INSIDE:
WHO’S NEW AT THE ZOO
2016 GRATITUDE REPORT
RAINFOREST CONSTRUCTION BEGINS
Welcome to all our new members, I am so pleased you are joining our family of friends. To those who are long-time members, you are in for a special treat in 2017 with the many new animals that will be joining us throughout the spring and early summer, as well as some family friendly attractions.

Inside this edition of Wild Magazine, you will meet some new animals including a Komodo dragon, American alligators, Watusi cattle, and Kunekune pigs. As you read the stories on these animals, you will gain a good understanding of how they fit into the fabric of the Zoo, and a bit on their origins and personalities.

Children and parents will have some new rides to enjoy at both the Zoo and Carousel Village. Our recently named Explore and Soar area will offer a train ride, camel rides and a thrilling zip ride. Explore and Soar is behind Hasbro’s Our Big Backyard, off the Feinstein Junior Scholar Wetlands Trail. Visitors will access the zip ride either through the Zoo or at a new entrance from inside Roger Williams Park if not visiting the Zoo. At the Carousel, pony rides are back by mid-April, and there is a new train ride as well as the Carousel itself.

In my letter to you last spring, I discussed the design for the first Carousel itself. pony rides either through the Zoo or at a new entrance from inside Roger Williams Park if not visiting the Zoo. At the Carousel, pony rides are back by mid-April, and there is a new train ride as well as the Carousel itself.

As always, I look forward to seeing you at the Zoo!

Jeremy Goodman, DVM

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Our Zoo Guardian members are individuals committed to wildlife conservation and donate annual dues of $250 or more. Their support and dedication is critical to the efforts to save threatened and endangered species, provide quality science and environmental education to children, and improve and create exhibits that will continually delight and fascinate visitors.

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By Jeremy Goodman, DVM
Executive Director, RWP Zoo and RI Zoological Society

Reflects gifts made 1/1/2016 – 12/31/2016 (CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)
As spring arrives in full force in New England, Roger Williams Park Zoo is introducing new animals into our growing family. Interesting and exciting additions include the Watusi cattle and Kunekune pigs in addition to a female Komodo dragon and American alligators. (Learn more about the Komodo dragon and alligators on p5.)

MEET THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF THE ZOO FAMILY

In the Fabric of Africa, you will quickly notice the two new residents joining our zebra and wildebeest. The young Watusi cattle, known as the King of Cattle, native to the Lake Mobutu and Lake Tanganyika areas in eastern Africa, will soon become one of the Zoo’s favorites. According to Lynne McLain, manager of interpretations and graphics, the animals are part of the Sanga family of African cattle breeds, which originated more than 2,000 years ago from a combination of the Egyptian Longhorn cattle of Africa and Zebu Longhorn cattle originally from India.

“Watusi cattle tolerate temperature and weather extremes thanks to their horns, which they use as radiators,” says McLain. “Their blood circulates through the horn area, and is cooled and returned to their body. Amazingly, Watusi cattle horns, which can have a circumference nearing 28 inches, can reach lengths of eight feet wide, tip to tip! “As our cattle are young,” McLain says, “their horns will not be full size yet.” During the day, the calves nap, with an “auntie” cow nearby for protection. At night, the herd members sleep together with the calves in the center of the group to keep them protected.

We are welcoming young Kunekune pigs to the Alex and Ani Farmyard. The Kunekune pig is a delightful breed of swine, originally found in New Zealand living with the Maori people. While they were once close to extinction, they are now common in Europe. Kunekune, which means fat and round in the Maori language, is the perfect description for these hairy and rotund animals. Their colors range from black and white, to ginger, cream, gold-tip, black, brown, and tricolored. During the hot summer days, the pigs will wallow in mud to keep cool.

We hope you have the opportunity to visit the new members of our Zoo family and re-visit your old friends too. A great way to learn even more about the animals is to check out our daily keeper talks posted on our Facebook page.

WHAT’S HAPPENING AT THE ZOO?

Spring Festival at the Carousel - April 8, 10am-2pm
Meet the Easter Bunny, enjoy animal encounters, ride the Carousel, and jump in the bounce house. $7 per person, $8 at the door while tickets are available.

April 9, 14, 15
Visit the Easter Bunny at the Carousel 10-3. Carousel will stay open until 6.

Party for the Planet
April 17 – 21
A full week of fun for families including daily animal encounters, lively entertainment, fun games, music and more! Free with Zoo admission.

Scout Safari Night
May 20 (Rain date May 21)
An exclusive after-hours event that meets Girl Scout and Cub Scout badge requirements.

Rise and Shine on the Farm
June 10
Join zookeepers in the Alex and Ani Farmyard for a special morning on the farm. Enjoy a continental breakfast then explore fun-filled farm activities. Must register in advance. Member $25; non-members $35

Come Out and Play
June 20
Outdoor Rock-A-Baby concert. Pre-registration is required.

Zoobilee: Feast with the Beasts!
June 24
Feast on food and beverages prepared by 40+ restaurants and caterers, groove to live music and bid on exciting silent auction packages.

Be a Kid Again-In Hasbro’s Our Big Backyard
July 15
An adult-only event with music, play and more. Pre-registration is required.

Family Overnight
July 22 & July 29
Snooze at the Zoo for the wildest family overnight adventure in town!

