range: Western Atlantic coastal waters from Nova Scotia south to Venezuela
Conservation Status: Vulnerable

Fun Facts:

- Seahorses are surprisingly poor swimmers!
- Seahorses can grow to over 7 inches long.
- The number of eggs/embryos that male seahorses can carry in their brood pouch can range from 97 to 1,552!
- Male seahorses have proportionally longer tails than females.
- Lined seahorses’ coloration ranges from gray to orange to brown to yellow, red and black. They rely on their unique coloring and bony texture to camouflage themselves among coral and vegetation in their aquatic habitat.

(Sea)Horse of a Different Color: baby seahorses are fully formed but tiny and black in color when born. Their pigment changes as they grow, and as adults they can change color to blend in with their habitat. Scan the QR code to see them in action!





ANIMAL HEALTH CENTER SIGNIFICANT SPACE NAMING DONORS

Many longtime zoo supporters made gifts to put their names on health care rooms, offices or equipment in the health center, from the lobby, pharmacy and ICU to an oxygen holding cage and a small animal anesthesia machine.

A very special "Thank You" to our generous donors:

Intensive Care Unit: Central New York Community Foundation's William and Mary L. Thorpe Fund and the Bilford Family Fund

Animal Health Center Lobby: Zalie and Bob Linn

Sample Drop-Off Room: Carol and Norbert Spiegel

Pharmacy: Claudia and Howard Preston

Director of Veterinary Staff Office: Ellenrose Galgano

Food Prep Kitchen: Deborah and Dennis Trepanier

Veterinary Technician Office: Drs. Tod Leggat & Shannon Magari Leggat

Graduate Student Office: Drs. Tod Leggat & Shannon Magari Leggat

Quarantine Treatment Room: In loving memory of Marjorie Kane from her daughter Maria

Field Small Animal Anesthesia Machine: Maria Kane

Oxygen Holding Cage: Michael Sperling

Medical Books: VIP Structures, Inc.

Senior Residents Office: Peggy Ogden and Timothy Atseff

Staff Training and Development Room: The Marsellus Family

Records Room: In Loving Memory of Laura Estabrook Holcombe

Veterinary Staff Break Room: Holtz Family Fund

Laboratory and Research: M&T Bank

Necropsy Room: In Loving Memory of Barbara J. Coffey

Case Review Room: In Memory of Dr. Leslie N. Davis

Viewing Monitors and Virtual Capability Cameras:
In Honor of Mary Mathews

ANIMAL HEALTH CENTER OPENING... continued from pg. 3

Onondaga County allocated \$7.5 million to design, engineer, build and landscape the new health center, while the Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo held a capital campaign to furnish it as a state-of-the-art zoological medical center.

The One Health | One Mission campaign has raised nearly two-thirds of its \$1.1 million goal, including a \$150,000 grant from the Fred L. Emerson Foundation and \$100,000 from the Central New York Community Foundation's William and Mary L. Thorpe Fund and the Bilford Family Fund, as well as contributions from individuals, families and business leaders.

A silent and live auction held at the Friends of the Zoo's first Fall Conservation Ball on September 10 raised another \$18,000 for the health center.

The new facility will allow the zoo veterinary and animal care teams to do routine physicals, diagnostic testing, treatment and surgical procedures on more and larger animals and eliminate the need to transport animals off grounds for treatment or perform sterile procedures in the field. The health center also will serve as a teaching hospital where Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine veterinarians and their residents, interns and students gain hands-on experience while providing medical care to zoo animals.

The center also will offer a special stop for children interested in veterinary and animal care. A Junior Vet Clinic will allow kids to don a white lab coat and use toy medical tools to examine plush animals as part of their educational visits to the Animal Health Center.

Friends of the Zoo Executive Director Carrie Large said her two young children love the Wegman's Super Kids Market at Rochester's Strong Museum, which gave her the idea to provide a place for imaginative play at the Animal Health Center.

Ted said the health center advances the zoo's "One Health" philosophy that animals, humans and the planet are all connected and the health of each affects the others.

"This new facility embodies a new era for our zoo, where we have the ability to put into practice everything we know about the different types of care that different animals need to thrive, to contribute to greater knowledge about animal health care and to educate our public to support healthy animals and healthy choices for a healthy planet," he said.



