

# ZooNews

The biannual newsletter for Pueblo Zoo supporters



Fall Brings  
Change  
and Renewal

# Letter from the Director



As we move into fall, it is part of the natural rhythm of the season to migrate to a spirit of transformation and change. Though change can be challenging and uncomfortable, it is also a necessary part of renewal and growth. We can find an apt example of the need to shed the old and welcome the new in the natural world in the shedding of a snake's skin. A snake's skin doesn't grow with it, so if it is not able to cast off the old skin, it will die. Regular sheds allow the snake not only to grow, but to sluff off damaged and parasitic cells. Sometimes, it is a smooth process with the skin coming off in one contiguous piece leaving a snake shaped shell. Other times, the snake has to really work at it while the skin comes off in bits and pieces. The results, however, are worth it. The new skin is vibrant, smooth and healthy and revitalizes the snake for another cycle.

At the Pueblo Zoo, we know something about revitalizing through renewal and change. In our last ZooNews we told you about our "Quest for Gold" in seeking AZA re-accreditation. The AZA Commission challenged us to examine ourselves in a new light to identify where change was necessary. At times, it was clear what we must do to reset our sights on improvements – repair, clean-up, improvements, decluttering. At other times, it was harder to let go of something that felt ingrained in our history or to reach for something seemingly unattainable. More often than not, though, that push to re-imagine things paid off and led to better experiences for all. You will read about some of those initiatives in this issue (p.4-5) and hopefully, you have seen the improvements during your visit to the zoo. These changes have led us not only to new opportunities and new ways of thinking, but also it has given our staff and supporters a new sense of energy and revitalization.

I am happy to report that this transformation and revitalization was readily apparent to our AZA inspectors, and the Commission granted us accreditation at our Fall Hearing at the Annual AZA Conference. Thank you to all of our supporters, Board and staff who helped us move forward. I say "move forward" rather than "cross the finish line" as there is no stopping point. We must continue to grow and transform. As one of my Board members is fond of saying, "If you are not moving forward, you are falling behind." Thank you for your support in moving us forward!

*Abbie Krause, Executive Director*



***"According to Darwin's Origin of Species, it is not the most intellectual of the species that survives; it is not the strongest that survives; but the species that survives is the one that is able best to adapt and adjust to the changing environment in which it finds itself." - Leon C. Megginson***

# Thank you to our Generous Sponsors

## Brew at the Zoo

presented by



VIP Sponsor

- Renewal by Anderson

### Friend Sponsors

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- Premier Members Credit Union
- T-Fiber

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- Red Leg Brewing
- Reservoir Brewing
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- Topsy Rose
- Walter's Brewing
- Wibby Brewing
- Wiley Roots Brewing
- World's End Brewing

## Zoofari

presented by



Michael & Cheryl Rohr



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- Pueblo Water
- Steel City Solar

## Senior Safari

presented by



- A Better Colorado Home Health Agency
- Allelon Hospice
- A Place at Home
- Dignity Memorial
- ENT Credit Union
- Frontier Home Health
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- KIX 107.5
- Life Care Center of Pueblo
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- Renewal by Anderson
- Sharmar Village
- T-Fiber
- University Park Care Center
- Visiting Angels

### Supportor Sponsors

Coffee & Donut Sponsor - KKTU



# Mastering Milestones

## Accreditation Achieved!

The hard work of staff, board and YOU, our supporters, has paid off! The AZA Accreditation Commission noted that the Pueblo Zoo “hit it out of the park!” when granting accreditation at the AZA Annual Conference on September 16th, 2024. The reviewer and other Commission members stated that it was extremely gratifying to see how our zoo rose to the occasion in making improvements in our “Quest for Gold” in achieving the Gold Standard of Zoo Accreditations.

We particularly want to thank the City of Pueblo and the Pueblo County Commissioners as well as our supporters for recognizing the importance of AZA Accreditation and what the zoo brings to our community as they dedicated resources to the cause.



We are a better zoo for these efforts and we are honored to continue serving our community, animals, and staff in the name of conservation.