Member Night - August 10
A member exclusive event, the Zoo is open after-hours. Animal talks, animal encounters, music, rides and fun.

Brew at the Zoo
August 26
Adult-only evening event - sample more than 100 beers from more than 70 local, regional and national brewers, enjoy live music, animal encounters and more at Rhode Island’s largest outdoor beer festival.

All events are rain or shine. For specific details and/or registration for events go to rwpzoo.org
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A gift to Roger Williams Park Zoo is a thoughtful way to recognize someone special. Gifts in honor or in memory allow you an opportunity to celebrate a loved one or family member in a truly meaningful way.

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Reflects gifts made 1/1/2016 – 12/31/2016
Adults and children will not only have the joy of learning about new animals as the weather warms up, but for construction enthusiasts there is great viewing of the “under construction” Rainforest. The underground work should be complete by spring and as the year progresses staff and visitors will see the foundation and walls go up with the expectation that the entire project will be open by Summer of 2018. Of course, accessibility and safety are always of greatest concern, so guests should be aware of temporary pathway closures and new walkways to allow everyone access around the grounds.

The Tropical America exhibit has been permanently decommissioned to allow for the new exhibit space. Favorite animals including the tamarins, flamingos and sloth are temporarily located in the Green House near Hasbro’s Our Big Backyard. Additionally, as patrons walk through the Zoo, some of the animals may be enjoying a different, yet temporary, home during the development of their permanent habitats.

“This dynamic exhibit brings a whole new level of interaction for guests,” says Ron Patalano, deputy director of operations. “With an open concept and technological advancements, we are giving visitors an experience like no other.”

“This exhibit is absolutely at the forefront of modern design,” states Tony Neves, draftsperson and Rainforest exhibit project manager.

“The goal is to have the outside structure in place by late fall, and then concentrate on crafting the interior exhibit space for our opening in 2018.”

“We’re taking an area of the Zoo that was outdated, and creating an atmosphere that comes alive,” comments Patalano. “Each detail of the Rainforest exhibit, from the otters’ new water slide to the cascading waterfall and lush horticulture, is a unique experience all on its own. It’ll be a tropical paradise right here in Rhode Island!”

**CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON RAINFOREST PROJECT**

**GIFTS AND GRANTS**

With the continual development of new exhibits, animal care improvements and the ongoing delivery of education, research and conservation programming, Roger Williams Park Zoo relies on the generosity of individuals, foundations, trusts and corporations. The Rhode Island Zoological Society enjoys working one-on-one with such donors to match their interests with the needs of the Zoo.

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ANIMALS THAT ROAMED THE EARTH MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO seem to appear only in fairy tales or horror films. Large lizards, reptiles with long tongues and sharp teeth may be the stuff of great film. However, what may be quite surprising is that there are animals that walked with the dinosaurs and are still surviving in the twenty-first century. Take one look at either the largest lizard on Earth, the Komodo dragon, or the American alligator, and there is no doubt these amazing creatures roamed the earth in another age.

PJ Jones, animal care manager at Roger Williams Park Zoo, explains that the Komodo dragon species is four million years old. “The Komodo dragon,” says Jones, “is quite lovable, and has lots of personality. This very large lizard,” she continues “has an interesting personality and is very intelligent.” The young female Komodo dragon joining the Roger Williams Park Zoo family hails from the Oglebay Zoo in West Virginia, and has a ways to go before reaching her adult size. She will arrive at the Zoo in late spring.

THE KOMODO DRAGON is a fascinating creature with its massive, flat head, bowed legs, and long, thick tail. Also known as the Komodo monitor, the animal originates from the Indonesian Islands of Komodo (from which it gets its names). A member of the monitor lizard family Varanidae, it is the largest living species of lizard, growing to a maximum length of ten feet, and weighing up to 150 pounds. They tend to be solitary animals only coming together to mate. Female Komodo dragons can have virgin births, which means there are some Komodo dragons that do not need a male to fertilize an egg for it to hatch!

AMERICAN ALLIGATORS, while more than 150 million years old, somehow managed to avoid extinction when the dinosaurs vanished 65 million years ago. The American alligator lives in freshwater, mainly in the southeastern part of the United States, largely in Florida. PJ Jones explains that the alligator is a survival success story of a once endangered species. “The alligator,” says Jones “was saved from extinction. State and federal protections, habitat preservation efforts, and reduced demand for alligator products improved the species’ wild population to more than one million and growing.” Roger Williams Park Zoo formerly housed the much smaller Chinese alligators, and Zoo guests enjoyed learning about this family of reptile. “We get many requests to have alligators back at the Zoo,” says Jones, “so we decided the time was right to have alligators rejoin us.” The four newly-arrived alligators will be located off Wilderness Plaza next to the porcupines. Make sure you stop by to visit our new family members.
**ANNUAL FUND**

Donors to the Rhode Island Zoological Society help enhance the Zoo’s award winning education programs, develop new exhibits and lend vital assistance to the Zoo’s critical conservation efforts to protect and save endangered and threatened species around the globe and in our own backyard. The following individuals have contributed $200 or more to our Annual Appeal in 2016.

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**PLEASE FOLLOW US ONLINE AND SHARE YOUR PHOTOS AND STORIES!**

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Roger Williams Park Zoo Marketing and Public Relations Department

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