ONE HEALTH | ONE MISSION

Rosamond Gifford Zoo Animals Participate in COVID Vaccine Trial

When the COVID-19 virus first reared its head in humans, scientists believe it did so as a zoonotic illness that jumped from bats to people. Weeks after the virus became a global human pandemic, a 4-year-old tiger at the Bronx Zoo came down with a cough and tested positive for COVID.

Since then, animals ranging from gorillas to minks to other big cats have become infected with COVID, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“There have been reports of animals infected with the virus worldwide,” the CDC says on its website. “Most of these animals became infected after contact with people with COVID-19.”

That’s why the Rosamond Gifford Zoo required visitors to mask up even in outdoor areas before a majority of people were vaccinated, said Zoo Director Ted Fox. And that’s why the zoo has signed up to participate in a COVID-19 vaccine trial for animals.

“As an accredited zoo, our number-one priority is protecting animals, especially endangered species,” Ted said. “We jumped at the chance to be among the first zoos to vaccinate our animals and we are really excited to be selected to receive some of the limited number of doses being tested for animals.”

The vaccine was developed by Zoetis, a world leader in animal health that has provided vaccines and diagnostic tests for emerging infectious diseases in animals. Zoetis initially began work on a vaccine for domestic animals that has been demonstrated to be safe in dogs and cats and has so far shown to be efficacious.

“The vaccine development work then shifted to minks last year as the incidence in that species escalated in Denmark and other countries and demonstrated a critical need,” Zoetis said.

In January, the San Diego Zoo asked Zoetis to develop a vaccine for great apes after eight gorillas tested positive for COVID. In March, the zoo vaccinated four orangutans and five bonobos with the trial vaccine.

Scientists hope that vaccinating animals may prevent a COVID spillover back to humans as well as protect animals from contracting the disease from unvaccinated people.

Ted said the Rosamond Gifford Zoo applied to be in the Zoetis trial and had to go through a lengthy state approval process. The zoo will receive enough doses to vaccinate 21 animals including primates, big cats and other mammals for the first round of the trial. That could increase if the zoo is allotted more doses, Ted said.

Thanks to daily training sessions that allow animals to participate in their own health care, most of the zoo’s animals do not have to be restrained, sedated or stressed in any way to receive vaccinations.

Abe the siamang ape is used to putting his arm through a plastic sleeve for blood draws in exchange for treats. Elephants are rewarded for allowing blood draws from their ears. Big cats get blood draws and receive vaccinations by offering their tails.

“We use positive reinforcement to train our animals to do many behaviors like open their mouths so we can inspect their teeth, lift their feet or stand up to allow an ultrasound,” Ted said. “With all this routine training, our zoo animals are the perfect candidates to receive the first COVID vaccines for animals.”

The Zoetis trial will help not just zoo animals. Domestic animals will benefit from the research, as will wild species that have been part of spreading zoonotic diseases in the past. Wild animals can potentially be vaccinated orally by eating tasty baits that contain the vaccine, which could help curb the spread of COVID-like viruses worldwide.



Zoonotic (/zu:.ə'na:.tɪk/) – adjective, BIOLOGY, MEDICAL (of a disease) able to spread from animals to humans: Rabies is perhaps the best-known and most feared of all zoonotic diseases.

Zoonotic transfer of pathogens to humans has been attributed to changes in natural environments for expanded global food production.

- Many high-impact diseases tend to be zoonotic diseases that emerge from wildlife like HIV and SARS did.
- Vector-borne and zoonotic diseases include Lyme disease, West Nile virus, malaria or dengue fever.
- Scientific theory suggests these viruses have repeatedly jumped from nonhuman primates to human beings in a process known as zoonotic transfer.

FRIENDS OF THE ZOO PUTS THE FUN IN FUNDRAISERS!

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo had one of its busiest summers ever with a whirlwind of exciting events held by Friends of the Zoo to support animal care and conservation at the zoo. Our team dreamed big, creating new and reimagined events that succeeded in bringing sponsors, volunteers, patrons and funding to the zoo.

