

ZOO TRACKS



Summer 2008

Troop Adopts Amur Leopard



In an effort to help save an endangered species, the Amur leopard, Girl Scout Troop 142 donated their Girl Scout Cookie money to the Zoo's Adoption Program. Due to poaching and dwindling prey, the Amur leopard is one of the most endangered large cat species with less than 40 remaining in the wild.



Thin Mints, Tagalongs® and Caramel deLites®: Girl Scout Troop 142 has sold them all. However, when it came time to spend their hard earned cash, it wasn't dessert they wanted, but rather, lunch with a leopard.

"The girls voted to adopt one of the Zoo's Amur leopards," said Jodie Barnes, troop leader.

As part of the adoption process, Troop 142 met with Zookeeper Myndi Clements, who gave them a behind-the-scenes tour of the leopard's holding facilities. The Girl Scouts also received the opportunity to hold a sample of leopard fur and whiskers. But the most exciting part was being able to watch Jura, during a training session and his lunch time feeding. After Myndi gave a verbal command, Jura stood on his hind legs and stretched so Myndi could examine his body.

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LINCOLNITES GO ON SAFARI

Join more than 20,000 Lincolnites, who, thanks to Lincoln Safari, have discovered the joy of the great outdoors.

Lincoln Safari, which is supported by an Institute of Library and Museum Services grant to the Zoo, provides opportunities throughout the year to experience the natural environment in the Lincoln community. Research shows that adults and children profit from outside play. It can reduce stress and blood pressure and can catalyze weight loss as well as provide opportunities for unstructured imaginative play.

"It's so important to raise our children to participate in outdoors activities and be

aware of nature and the environment around them," said Lynette Ivanov, a Lincoln Safari participant.

Lynette and her husband, Ivan, said they enjoy taking their sons Ashton, 7; Maxwell, 5; and George, 2, on Lincoln Safari outings.

"It's an adventure every time we go out," she said. "Our children are always looking for Lincoln Safari posts."

In addition to the Ivanov family, approximately 4,000 Safari groups are enjoying Lincoln's parks and have discovered outside places to play in Lincoln that they didn't know existed!

"It's been an amazing experience,"

Lynette said.

"Lincoln Safari has been informative and educational. We've learned a lot about Lincoln."

There are still Safari kits available at the Lincoln City libraries. Sign up online at www.lincolnsafari.com and take part in the fun.

Registration is free and is available at every Lincoln City library. You can register yourself, a group, or your family. There is no age specification; the activity is fun and

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From the desk of John Chapo, President/CEO

EXCITING NEW EXHIBITS

We are so proud to have our two new exhibits open at the Zoo and hope you'll visit them if you haven't already. It has truly been a labor of love for our entire staff to create these experiences that we knew would thrill our visitors. Everyone from our maintenance staff, to our education team, to our development department have worked tirelessly to make these dream exhibits become a reality.

Laura's Butterfly Pavilion opened Memorial Day weekend and is filled with people of all ages getting a firsthand look at the wonderful butterflies as they soar from perch to perch. Many people have had butterflies perch on their finger, or shoulder, or hat, and have been delighted at our decision to encourage "gentle touching."

After a slowdown caused by our wet spring, Stego's Big Dig is now open to the delight of our young visitors. It is exciting to see the many shoes line the rim of the sand as children are busily in the hunt for a buried bone. The one aspect of this exhibit we didn't anticipate was the extent to which the older children enjoy the experience. They are asking our Paleo Pals in-depth questions about the particular bones

they have uncovered and what function that particular bone has in a body. These conversations confirm our belief that a child is more engaged when they are learning through play.

But our visitors say it best. Here are some of the comments we have heard about our new exhibits:

"When I brought my grandson to the Zoo, I didn't expect him to truly enjoy the butterflies. It was wonderful to see his gentle side as he tried to hold a butterfly. This is a memory I will cherish."

"Congratulations on a great new exhibit. Who knew digging in the sand in search of a bone would be so much fun?"

We are now busy planning for our Zoo's future and what our next additions will be. With your support, we can continue to create experiences that will engage our children and help build a better world for us all. I encourage you to contact our office and learn more about how your support can significantly impact the Zoo.

We'll see you at the Zoo!
John Chapo

About the Amur Leopard

With less than 40 remaining in the wild, the Amur leopard is one of the most endangered large cats on earth. The Amur leopard is listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and is on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora's Appendix I for protection status.

