Tulsa Zoo
Annual Report
2016-17
The June 2017 opening of Lost Kingdom serves as a testament of your zoo’s ability to deliver on the promise of the public-private partnership and the resulting master plan. Lost Kingdom, a $21 million exhibit complex, shows our community exactly what we mean by world class. From habitat design, to back-of-house care and off-exhibit spaces, to providing year-round viewing, Lost Kingdom improves the experience for our guests, our staff and, most importantly, for the animals in our care.

The fiscal year also ushered in record attendance, with 705,332 visitors, shattering the previous record of 669,928 set in 1997-98 with the opening of the Tropical American Rainforest exhibit. Additionally, we achieved our highest attendance month, with 112,445 in June 2017, and reached 20,737 membership households, from 16,111 the year prior.

The record-breaking year can be attributed to increased attendance at zoo events like HallowZOOeen, strong performance of the Mathis Brothers membership promotion, expanded educational programming, and an increase in private events such as weddings and corporate picnics.

We reaffirmed our commitment to supporting families with the completion of the St. John Family Den. The 900-square-foot facility provides a space for nursing mothers, family restrooms, an adult changing area and quiet space for families affected by autism or other sensory processing disorders. As we rebuild the zoo we will continue to offer new and unique experiences.

I want to recognize our Tulsa Zoo staff, volunteers and board of directors for such a successful year. From those who take care of the animals, to those who take care of our guests and facilities, to those that volunteer their time and treasure, each is dedicated to supporting the Tulsa Zoo’s conservation mission.

The Tulsa Zoo enters its 90th year poised to continue our successful rebuilding, including an expanded giraffe barn and formalization of plans for our new $24 million African Wilds complex, which includes a new and re-imagined playground. This growth is only possible due to the ongoing support and generosity of our donors and our community. I want to thank you for sharing our dream of building a bigger, better zoo.
Our giraffe herd, and the keepers who provide care, will benefit from a $1 million barn renovation that has begun that will double the existing barn footprint thanks to a generous gift from Osage Casino Hotel. The expanded 2,000-square-foot facility will feature new stalls and a large community space, as well a new viewing area to allow guests a year-round view no matter the weather. Wider doors and adjustable feeders will allow the barn to better accommodate both young and adult giraffes. The Osage Casino Hotel Giraffe Barn will open in 2018.

Our elephant habitat boasts a new shade structure in the bull elephant yard, as well as new, softer flooring in the elephant barn. YOT Full Circle Foundation provided funding for these improvements.

The Tulsa Zoo’s colony of 24 South African penguins serves as ambassadors for this endangered species. So it is appropriate that in February 2017, we received male penguin Rogue from the Little Rock Zoo to pair with our female Keppie as part of the AZA Species Survival Plan. Tulsa Zoo has hatched 36 penguins since 2003 and has been integral to the success of this SSP.

The Tulsa Zoo’s Herpetology and Aquatics team continues to achieve milestones. The team hatched an endangered Henkel’s leaf tailed gecko, a first for our zoo. The hatchling moved to an exhibit with a reverse light cycle in the Conservation Center.

Our second and third common chuckwalla hatchlings emerged in November 2016. Little is known about chuckwalla incubation, so our keeper staff collected important information about temperatures and humidity levels during incubation that can be shared with other zoos.

The Rainforest staff made a huge advancement on the breeding of red-bellied piranha. We are currently caring for a handful of fry in a reserve area and are excited about watching the babies grow. Continued success means the Tulsa Zoo ultimately will become a resource for other institutions to acquire piranha into their collections.

A female Roti Island snakeneck turtle laid seven eggs this year. Our turtles are just now reaching sexual maturity and unfortunately these eggs were determined to be infertile; however, it was a good opportunity to for staff to gain experience in incubation techniques for this species. Little is known about these turtles since their natural habitat on the Island of Roti is nearly impenetrable and only a handful of zoos world-wide house this species.
VETERINARY HEALTH
Our snow leopard cubs were born with eyelid abnormalities requiring reconstructive surgery. These procedures were performed by our veterinary ophthalmologist consultant and required that each cub be removed one at a time from the litter temporarily and hospitalized. Each cub had daily play time with its siblings until the incisions healed and the sutures were removed. All three cubs now have functional eyelids.