The first **Tee Off FORE the Animals Golf Tournament** on Monday, June 7 attracted 72 golfers to historic Bellevue Country Club for 18 holes of championship golf with amazing animal ambassadors, great food and drinks and entertaining contests.

The tournament and our Tee Off Silent Auction featuring first-time celebrity items combined to raise \$56,743 to assist the zoo.



Brew at the Zoo 25th Anniversary Presented by CXtec was held Friday, August 6 – International Beer Day – with a sellout crowd of nearly 2,000 as well as eight food trucks, five bands/musicians and more than 100 tasting opportunities throughout the zoo. Brew 25 also featured a Silent Auction of celebrity collectibles and animal art as well as sales of Brew souvenirs and a silent auction. **All told, Brew at the Zoo raised over \$125,000 for its 25th year!**



The Fall Conservation Ball & Ted Fox Celebrity Roast on Friday, September 10 brought guests to the zoo's outdoor courtyard for a fall celebration of Rosamond Gifford Zoo Director Ted Fox's 30 years at the zoo. The evening kicked off with a cocktail hour and gourmet hors d'oeuvres, a roast and toast of Ted and a live auction of exclusive items to benefit the new Animal Health Center at the zoo. **The event raised over \$62,000, \$18,000 of which will go to the Animal Health Center. The event garnered rave reviews from everyone who attended.**



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CAME, CONTRIBUTED AND OTHERWISE SUPPORTED THESE EVENTS!

Friends of the Zoo Hires Phil Austin as Director of Finance



Phillip "Phil" Austin of Chittenango has been hired as director of finance. He is responsible for all financial activities and reporting for Friends of the Zoo, a 501(c)(3) non-profit support organization to the Rosamond Gifford Zoo.

Austin has more than 20 years' experience in hotel and hospitality financial accounting and management. He also is former publisher of the Oneida Daily Dispatch newspaper.

"Phil has been an executive-level accountant and financial manager for decades, and we are thrilled to welcome him to the Friends of the Zoo team," said Friends of the Zoo Executive Director Carrie Large.

A native of Fairport, Austin holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Oswego State University. After college, he moved to Phoenix, AZ, and got a job as a waiter in a Wyndham hotel. He took advantage of the Wyndham Hotel's Management in Development program to train as a front desk and housekeeping manager, a role that took him to Nashville, TN.

"At the end of the program they asked me whether I wanted to be the front desk manager or the housekeeping manager," he said. "I said, 'Neither, I want to be the accountant.'" Wyndham agreed and sent him to Dallas, TX, where he rose from associate staff accountant to staff accountant to operations manager.

In 1998, Wyndham took over a former Marriott on Syracuse's Carrier Circle and Austin moved back to CNY as controller for that property. In 2002, the hotel was "downsized," so he shifted to the newspaper industry as controller for Oneida Publications, Inc., publisher of the Oneida Daily Dispatch and three weeklies. In 2005, he was promoted to publisher and general manager, overseeing six department heads with 72 employees.

In 2010, with newspapers experiencing a downturn, Austin returned to the hospitality industry as controller for the Crowne Plaza Syracuse hotel and also served as regional controller for three other Crown Plaza hotels in the Northeast. He has since served as director of finance for the Sheraton University Hotel and the Marriott Syracuse Downtown.

Austin said he is excited to be working at a place he has often enjoyed with his wife and their two children who are now in college. "I like the idea of supporting the zoo in any way I can," he said.

Friends of the Zoo Hires Rachel Leonardo as Director of Human Resources



The Friends of the Zoo has hired Rachel Leonardo as director of human resources. Leonardo is responsible for human resources for the non-profit organization that supports the zoo and its missions.

Leonardo, a Syracuse native, served as director of human resources for ACR Health for most of the past five years. She has worked in HR since 2012 and holds a masters' degree in television,

radio and film from the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University.

"Rachel has a lot of experience in human resources and she's a great communicator," said Friends of the Zoo Executive Director Carrie Large. "Besides her understanding of all the facets of HR, she is approachable for our employees and will help enhance our work culture to the level that everyone will want to work at the zoo."