A rare subspecies, this cat lives in the temperate forests and harsh winters of the Amur river valley in Siberia, Manchuria, and Korea. Thus, the Amur leopard (*Panthera pardus orientalis*), also is known as the Far East leopard, the Manchurian leopard or the Korean leopard.

The Amur leopard has several distinguishing features. The hairs of its summer pelt are 1 inch long but in winter it grows to nearly 3 inches. Apart from its long winter coat, the Amur leopard is easily distinguished from other leopard

subspecies by its widely spaced rosettes with thick borders. It also has longer legs, probably an adaptation for walking through snow.

Male Amur leopards weigh 71-106 pounds, with exceptionally large males up to 132-165 pounds. Females weigh 55-95 pounds.

The Amur leopard is habitually nocturnal and solitary. Nimble-footed and strong, it carries and hides unfinished kills so that they are not taken by other predators.

The main prey species of the Amur leopard are roe and sika deer, along with hares and badgers.

However, its prey base of small ungulates (hoofed mammals) including roe deer has been depleted by human-subsistence hunting and forest clearance. Poaching for their skins continues to be a threat.

Zoos play a valuable role for public awareness and the urgent need to improve Amur leopard conservation. There are presently approximately 300 Amur leopards in the European and North-American zoo breeding programs.

Troop Adopts Amur Leopard

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Jura also moved to different areas of the holding so Myndi could practice moving him safely from one area to another.

As a reward during training, Myndi provided Jura with one large raw meatball at a time.

"The program helps children make a connection with the animals and inspires them to learn the importance of wildlife conservation," Myndi said.

The Zoo's adoption program provides individuals, schools, troops and youth groups an opportunity to get involved with caring for the Zoo's animals.

When you participate, you or your group will receive one adoption certificate featuring a photo of your animal and a Proof-of-Adoption card for each member of your group. The group can then visit the Zoo and learn more from a visit with the animal's Zookeeper.

For additional information visit www.lincolnzoo.org/adoptions.php or contact Michael, at 402-475-6741, ext. 131, or email mtrutna@lincolnzoo.org.



Wild About Birthdays



The best memories are made of friends, family, celebration and laughter. All of these are found in the Crooked House during a birthday party at the Zoo. Birthday parties have been held at the zoo since it opened 43 years ago.

June 8, Meg Wightman, daughter of Jack and Anna Wightman, celebrated turning 4 with her parents, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents.

Cupcakes, ice cream, punch and treat bags provided by the zoo staff, were given to each child. After treats and gifts, party members walked through the recently opened Butterfly Pavilion, marveling at the peacocks and shouted "yahoo" as they rode the ponies.

Trae Andrews, 6, son of Tanner and Faith Andrews, celebrated his birthday with 11 of his friends. Amid excitement and laughter, they shared stories in the Crooked House, next to the upgraded Stego exhibit.

Birthday parties have been held at the Zoo since it opened 43 years ago. "Many parents remember having their own birthday party at the Zoo when they were a child," said John Chapo, President/CEO. "This is a great way to relive a memory while making a new one."

Invite your friends and family to a party they won't forget. Party packages are available now! For more information, visit www.lincolnzoo.org/birthdays.php.



WORKPLACE GIVING ENCOURAGED

Lights ... Camera ... Action!

Community Services Fund of Nebraska (CSF), Lincoln Children's Zoo and dedicated member organizations work together to encourage workplace giving.

The Zoo is a member agency of CSF, a nonprofit umbrella organization that provides resources to help agencies gain access to workplace giving.

This year's video, shared with employees within the public sector, features the Zoo. Kiersten Hill, CSF executive director, said the video will be released in July and used for fundraising throughout the fall.

Zoo Member Tracy Beranek provides a moving testimonial for CSF on the film. The spotlight is on Alea, Tracy's 18-year-old daughter.

Alea was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer when she was 4. Alea is now 18; there is no more cancer, but related strokes caused permanent balance difficulties and blindness. Her love of animals,

though, is greater than her physical barriers. She takes advantage of the Zoo's annual Sensory Safari, a one-day event for visually impaired children and adults.

Sensory Safari is a collaboration of the Zoo and other area agencies. Recordings of animals, stuffed animals and sensory discovery stations help attendees see the animals as others do.