Several months later our female snow leopard cub, Zara, and our geriatric crested seriema, Ward, were both diagnosed with cataracts. Our veterinary ophthalmologist returned and performed successful cataract removal on both Zara and Ward.

Our Veterinary Health department received a $10,000 grant from the International Elephant Foundation for a collaborative research project with Ringling Brothers Center for Elephant Conservation, the Endangered Ark Foundation, and the North Carolina State University Clinical Pharmacology department. The research will help determine blood levels achieved after a single dose of antibiotic levofloxacin. The data collected from this study will be extremely important in determining dosage amounts and intervals of this important antibiotic used in elephants.

BEHAVIORAL HUSBANDRY
In June of 2017, seven zoo keepers completed an animal training class led by our Curator of Behavioral Husbandry. The course provides keepers with an understanding of how animal training improves animal welfare in their daily interactions. Training using operant conditioning techniques encourages a safer interaction with the animals and their caretakers.

Our two male California sea lions, Cisco and Reyes, have learned more behaviors to add to their daily repertoire for our sea lion chats given to the public. These young sea lions are growing in confidence and skills on a daily basis. Through the guidance of their keepers they have learned behaviors such as a flipper stand that shows the strength of their pectoral flippers and enjoy some exercise by using their pectoral flipper to hit a soccer ball back to their keeper. Another behavior, toy retrieval, has the sea lions learning to maneuver floating toys back to the keeper.

The giraffe herd received new puzzle balls with updated attachment hardware utilizing aircraft cable and stainless steel attachment fixtures. Zoo guests attending Breakfast with Bunny supported giraffe enrichment by painting these new balls, which were stuffed with edible greens, challenging giraffes to use their long tongues to obtain food.

Our Asian elephants had an egg-citing spring with elephant-sized, edible papier-mache eggs made by the Behavioral Husbandry team. The herd seemed to enjoy flattening the eggs with their foot then pulling them apart to eat the fun diet items hidden inside.

IN MEMORIAM
The zoo mourned the loss of Wheezy the Cape buffalo, who at the age of 34 was the oldest documented African Cape buffalo in human care. Wheezy was often referred to as Mama, as she was known for being a fiercely protective mother in her younger days. While she lived in retirement, she would sometimes choose to explore the public portion of her home in the Mary K. Chapman Rhino Reserve.

We also said goodbye to meerkat Nomble, who was just shy of 13 years old.

ADDITIONS TO THE ZOO

- Diana Monkey
- Red-fronted Macaws
- Dexter Cows
- Mt. Apo Lorikeet
- Bali Myna
- Forsten’s Lorikeets
- Red Panda
- Nyla Antelope
- Village Indigobird
- Archer Fish
- Malayan Tiger
- 76 Birds of 16 species hatched
Education is core to our Tulsa Zoo mission, specifically to become a leading wildlife education resource in Oklahoma. The Education team continues to achieve record levels of success in reaching students and visitors, through creative on-grounds and outreach programming for toddlers to grandparents.

The Zoo Teen program provides opportunities for teens to learn from hands-on experiences in the zoo field. Returning participants are given the opportunity to learn leadership skills as Zoo Teen supervisors and expand their knowledge in special areas of interest, including veterinary medicine, behavioral husbandry, and animal nutrition.

Nature’s Grand Adventures joins the nature’s course lineup, offering an opportunity for each generation to learn from the other as they discover exciting things about the natural world during the themed three-part series.

Zoo Insider, a program designed especially for teens, was a popular addition to our programming this year. Each month, teens get an inside look at what it’s like to work in a zoo.

A 2,400-square-foot building was added providing new spaces for our ambassador animals used in our education programs. These interior enclosures allow for the growth and needs of our ambassador animals while also providing state-of-the-art animal care and at the same time promotes the safety of both the animals, staff and volunteers.
ANIMAL CONSERVATION

Giraffes in Tanzania. Chinchillas in Chile. Primates in West Africa. Ground hornbills in South Africa. Scarlet macaws in Guatemala. Snow Leopards in Mongolia. American burying beetles and monarch butterflies right here in Oklahoma. Species locally and globally need our collective help, and your zoo is leading by example, by supporting the protection of wildlife, critical habitats and community conservation.