Leonardo is a graduate of East Syracuse-Minoa High School, Onondaga Community College and SUNY Brockport, where she earned a BA in Communications in 2002. After a stint working at a children's learning center in Beverly Hills, CA, she missed "the seasons and my family" and moved home to Syracuse, she said.

In 2009 she went back to school for her master's in communications at Newhouse while working at a Starbucks in Fayetteville, interning at Clear Channel Communications and working as a teaching assistant at SU. On completing her MA, she joined United Radio, a Syracuse electronics repair company, as human resources administrator. "I wanted to stay in the Syracuse area and a position opened up there in HR," she said. "Part of the job was to be a liaison between employees and upper management, which involved a lot of communications skills – and that's how I fell into HR."

In 2015 she jumped at the chance to work at ACR Health, formerly AIDS Community Resources, whose Q Center for LGBTQ youth she had served as a volunteer during college. Over five years she rose from administrative assistant in Human Resources/Finance to human resources generalist to director of human resources.

After ACR, she worked at Davis Standard LLC in Fulton, which gave her an opportunity to learn more about the manufacturing environment and working with unions. She enjoyed it and learned a lot but couldn't resist pursuing a "dream job" she saw posted on Indeed – HR Director for Friends of the Zoo.

"The environment here is good for the soul," she said of the zoo. "I love having the opportunity to be part of a team that's creating this amazing space for a community I love."

Welcome to Our New Board Members!

The Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo is pleased to welcome four new board members for the 2021-2023 term of service. We are grateful to have these accomplished contributors to our community serving on the Friends of the Zoo Board of Directors!



Bishop Colette Matthews-Carter

Bishop Colette is Senior Pastor of the Zion Hill World Harvest Baptist Church, president of the Syracuse/Onondaga NAACP and Director of Interfaith Initiatives for InterFaith Works of Central New York, where she oversees chaplains and chaplaincy contracts with area hospitals, nursing homes and correctional facilities and provides education, dialogue and training to promote interfaith understanding. She is a civil rights activist, motivational speaker and leadership consultant who will be chairing the Friends board's new Community Outreach and Volunteerism committee.



Jean Marie Russo

Jean Marie is Director of Marketing & Operations at Alkaline for Life and Betterbones.com. She is actively involved in promoting women-owned businesses in Central New York. She also is a registered yoga teacher and founder of the Breath Body Community Yoga Program in North Syracuse. Jean Marie hopes to help promote the zoo and Friends of the Zoo to all segments of the community.



Natalie Scavone

Natalie is executive director of BASCOL, Before and After School Childcare on Location, which operates before- and after-school childcare at 19 schools in 9 local school districts. Before joining BASCOL, Natalie taught in the Cato-Meridian district for 18 years at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. She then taught New Visions Teacher Education at Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES for 8 years and was a principal and data administrator for BOCES for 7 years. Natalie is an enthusiastic supporter and cheerleader for the zoo.



Melissa Oliver

Melissa Oliver, hotel manager at the Marriott Syracuse Downtown, is well-versed in both animal care and human hospitality. She majored in veterinary technology at SUNY Canton and has been a leader in animal rescue organizations. Over the past decade, she has become a leader in sales and marketing in the hotel industry. She hopes to bring her expertise to help the board create new ways to promote the zoo and its conservation mission while expanding the reach of zoo events and programs to all of the zoo's neighboring communities

The Curious Cub to Showcase WISE Women's Business Products

As part of Friends of the Zoo's mission to support and engage with all segments of our local community, The Curious Cub gift shop will be showcasing products from CNY women-owned businesses this coming spring.

The Friends is partnering with the WISE Women's Business Center in Syracuse to offer products ranging from jams and jellies to jewelry to body products from local women entrepreneurs during March, April and May of 2022.

The success of the gift shop's Shop Local partnership with area small businesses this past summer gave Friends of the Zoo Executive Director Carrie Large the idea to partner with WISE, which stands for Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship.

"This partnership will allow people to buy products from local women-owned businesses at the zoo gift shop while also educating folks that this awesome resource for women exists here in Syracuse," Carrie said.