"Sensory Safari has fueled Alea's passion for animals," Tracy said. "She's attended every year since it began, and every year we've learned something new. It's been a fantastic experience all the way around."

Not only does Alea help care for the family's dog, mouse, snail, two cats and nine fish; she also wants to work with animals one day. She remembers meeting President/CEO John Chapo when she was 6, her first backstage tour of the Zoo and the friends she met at the Zoo since.

"The volunteers from the Zoo remember our kids," Tracy said. "They'll say, 'Hi,

Alea! How are you? You look fantastic.' Hearing that is incredible to me."

"We have been so immensely and richly blessed," Tracy said. "We have met many wonderful people and want to share that message. I hope this film helps people remember to not put off doing nice things."

The Zoo impacts its visitors, and visitors impact the Zoo as well.

"This project exemplifies years of connectivity," Chapo said. "The Zoo touches many lives in many ways. It keeps me going."

Alea has one brother and two older sisters. Tracy and her husband Kevin have taken their children from their home in Milford, to the Zoo countless times. They are grateful for the help CSF has given to organizations like the Zoo.

"The organization impacts many groups," Tracy said. "We're part of a group that got impacted. Thank you to everyone who has supported the Zoo and Sensory Safari."



Vet Day Keeps Animals Healthy and Strong

The saying "one day is never like another" is exactly what happens in the Ethel S. Abbott Animal Care Center at the Zoo.

Many people may not realize that the Zoo dedicated a Clinic 11 years ago on Zoo grounds. This clinic houses treatment and hospitalization facilities, an x-ray suite and private holding areas. The clinic was located at the Zoo so that it could increase quality of care and reduce the amount of stress put on an animal each time it needed to be seen by a veterinarian.

Every Thursday, the clinic's exams are led by Dr. Mark Falloon, Pitts Veterinary Hospital, and Dr. Micah Kohles, Nebraska Animal Medical Center. Animal curator Randy Scheer, Zookeeper DaviAnn Buggi and Veterinary Technician Amanda Beasley, Pitts Veterinary Hospital, all assist the vets with the procedures.

The day begins with a staff meeting and then house calls to some of the patients. The vets work closely with the Zookeepers Nemo, a squirrel monkey, is treated for an eye infection on Vet Day by Zookeepers and veterinarians: DaviAnn, left, Dr. Falloon, Randy and Dr. Kohles.

because the keepers know the animals so well, they are the first to pick up any changes in the animal's behavior. Some visits are to sick animals but others are routine visits to discuss health, general care and feeding with the keepers. The staff then regroup in the clinic and prepares for the first patient. Today, the staff will focus on the squirrel monkeys. "Nemo" is being treated for an eye infection. Next is "Kirk" followed by "Miles."

Scheer said, "Our Zoo is unique in that it provides routine visits for each of our animals every year. Many zoos see this as an unnecessary expense, but we feel it is a key component in ensuring that our animals are happy and healthy. The standard of animal care that we provide is excellent, and I think that is what really sets us apart."



LINCOLN SAFARI

Continued from Page 1

beneficial for both adults and children. Upon registration, you receive a safari kit containing a map, a safari guidebook, a package of crayons and a set of calling cards.

With the map, you identify the locations of 35 Safari sites, which are parks

and outside spaces in the Lincoln area. Your guidebook has a corresponding clue for the site that will lead you to a rubbing post. With the crayon, you make a rubbing of the embossed tile, a symbol in your guidebook to commemorate your achievement. The Lincoln Safari Web site lists the Lincoln Safari partner events that will give participants an opportunity to enter a drawing to win a prize.

The Zoo's WinterWeekends, November

29-30 and December 6-7, will celebrate all who complete the Safari with another 10-piece patio set prize drawing and a special chance to win by turning in your completed final evaluation, which is on pages 86-87 of the Safari Guidebook.

Your group may choose to visit several locations during each season, or you may do them all at once; the pace is up to you.

Visit www.LincolnSafari.com for more information and for a list of Safari events.

SUMMER CALENDAR 2008

***Visit Calendar at www.lincolnzoo.org for most up to date listing of events.
Calendar subject to change without notice.

Close Encounters of the furry kind!

Fall Zoo Camp is coming!

Send your child on an animal adventure full of games, crafts, outdoor play and mysteries solved through careful lessons in observation. Our animals are just waiting to open your child's eyes to the wonders of nature.