Our priority is preserving ecosystems through support of long-standing conservation programs and organizations that focus on environmental stewardship and creating conservation awareness for many important species throughout the world. Accredited zoos and aquariums, local government and non-profit agencies are among our partners in conservation.

We support anti-poaching units charged with protecting rhinos, elephants and tigers in Africa and Asia, through the International Rhino Foundation’s Stop Poaching Now Campaign, International Elephant Foundation, Berdiri Foundation and Tiger Conservation Campaign. Patrol units reduce human/wildlife conflicts and foster a better understanding of the movement of wildlife.

By supporting the longest-ever study of snow leopards in the wild, through The Snow Leopard Trust, your zoo is helping conservationists estimate home range sizes and habitat requirements. Information gathered through motion-sensor cameras, GPS radio collars and socio-economic surveys is being used to establish programs to ensure these vulnerable big cats avoid extinction.

As an accredited zoo, we support SAFE, Saving Animals From Extinction. SAFE leverages the collective expertise and resources of Association of Zoos and Aquariums members to maximize the wildlife conservation impact for species.

Tulsa Zoo has been a longtime supporter of the South African penguin, one of the species supported through SAFE. Results so far include construction of a new seabird hospital through The Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds, or SANCCOB; as well as needed manpower and funding for rescue, rehabilitation and veterinary services.

We joined the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ fight against the illegal wildlife trade in South East Asia. TRAFFIC is an initiative to eradicate trafficking of critically endangered pangolins, as well as tortoises and songbirds.

Our support of the Wild Nature Institute in Northern Tanzania resulted in a teacher workshop, Juma the Giraffe books, lesson plans and supplies for thousands of children. The Tulsa Zoo was recognized for its contributions in a paper published in the Ecology and Evolution journal.

The Tulsa Zoo has again taken the lead in Monarch butterfly conservation by supporting the Monarch Initiative of Tulsa and the statewide Oklahoma Monarch and Pollinator Collaborative.
RESEARCH
The Tulsa Zoo is committed to supporting, facilitating and conducting scientific research in the life sciences by extending invitations to staff, university students and interested parties to initiate joint projects. Key research partners include Oklahoma State University, Oral Roberts University, Ohio State University, Missouri State University, Antioch University, Cornell University, Oregon Health and Science University, Mississippi State University, and many more.

Our research milestones include being recognized for research with the first ever published pharmacokinetic study with American flamingos. The findings were published in the Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. This research project provided valuable information in allowing us to provide optimal care to our large colony of American flamingos. Discoveries made with this research will improve the veterinary care of the species as a whole by providing species-specific information in an area that has so far lacked research.

Tulsa Zoo continued research collaborations to build an osteohistology thin section database through the Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences. A study of our Diana monkeys investigated whether hormones can accurately reflect physiological changes based on levels of corticosterone and progesterone. The levels of these two hormones will be used to assess stress and reproductive cycling with Dianas in zoos compared with similar data collected from Diana monkeys in Tai National Park, Côte d’Ivoire, West Africa.

GREEN PRACTICES
Our new Green Practices Strategic Plan serves as the guide to reduce our impact on the environment by embracing green practices in our everyday operations. Our ultimate goal is environmentally neutral operations.

We are leaders in a communitywide effort to guide local businesses toward improved stewardship of our planet. Our Conservation and Research Manager was asked to participate as a coach in Sustainable Tulsa’s pilot ScoreCard Program, which is Tulsa’s first business sustainability assessment tracking tool. Tulsa Zoo achieved the highest score among 22 other participating businesses, corporations and universities.

Choices we make each day directly impact the conditions threatening wildlife, from sea lions and marine life, to orangutans and other land mammals. Because of this, we are a partner in programs such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program and Sustainable Palm Oil Initiative, which promote responsible production and sourcing while maintaining healthy ecosystems.

Tulsa Zoo was the honored recipient of the 2016 Henry Bellmon Sustainability Award, (pictured above) which promotes a commitment to factoring the impact to people and the planet along with profits, or the triple bottom line. The Bellmon award recognizes achievements in quality of life, responsible economic growth and environmental stewardship. We were selected for this award because of our wildlife conservation efforts and green practices programs.
Tulsa Zoo proudly opened the Lost Kingdom Exhibit Complex in June 2017. Lost Kingdom allows guests to roam through lush landscapes and settings inspired by ancient Asian cultures, such as the city at Angkor-Wat. More than four-acres, this multi-species complex is the new home for ambassadors of some of Asia’s rarest and most elusive species, including Malayan tigers, snow leopards, Chinese alligators, siamangs, binturongs and Komodo dragons.