# Evolving Landscapes

## Newly Added Features



## Savoring the Shade this Summer

One of the newest features to our bison and elk exhibits are the newly constructed shade shelters. These structures have provided much needed shade for the animals from the intense heat this summer. Similar structures have also been added to the zebra enclosure. The animals now have it made in the shade!

## The Land Down Under - Construction



Artists Billy Williamson and Amy Wroblewski hard at work



The New Australia Exhibit

Look who just hopped in to help us freshen up our Australia exhibit! This giant kangaroo, created by Billy Williamson, welcomes little joeys to climb into her pouch. Take a crawl through the entrance of the giant termite mound, painted by artist Richard Montano, and you may find yourself inside a photo opp on the other side! More changes to this area to come!

# Who's New at Pueblo Zoo



One of our most popular new arrivals is the baby **ring-tail lemur** located in the World of Color building. The gender is still unknown to us all, but one thing is for sure - he/she is very rambunctious and photogenic. Zoo guests are very much in love with this little one!



Pacha, our newest resident to the farm, is a young guanaco. **Guanaco** are closely related to llamas and are one of two wild South American camelids.

Pacha has settled in well and is known for greeting passersby. Tread carefully though, as he is a notorious spitter!



The education team has welcomed a pair of **chinchillas**. After routine quarantine, Honey Bun and Sweetie Pie (yes! that is their names!) will soon be joining our education team to aid in educational programming with children and other guests.

## SSP Transfers *News from Afar*

As an AZA accredited zoo, we participate in Species Survival Programs (SSP) to manage animal transfers. The collaborations are how we manage collection planning, breeding, and ensure genetic diversity.

- Tenzin the Takin Travels to Toledo! Our little charmer arrived safely and after quarantine, will move in with 3 ladies as a companion.
- Zuri, one of our female lions that moved to Phoenix Zoo, has since given birth to two cubs! They are currently in the process of naming them. It always makes us proud when our pride contributes to the population.



## Volunteer Spotlight *Meet Bob Riseling*

Not only has our new Mexican bull snake found a new home in the Discovery Room, he has found a new friend. Bob Riseling and Ferdinand are getting all wrapped up in each other - literally. They have been forging a bond through trust and exploration.

# Transformation *and Change*

Reimagining the Mahlon T. White  
Discovery Room

When the Discovery Room was introduced in 1985 with the support of the Mahlon T. White Foundation, it was state of the art featuring the then-new concept of interactive learning. Over time though, everything ages and with the evolution of animal care practices and standards, the time came to renovate to provide more room for the animals which were housed in the very small adjacent Animal Room.

During COVID, the keepers would allow animals to exercise in the closed Discovery Room and they loved it! In keeping with that idea, we designed larger enclosures as well as a presentation/exercise area where animals hang out while keepers go about their daily work. As young visitors observe keepers at work, they can ask questions and perhaps envision themselves going into a career in zoo keeping or bioscience.

The space is also designed to be transformative to feature different themes over time. The first exhibit, AZA's "Not A Pet" campaign, educates the public about responsible pet ownership. It talks about the importance of carefully evaluating pet purchases by working with responsible pet providers such as Beasties.

The space also provides cozy spots for children to do crafts, gather around a "cozy fireplace" on faux log stools, or curl up in a ploof to read. This fun, innovative furniture was provided by Fomcore, a new local company brought to Pueblo by Pedco. Rampart Tile & Nora provided flooring made with sustainable products. We are so excited to re-open this space. With different themes, presentations, crafts and animal activity, this will be a great place for our guests to visit time and time again. We can't wait to see all the discovery, learning and energy return to this room. We could not have done it without the help of our partners in designing and building these unique components that serve both our animals and our guests.



Hercules enjoying his expanded enclosure.



A ZooALIVE member educates visitors at the ribbon-cutting.



The newly-renovated Discovery Room.



## *in Remembrance*

Along with her husband, Mahlon "Butch" White, Maylan T. White was a passionate supporter of Pueblo and the zoo. As we open a new era for the Discovery Room, it is fitting that we remember her and all she has done for Pueblo.