Zoo Camp is held from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, October 27–31. This camp is ideal for children in grades 2–5. Snacks and drinks are provided, but lunch should be sent with the child or can be bought at the Safari Café. The cost is \$210 for Zoo members and \$245 for non-members. Supervised fun & games, outside play, learning about nature—this is an ideal way to spend a week.

Move over YouTube, it's time to meet ZooTube

The latest feature on the Zoo's new Web site is the addition of ZooTube. This interactive page allows the public to experience part of the Zoo from the comforts of their own home. Videos featuring our youngest animals are posted on the site as well as a live video feed that is updated every eight seconds.

Although ZooTube is new, it is already a huge success. Just 11 days after installing the new page, the Web site had over 4,400 hits! The Zoo is proud to reach beyond our gates and bring the Zoo to everyone.

ZooTube is made possible by The Advanced Baby Center of Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center.



JULY

- 21 **Funky Shirt Day** – Show us how funky you can dress and receive \$1 off admission, combo meal and train rides
- 23 **Wallaby Wednesday** – focus on Wallabies today
Wild Wednesday – Zoo open until 8
Theme: Marvelous Metamorphosis
Lance Schupbach performs: 6:30-7:15 p.m.
- 26 **Wake up the Zoo** – 9 a.m. - Family Fun Pack Members only
- 28 **Music Monday** – come make some noise and listen to some tunes
- 30 **Wild Wednesday** – open until 8
Theme: Prehistoric Party & Ice Cream Social
- 31 **Go Batty Thursday** – we are batty over bats today

AUGUST

- 2 **Red Cross Blood Drive** – free items for people registering to give blood this day in the blood mobile
- 3 **Clown Day** – Appearances and plenty of clowning around by Lincoln's local clown group, Calliope Clown Alley #40. Come clown around with the best!
Otter Day – focus on otters
- 4 **Meerkat Monday** – Dress like an animal today to receive \$1 off admission and train rides
- 5 **Wake up the Zoo** – 9 a.m. - Family Fun Pack Members only
- 6 **Wild Wednesday** – Zoo open until 8
Theme: Beautiful Bugs
- 8 **Seeing Double** – Special pricing for families with "multiples"
- 11 **Cartoon Character Day** – wear your favorite costume to receive \$1 off admission and train rides
- 12 **Tortoise & Turtle Tuesday** – special topics and factoids
- 13 **Wild Wednesday** – Zoo open until 8
Theme: Butterfly Bungalows. Offutt Air Force Base presents falcons.
String Beans performs: 6:30-7:15 p.m.
- 14 **Kiwanis Day** – free admission for Seniors and Children 11 & under
- 16 **Wake up the Zoo** – 9 a.m. - Family Fun Pack Members only
Girls Scout Event – Hug a Bug For more information, contact the Girls Scout Council

- 18 **Sundae Monday** – Visit the Safari Café for special pricing on sundaes
- 20 **Wen-Dee Wednesday (Red Panda)** – we love our red pandas!
Wild Wednesday – Zoo open until 8
Theme: Jurassic Journey
Dinner with the Director – Family Fun Pack members only. Jim King performs: 6:30-7:15 p.m.
- 25 **Stuffed Animal Day** – bring your favorite one to the Zoo to receive \$1 off admission and train rides
- 27 **Wild Wednesday** – Zoo open until 8
Theme: the Last Wild Wednesday of the season.
Kiwanis Quartet performs: 6:30-7:15 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

- 7 **Summer Safari** – Member's Night 5:30-8 p.m.
- 8 **Senior Monday**
- 15 **Senior Monday**
- 17 **Sensory Safari** – for the blind and visually impaired. must pre-register
- 22 **Senior Monday**
- 29 **Senior Monday**

OCTOBER

- 4 **Meet and Shriek**
- 6 **Senior Monday**
- 11 **Last Saturday blast** – open until 7 p.m. weather permitting
- 13 **Senior Monday**
- 15 **Last Day to visit Zoo**
- 26-30 **Boo at the Zoo**

Zoo Wish List

- autoclave
- surgery table
- ultrasound unit
- digital radiograph unit
- large animal platform scales
- portable animal crates
- digital camera
- Portable or ceiling mounted surgical lighting

Join in the Wild Wednesday Fun!

Every Wednesday in July and August, special activities take place as visitors experience the zoo until 8 p.m.

"The Zoo is a different place in the evening," said John Chapo, President/CEO. "Soon the weather will begin to cool and our animals will become more active after 5 p.m."