The WISE Women's Business Center was founded in 2006 to encourage and support women entrepreneurs. It has a physical center at 100 Madison St., Syracuse and also offers workshops, online programs and resources to hundreds of clients, said WISE WBC Director Meghan Florkowski.

Look for the Shop Local and WISE WBC products when you visit The Curious Cub!

For info about the WISE Women's Business Center, visit their website, wisecenter.org.



edventure academy

A JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION AND LEARNING

All the Ooky Spooky and Creepy Crawlies

Friday, October 15 | 10:30 a.m.-noon
Ages 3-5, one parent or guardian must attend.

Saturday, October 16 | 10:30 a.m.-noon
Ages 3-5, one parent or guardian must attend.

Saturday, October 16 | 1:30-3 p.m.
Ages 6-10, Child may be dropped off with a signed waiver on file.

Why do we cuddle a teddy bear yet fear a tarantula? What creepy creatures are you afraid of? What makes them scary and gross actually helps them survive and protect themselves. Meet some of these important species up close and just maybe they will be less frightening!

Feasts and Beasts

Friday, November 12 | 10:30 a.m.-noon
Ages 3-5, one parent or guardian must attend.

Saturday, November 13 | 10:30 a.m.-noon
Ages 3-5, one parent or guardian must attend.

Saturday, November 13 | 1:30-3 p.m.
Ages 6-10, Child may be dropped off with a signed waiver on file.

Animals, both wild and domestic, are very food motivated! "Feast" your eyes on some of your most beloved animals' favorite treats and what they are willing to do for them. All while creating a food enrichment for an animal at the zoo.

Cold Weather Critters

Friday, December 17 | 10:30 a.m.-noon
Ages 3-5, one parent or guardian must attend.

Saturday, December 18 | 10:30 a.m.-noon
Ages 3-5, one parent or guardian must attend.

Saturday, December 18 | 1:30-3 p.m.
Ages 6-10, Child may be dropped off with a signed waiver on file.

What animals come to mind when you think of the holiday season? Celebrate the holidays with all the cuddly critters you can imagine. Find the animal artist in you as we create a holiday craft together.

Members: \$20 per child/adult pair
Non-members: \$25 per child/adult pair
\$15 each additional child

Wild Beginnings

Want to try EdVenture Academy, but your child is too young? We've designed these new programs tailored just for little ones, aged **12 months to 3 years**. Each themed class includes animal biofacts, nature-themed sensory play, a story and an opportunity to see an animal up close! Young ones will explore with their senses as well as develop language and motor skills in the process during this early learning adventure.

10:30-11:15 a.m.
All the Ooky Spooky and Creepy Crawlies
Friday, October 15

Feasts and Beasts
Friday, November 12

Cold Weather Critters
Friday, December 17

Tuition per session
Members: \$10 per child/adult pair
Non-members: \$12 per child/adult pair
\$5 per additional child in same session

Family Twilight: Creepy Critters Craft Corner

Friday, October 22 | 6:30-8 p.m.

"Ring" in the Halloween season with a decoration sure to impress Trick or Treaters! Bring your frighteningly good painting and crafting skills as we create a creepy craft. It will be a howling good time!

Members: \$30 per child/adult pair
Non-members: \$40 per child/adult pair

Kids' Night Out

Friday, November 5 | 5:30-9 p.m.
Ages 6-10

Looking for a night out? Drop your kids off at the zoo to party like an animal! Kids will enjoy pizza upon arrival, meet animals up close, tour the zoo after hours, make crafts and play games throughout the night.

Members: \$30 | Non-members: \$35

SEASONAL ZOO CAMPS **FOR AGES 6-11**

One Day Zoo Camps

9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Monday, October 11, Tuesday, November 2,
Thursday, November 11, Wednesday, November 24
Members: \$55 per child per day
Non-members: \$65 per child per day

Make the best of a day off from school! Play games, make crafts, and meet animals up close. Pizza party lunch included!

Holiday Zoo Camps

9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Monday, December 27, Tuesday, December 28,
Wednesday, December 29, Thursday, December 30,
Friday, December 31
Members: \$45 per child per day
Non-members: \$55 per child per day

Explore the zoo, play games, make crafts, and meet animals up close. Join us for one, two, or all 5 days!