## Local vendors and artists making this remodel possible include:

Generous donations from  
The Jennie and Albert Gersick Foundation  
The Garone-Nicksich Foundation  
and Rotary #43

Beasties  
- expertise, supplies and animals -

•  
Cryptic Creations  
- design and construction of exhibits -

•  
Quality Custom Woodworking, LLC  
- custom cabinetry -


•  
Richard Montano  
- presentation space and custom tree bookshelf -


# What's in Store: *Woods of Wonder*

## Necessity is the Mother of Invention

In going through our re-accreditation process, we faced some hard decisions and had to consider letting go of some things. For example, while the wooded area at the front entrance of the zoo is scenic, the exhibits in that area are aging and no longer meet “modern zoological standards”. So, we are re-envisioning this area to become a fun, welcoming space for families. The “Woods of Wonder” will spark the imagination with whimsical designs and opportunities for play and relaxation through 3 primary areas:

 **A kids nature play space** – while animals are the primary zoo attraction, children can burn off steam in a naturalistic play space.

 **Education/ambassador space** – this will be a place for our teen ZooAlivers, docents and Education team to exercise animals and provide animal presentations. It will expand our ability to add more Animal Ambassadors to our collection.

 **An Adult / Family area-** two of the exhibits will be transformed into seating spaces with shade that can be used both for free by the public as the children play and also as a rental space for birthday parties and other gatherings.

Don't worry, there will still be animals housed in this area. The Woods will be home to several sets of education animals. Some of our friends will be moving to other parts of the zoo. The ring-tails will move into a cozy barn in the farm and our porcupine, Ash, will be getting a new home too!



We Want Your Input on This Project!

Take our Woods of Wonder Survey  
Online at: [bit.ly/3zzCEvR](https://bit.ly/3zzCEvR)

**WOODS OF  
WONDER**



**OUR MISSION**  
 To empower people to engage in conservation of animals and their natural habitat

**ZooBoo**  
 at Pueblo Zoo

Experience a Fun-Filled Adventure  
 Trick-or-Treating at the Zoo!

[pueblozoo.org/zooboo](http://pueblozoo.org/zooboo)

**BooBonus (members only)**  
 October 25th | 3pm-6pm

**General Public**  
 October 26th | 11am - 3pm

**Board of Directors**

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**Pueblo Zoo**

**ElectriCritters**

EXPERIENCE OVER 150 ANIMATED ANIMAL CREATIONS & 250K DAZZLING LIGHTS!

OPEN DAILY  
 NOVEMBER 29TH - DECEMBER 28TH, 2024

**Upcoming Events**

This Halloween, dress up in your most creative costume and have a spooktacular time with treat stations, costume parades, and more!

**OCT 25** **BooBonus (members only)**  
 Presented by R Buck 3pm-6pm

**OCT 26** **ZooBoo (General Admission) 11am-3pm**  
 Presented by Minnequa Works Credit Union  
 More details online: [pueblozoo.org/zooboo](http://pueblozoo.org/zooboo)

Celebrate America's national mammal - the North American Bison! Join us for tree climbing and many more fun family activities!

**NOV 2** **NOV 3** **Military Weekend/Bison Day**  
 Presented by T-Fiber 9am-4pm  
 Free admission for all military with valid military ID.  
 (Includes veterans, spouses and dependent children)

**NOV 2** **National Bison Day 9am-4pm**  
 (Activities 10am-2pm)

The holiday season wouldn't be complete without a visit to ElectriCritters at Pueblo Zoo! See thousands of lights and imaginative designs and make memories with the whole family!

**NOV 29** - **DEC 29** **ElectriCritters at Pueblo Zoo**  
 Presented by Black Hills Energy

Open Fri-Sun, Nov 29 - Dec 1, Dec 6-8 & 13-15  
 Open daily Dec 20-29  
 (Closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day)  
 Sensory Friendly Night Dec 16

Visit the Candy Cane Cafe brought to you by T-Fiber

**Santa Sundays presented by Bridges Child Placement Agency:** Dec 1, 8, 15, 22  
 Full details: [www.pueblozoo.org/electricritters](http://www.pueblozoo.org/electricritters)

**Holiday Closures:** Nov 28 (closed), Dec 24 (closing at noon), Dec 25 (closed), Dec 31 (closing at noon), Jan 1 (closed)