There is still plenty of time to take part in Wild Wednesday fun. Stego's Big Dig is open and we have many exciting special guests and activities planned.

July 23: **Marvelous Metamorphosis.** Watch the transformation of eggs, caterpillars and chrysalis to butterfly. Create a pom-pom caterpillar and thumbprint art, and see butterflies first hand during lessons from Dr. Tiffany Heng-Moss and Dan Stahr, "The Butterfly Man."

July 30: **Prehistoric Party!** Prizes will be given to those wearing dinosaur party hats and/or costumes. During the party, make a stegosaurus, watch a dino feet demonstration and see a dinosaur's graph created by all Wild Wednesday

visitors. The Kiwanis Quartet performs on Stego's stage.

Aug. 6: **Beautiful Bugs.** Beetles and other insects show off their amazing colors and patterns. Draw through the Zoo with sidewalk chalk while creating a beautiful bug. Participate in a matching game, crazy crawlers craft or "Ladybug, Ladybug, Fly Away Home" activity in the My Yard area. Club Kicks will entertain on Stego's stage at 6 p.m.

Aug. 13: **Butterfly Bungalows.** Learn about where butterflies live while making butterfly houses and a bouncy caterpillar craft. Special guest, a Master Gardener, will join us in the My Yard area.

Aug. 20: **Jurassic Journey.** Travel through prehistoric times while pinning the tooth on the T-Rex in the My Yard area, make a triceratops and discover eggs in the dino hunt.

Aug. 27: **The Last Wild Wednesday.** Win an award for attending every Wild Wednesday.

Wild, Wacky One Day Events

The Lincoln Children's Zoo has introduced "one day events" this summer.

Starting with Friday, June 13th, we have had Tamarin Tuesday, Thirsty Thursday and Wacky Hat Day, to name a few. Some of the upcoming one day events are Funky Shirt Day, Wallaby Wednesday, Go Batty, Meerkat Monday, Sunday Monday, Plush Animal Day and Wen-Dee Wednesday.

These days have been created to instill more fun in coming to the Zoo, along with special prices for admission, train rides and café items for our visitors.

"With families staying closer to home this summer, we want them to come to the Zoo often with the idea that every week is not the same at the Zoo," said John Chapo, President/CEO.

There are other events planned as well, such as Otter Day, Kiwanis Day and Seeing Double Day, all in August.

Seeing Double Day will honor families who have multiple birth children and special admission prices and train ride prices will be featured that day for those families.

Everyone is encouraged to check the calendar on the Zoo web page for the events and specials.

"We will always have the specials that are posted, but we may add something more the day of the vent," add Chapo.

As a reminder, all events are subject to change.

Membership Card Changes

Have you ever misplaced your membership card before the Zoo season begins? Tired of rising postage costs?

The Zoo's Membership Department is working hard to take the guess work out of visiting the Zoo. One idea is to have your membership card waiting at the Zoo's office during week days and at a special table on weekends until May.

Other zoos across the country have found this practice works – and saves the zoo several thousands of dollars each year in postage.

As always, memberships make a great gift. We will continue mailing those presents out to the lucky recipients.

Stay tuned for additional changes to help us serve our members more.

Stego's Big Dig

Zoo's newest adventure is 170 million years in the making

Big changes were happening in June at the Lincoln Children's Zoo. After 45 years of service as the Zoo's iconic water fountain, "Stego," the one-ton stegosaurus replica now oversees — and literally overshadows — a truly dynamic science-discovery area called Stego's Big Dig. This exciting new exhibit was made possible through the generosity of Ted and Colleen Hubbard.

The new discovery area helps kids develop their scientific skills while searching for buried bones in a nearly 30-foot-wide sand pit below Stego. Helpful "Paleo Pals" are available during peak Zoo hours to educate and answer questions.

Similar to paleontologists, who begin their studies with bone identification, the children are encouraged to compare their finds to a skeleton display. They are invited to rebury their bones so that other children can experience the thrill of discovery.

The goal is to help guests understand the connection between the bones and the many endangered animals at the Lincoln Children's Zoo. "Children are fascinated by dinosaurs and they love to learn — especially when learning seems like play," John Chapo, President/CEO, explained. "The Zoo's new exhibit builds on their interest and promotes learning through a hands-on, paleontology-like experience."