Register online today at: rosamondgiffordzoo.org

For details, Call (315) 435-8511 x8559 or email education@rosamondgiffordzoo.org



SUPER SEAHORSES!

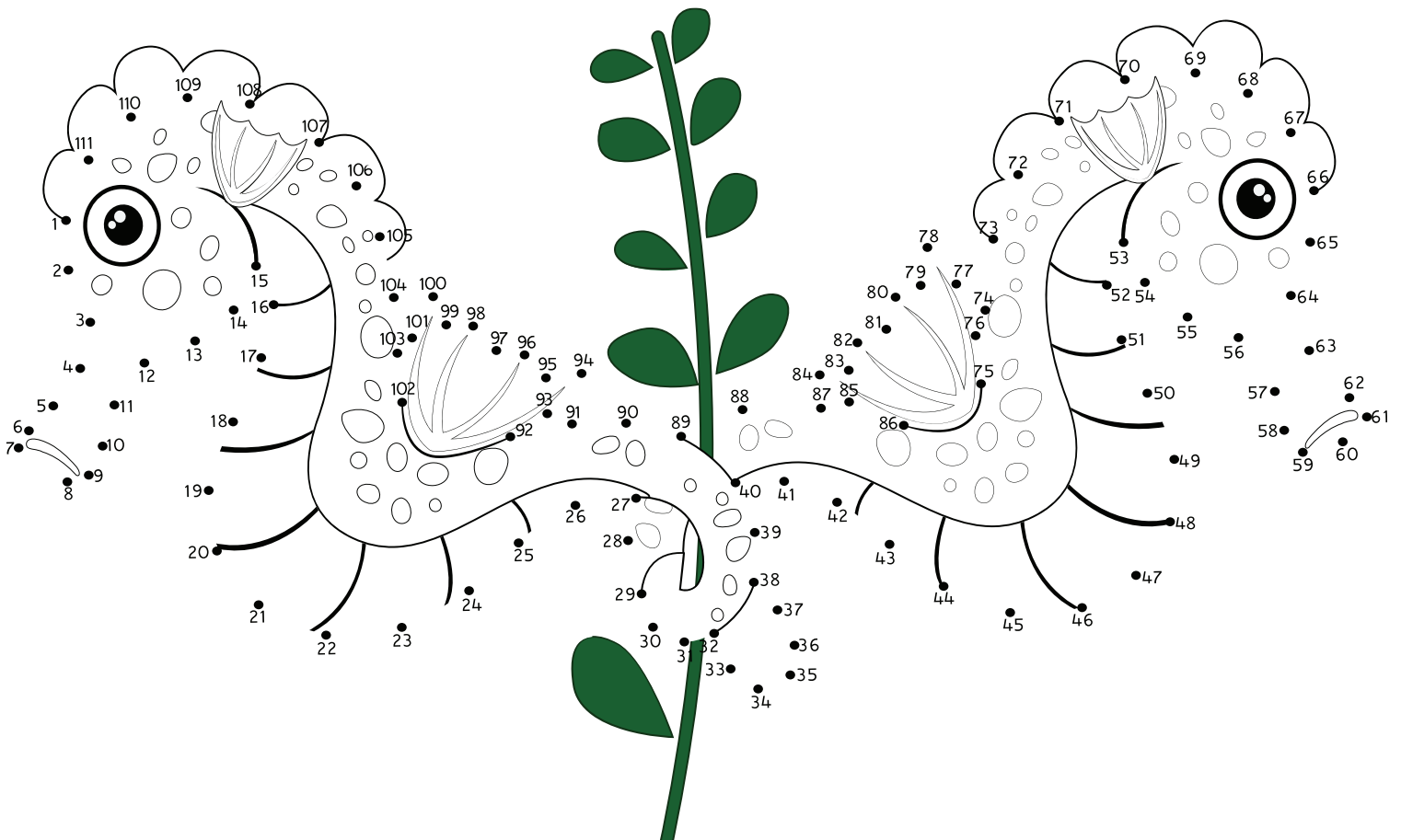
Seahorses are super specialized in the animal world. Among their amazing features, seahorses and their pipefish relatives are the only fish that have prehensile tails!

