



## NEWS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

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### Friends of the Zoo Announces New Board Members

Syracuse, N.Y. (March 19, 2015) – Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park is pleased to welcome to its board of directors Peter E. Belyea and Vicki R. Brackens.



**Peter E. Belyea** is president of CXtec and TERACAI, information technology companies located in Syracuse. Belyea has been with CXtec and TERACAI for more than 25 years, previously serving as vice president of data center and cabling for CXtec from 2007-11. Belyea also served as vice president of TERACAI during its launch, development and growth as a Cisco Silver Partner in 2009. Prior to joining CXtec and TERACAI, Belyea worked with AT&T as a design consultant in its premise service cable division.

Belyea is active in the Central New York community, where he also serves as a board member for the Central New York Sales and Marketing Executives (CNYSME). He previously served on the Chittenango School Board for 13 years, six of which he was president. In 2013, Belyea was selected as the Crystal Ball Award recipient by the CNYSME, which was awarded based on his contributions to the sales and marketing professions and for efforts in the areas of community development and support. Belyea is married with two children and resides in Chittenango.

**Vicki R. Brackens, ChFC®** is president of Brackens Financial Solutions Network in Syracuse. She has over 25 years' experience as an entrepreneur in the area of financial education and financial services. Brackens co-hosted Financial Fitness on PBS affiliate WCNY-Syracuse, the station's longest-running weekly show, from 2012-15. After completing a successful 25-year career with Metropolitan Life Financial Services she affiliated her firm with Lincoln Financial Advisors Corp. In 2008, she founded The World of Cheddar LLC, a social enterprise software development start-up company



dedicated to diffusing the personal financial health crisis through the use of games and simulations.

In addition to holding personal financial management seminars at various colleges, universities and community venues, Brackens has also been featured as an industry thought leader in media outlets, including CBS affiliate WTVH-Syracuse, Black Enterprise, Essence, Consumer Report's Money Advisor, the Central New York Business Journal and Reuters. She previously served as assistant treasurer of the Central New York Community Foundation and foundation board member of The Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science and Technology. She is currently a member of the Syracuse Area Salvation Army Advisory Board and The Raymond von Dran IDEA Board of Advisors. Brackens is married and resides in Syracuse.

Founded in 1970, the Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park is a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) support organization to the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, which is operated by Onondaga County Parks. Friends of the Zoo supports the mission of the zoo by providing educational programming to zoo visitors and the surrounding community. The Friends organization supports the zoo with marketing efforts, as well as fundraising and development activities. Friends of the Zoo operates the gift shop, catering department and Jungle Café. Over the years, the Friends organization has helped build new exhibits, improve existing habitats and upgrade facilities. Membership offers discounts on programs and in the gift shop, a quarterly magazine and free admission to the zoo.

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Founded in 1914, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park is among the top 10 percent of zoos in the country as an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is dedicated to connecting people to the natural world by providing engaging guest experiences, exceptional animal care, and unparalleled conservation education.

The zoo actively collaborates with Friends of the Zoo to provide its guests "the best day ever," ensuring experiences that excite, memories that endure, and knowledge that inspires worldwide conservation.

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission is \$8 for adults (19-61), \$4 for youth (3-18) and \$5 for seniors (62+). Children two and under are free. For more information, call the zoo at (315) 435-8511 or visit [rosamondgiffordzoo.org](http://rosamondgiffordzoo.org).

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[www.rosamondgiffordzoo.org](http://www.rosamondgiffordzoo.org)

County Executive, Joanne M. Mahoney • Commissioner of Parks & Recreation, Bill Lansley  
Rosamond Gifford Zoo Director, Ted Fox • Friends of the Zoo President, Janet Agostini

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