ANIMAL ENRICHMENT DAY

Lincoln Children's Zoo provided its visitors an opportunity to give back to the animal kingdom June 22 by hosting Animal Enrichment Day.

"Animal Enrichment Day provided visitors with a hands-on opportunity to get involved with our animals' well-being," said Missy Aning, Zookeeper.

The event featured five stations where Zoo-goers, both young and old, learned about animal enrichment. They also were able to create a variety of different objects for many Zoo residents including pinecone treats, popsicles, Cheerios strings, and paper bag and paper roll surprises.

Missy described enrichment as an attempt to make the animals' environment exciting and/or challenging through the use of toys, scents and puzzles.

"Our Zookeepers and volunteers daily work to maintain our animals well being," Missy said. "These

enrichment objects keep the animals as mentally and physically healthy as possible."

The enrichment used depends on the animal. Natural behaviors are researched to find out what the animals would react to in the wild.

"Each item is designed to encourage species specific behaviors," she said. Zookeepers speak with zoos across the world to find out what items work best for their animals.

For instance, leopards are carnivores. One thing we do for them is make a pinata of an animal they would hunt in the wild. Primates enjoy boxes, bags, and frozen treats with hidden food. The gibbons love to swing from their firehose — whatever will keep them interested!

Sometimes enrichment is as simple as giving the animal a new cardboard box or bag to enjoy. Other times, enrichment can be a tough and time consuming job.

Lincoln Children's Zoo thanks everyone for their participation and looks forward to its next Animal Enrichment Day. Make sure to check the zoo's calendar at www.lincolnzoo.org for other great events.



Students Benefit from CATZ

Children at the Zoo is a demonstration of the Zoo's dependability as a community partner and neighborhood resource.

From one nonprofit to another, CATZ provides free admission to organizations such as Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters, Teammates and Title I Schools. Benefitting organizations distribute tickets to the children they serve.

Elliott Elementary school is one of many CATZ participants. Elliott Principal Dr. DeAnn Currin said a combination of preparatory research, grade-level team planning and generosity by the Zoo and its donors brings remarkable experiences within the reach of her students.

Mary Logan, Elliott science teacher and Zoo educator, prepares students before their trip to the Zoo. Logan and Barbara Frank, second grade teacher, continue lessons throughout programs such as Zoo Through the Seasons, in which Elliott second graders visited the Zoo in Fall, Winter, Spring and late Spring.

"Whether the trip involves first, second, third or any grade, research adds depth and richness to the experience," Currin said. "It's an amazing collaboration and is very important for the kids; the Zoo is a wonderful neighborhood resource."

Elliott endorses and participates in the Lincoln Safari. Staff and students encourage community members to visit the rubbing post on facility property.

"It's nice to have the connection with Safari," Currin said. "We want our kids to be outside."

Although CATZ is subsidized by generous donors, donations do not cover the cost of the program. The Zoo, however, is committed to the program and to giving the children firsthand enjoyment of nature.

Helping with the program is simple and will positively affect the life of a child. For more information, visit www.lincolnzoo.org/CATZ.php.

THANK YOU TO OUR FRIENDS OF THE ZOO CORPORATE SPONSORS!



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Full Steam Ahead for Miller

Volunteers play a significant role in helping our visitors learn firsthand. In addition to office assistants, Zookeeper assistants, Bug Buddies, Stego's Big Dig Paleo Pals and Laura's Butterfly Pavilion guides, we have our own locomotive engineers.

R.P. Miller, retired Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway locomotive engineer, has donated his time to operate the Zoo train and has enriched Zoo visits for nearly 15 years.

Miller began working for the railroad in 1952 and retired in 1987. He knew the Zoo's founder, Arnott Folsom, and witnessed the opening of the Zoo 43 years ago.

"The Zoo needed help running the train, and I like being on railroad tracks," Miller said.

Miller joins a hundred of other former BNSF employees who are responsible for making the train run every day. These soft spoken individuals are looked upon in awe by the Zoo's young visitors. It's often hard to tell who benefits most from this important volunteer position — the giggling children, a grateful Zoo staff, or the retirees who beam with pride every time they blow the whistle.

Whatever your interest may be, we have something for you if you would like to volunteer. You could provide remarkable experiences for our visitors. We are happy to adjust to your schedule. Please call Linda at 402-475-6741, ext. 129, or email lfischer@lincolnzoo.org for details and additional information.