Primate species that have prehensile tails – such as howler monkeys, spider monkeys and squirrel monkeys – use them to dangle from trees while

eating or climbing. Fully or partly prehensile tails occur in other creatures like opossums, some porcupines, snakes and some lizards and amphibians like salamanders.

Seahorses use their tails to hang onto coral reefs, underwater plants or other seahorses in their wavy ocean home.

Connect the dots to make a picture of seahorses using their awesome tails!



PREHENSILE – pronounced “pree-HEN-sill” – means capable of grasping or holding onto things, like branches, coral reefs or each other. Scientists believe this adaptation evolved in species whose habitats made having an anchoring limb a great survival tool.



Kitchen Composting

A third of our nation's trash takes the form of organic matter, mostly food waste that, if discarded in a landfill, releases methane while it rots, contributing to global warming.

But any household can reduce their environmental impact and instead put this waste to use by feeding the soil. We are talking about a process called composting!

Composting is a rewarding hobby that promotes personal waste reduction, soil enrichment and a reduced need for synthetic fertilizers. The rule of thumb for composting is quite simple; almost anything that grows and is composed of living materials can be composted. For beginner composters, it is recommended to start small. All you need is:

- A compost bin
- Compost bin liners (if required)
- Locations of area drop-off facilities
- The motivation to be eco-friendly!

First step is to find a suitable kitchen compost bin which can reside on your countertop or under the kitchen sink. Composting bins are very versatile, from a DIY bin made from an empty yogurt container to a sleek stainless-steel bin! For more classy countertop composting bins, check out: <https://lifestyle.reviews/best-kitchen-compost-bin>. Next are liners if your bin requires them or to make drop-off easy. UNNI is a company that makes 100% compostable and BPA-free trash bags.

ONCE YOUR BIN IS FULL, IT'S TIME TO:

Transfer to a covered outdoor container and let it ripen for your personal garden or landscaping use.

1. Verify that your compost is ready to use; finished compost is dark and crumbles.
2. Decide how you would like to use the compost
 - In a plotted plant soil mix
 - Add to garden beds when planting young plants
 - Add to your garden beds in the fall
 - Side dress vegetable plants, flowers, or shrubs
3. If you consistently use a rich compost in your garden, you will not need to use commercial fertilizer!

Alternatively, you can give your organic materials to a facility to be composted with your entire community's compost.

- OCCRA has drop-off locations in Amboy and Jamesville: Locations - OCCRA.org.
- Drop-off at a local community garden that includes a public compost bin.
- Some areas offer composting programs that allow you to recycle compost curbside.
- If you cannot access a drop-off location for a few days, put your bagged compostable materials in the freezer. It will freeze before it decays, ensuring a bug-free and mess-free space until then.

For more information, please visit the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation web page on home composting: dec.ny.gov/chemical/8799.html





BLACK FRIDAY Sale

Friday, November 26

Annual Holiday Sale 10% Off December 6-10

Take 10 percent off purchases in store (open 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and online at syracusezooevents.org/shop.

Zoo members, add 10 percent to your member discount for 20 percent off!

Discount does not apply to books or Shop Local items.

Holiday Sales at The Curious Cub Gift Shop!

The holidays are fast approaching, and The Curious Cub Gift Shop has stocked up on gifts that will delight the animal lovers in your life and support animal care at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo!

Check out our selection of seasonal items and holiday-themed plush animals like these 12-inch glitter reindeer, adorable animal-inspired attire for infants, toddlers and youth as well as zoo-branded items for the zoo fans in your family. Best of all, proceeds from every sale benefit animal care and conservation at the zoo!



Can't come to the zoo?
Scan the QR code to visit our online store or go to syracusezooevents.org/shop

Adopt Andean Bear Bjorn

Senior Keeper Special \$55

Package includes:

A certificate of adoption, 4x6 color photo of Andean bear Bjorn, animal fact sheet, 12" animal plush, an adopt parent gift, copy of *MyZoo Magazine*, and listing on adopt parent board for one year.

Adopt an Animal online at syracusezooevents.org
Looking to adopt another animal at the regular rate?
Call (315) 435-8511 x8563 or
email giftshop@rosamondgiffordzoo.org



Holiday Gift Membership Special!

Give the gift of lasting family memories this holiday season, at one of CNY'S most cherished destinations. Recipients will enjoy a full year of zoo admission, a variety of seasonal activities—and SO MUCH MORE!

ALL MEMBERSHIPS INCLUDE:

- Free zoo admission 362 days a year
- Discounted admission to more than 150 AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums
- Discounts on education programs and zoo camps
- Discounts on purchases at The Curious Cub Gift Shop
- Discounts on food and beverage purchases at concessions
- Discounted prices for zoo birthday parties and special events
- Free limited-edition t-shirt (one per membership)
- Subscription to our full-color zoo publication, *MyZoo Magazine!*

It's the gift that keeps giving all year long!

SPECIAL OFFER

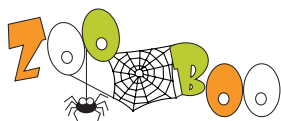
Purchase a gift membership between November 15 and December 20 and your recipients will be valid for the FULL 2022 year, PLUS they'll receive 2 single-use guest passes, an \$18 value!

Announcing a new membership opportunity for local organizations and their team members!

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo's new Organization Membership is the perfect way to say thank you to your staff for their hard work and dedication.

Reward your organization's team with annual membership benefits for just \$145 per organization!

For details, please contact the membership department at (315) 435-8511 x8537 or members@rosamondgiffordzoo.org



Weekends in October
October 9-31 | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Advance Sale Tickets:
Members: \$7 | Non-Members: \$8
Day Of Tickets:
Members: \$8 | Non-Members: \$9

Trick-or-Treat with the animals at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo! This kooky not spooky event provides Halloween fun without fear. Families will enjoy themed treats, creepy-crawly animal encounters, keeper talks, pop-up dance parties, games and more!



Fridays and Saturdays in December
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Advance Sale Tickets:
Members: \$7 | Non-Members: \$8
Day Of Tickets:
Members: \$8 | Non-Members: \$9

Take a festive and fun after-hours stroll amid sparkling displays of holiday lights that transform the zoo into a winter wonderland. Enjoy hot chocolate, festive music and awesome animals.



December 31 | 10 a.m. - Noon
Free with zoo admission

Come ring in the "noon" year at the zoo with this popular family event! Enjoy entertainment, a dance party and a New Year's celebration that keeps bedtime in mind, complete with ball drop countdown at noon!

Scan QR Code for event information
 or visit rosamondgiffordzoo.org/events





Host Your Holiday Party or any Special Celebration at the Zoo!

Whether you're planning a holiday gathering for your company, organization or friends and family or celebrating a special occasion, Catering at the Zoo offers a five-star menu from acclaimed **Executive Chef Dan Hudson**, top-notch service from our expert staff and a wildly unique venue at Syracuse's internationally accredited Rosamond Gifford Zoo!

We provide:

A wide selection of delicious menu options, beverage offerings and flexible setup and seating plans.

Beautiful banquet space with elegant holiday décor.

Access to the indoor zoo and/or an animal greeter – available nowhere else in Central New York.

Best of all, your event benefits the animals of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo!



BOOK YOUR
HOLIDAY EVENT
BY **OCTOBER 31**
AND RECEIVE A
COMPLIMENTARY
MEET AND MINGLE
WITH ONE OF OUR
CHARMING
ANIMAL AMBASSADORS!

SAVE THE DATES! DON'T MISS OUR SEASONAL 5-COURSE
GOURMET HARVEST DINNER PAIRINGS
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12 and FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3



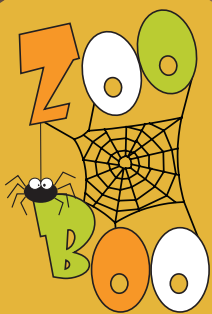
CATERING AT THE ZOO

Contact our event experts today!
(315) 435-8511 x8543
events@rosamondgiffordzoo.org
cateringatthetree.org





Upcoming Family-Fun Events



**WEEKENDS
IN OCTOBER**



**WEEKENDS
IN DECEMBER**



**FRIDAY,
DECEMBER 31**