The large, interactive spaces of the Helmerich Tiger Exhibit, the Hardesty Snow Leopard Habitat, the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation Siamang Habitat, and the H.A. and Mary K. Chapman Komodo Dragon exhibit showcases the animals in naturalistic habitats.

The new Lobeck Taylor Family Foundation seasonal exhibit for binturongs and red panda showcases these two new-to-the-zoo species year-round; binturong in spring and summer, red panda in fall and winter.

The Hille Foundation Tiger Bridge allows the Malayan tigers to walk above zoo visitors to travel between outdoor spaces.

Training areas are an integral part of the exhibit. Both the Suzanne and Jim Kneale Family Foundation Tiger Demonstration Area and the Barbara and Lynn Owens Snow Leopard Demonstration area give guests an opportunity to watch zookeepers work with the animals, demonstrating the positive reinforcement training necessary for the best in animal care.

Lost Kingdom was designed to provide immersive, year-round viewing opportunities where zoo guests can feel like they have walked into a forgotten land. Exploring among the ruins teeming with wildlife, zoo visitors will feel a mixture of curiosity and engagement; curiosity about the animals they are viewing, and a desire to engage in conservation action to save species in the wild.

The complex features two dining options – an upscale pizza restaurant at George Kaiser Family Foundation Rajan’s, allowing guests to dine up close with tigers, and an outdoor snack shop. The Ann and Jack Graves Komodo Canteen offers seating areas where guests can relax with a sweet or salty treat, and enjoy fantastic views of the wildlife around them.

As with the Helmerich Sea Lion Cove and Mary K. Chapman Rhino Reserve, the Lost Kingdom Exhibit Complex is an immersive exhibit offering new opportunities to inspire passion for wildlife in every guest, every day.
THANK YOU
Tulsa Zoo appreciates the generous gifts that made Lost Kingdom a reality.

The Helmerich Trust
City of Tulsa Taxpayers through the Improve our Tulsa Initiative
Hardesty Family Foundation
Lobeck Taylor Family Foundation
Anne and Jack Graves Foundation
Suzanne and Jim Kneale Family Foundation
Lynn and Barbara Owens
Founders of Doctors’ Hospital, Inc.
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George Kaiser Family Foundation
H.A. and Mary K. Chapman Charitable Trust
The Grace and Franklin Bernsen Foundation
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Additional donors include: E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Foundation; Frank and Gayle Eby; Williams; Hannah and Joe Robson; Bailey Family; Great Plains Coca-Cola; Alma and Nick Robson Foundation; Stuart Family Foundation; Harold and Edna White Foundation; The Mervin Bovaird Foundation; William S. Smith; and The Oxley Foundation.

Thank you to Kathy Taylor and the Lobeck Taylor Family Foundation for their support of the Master Plan and making these dreams a reality.
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TULSA ZOO MISSION
Inspiring passion for wildlife in every guest, every day.

TULSA ZOO VISION
To be the premier family recreation destination and the leading wildlife education and conservation resource in Oklahoma.

TULSA ZOO VALUES
Excellence – We have a passion for excellence and continuous improvement. We are encouraged to take initiative to improve the guest experience. We reject the status quo because we value creativity and diversity. We constantly challenge and stretch ourselves to learn new things and to grow both personally and professionally.

Integrity – We act with integrity in everything we do. Honesty, ethics, accountability and social responsibility are fundamental to success. Our behavior must consistently reflect the zoo’s core values during both good and bad times.

Conservation – We believe in a proactive approach to the preservation of the natural world. Animal care and conservation are the heart of our organization.

Teamwork – We are an organization that expects collaboration from and within the team in order to achieve the zoo mission and the growth and development of staff and facilities. We approach situations, challenges and new ideas with an open mind. We go above and beyond, together, for every guest every time.

Stewardship – We will ensure responsible stewardship of the human and financial resources entrusted to us. We recognize our responsibility to be active participants in our local communities as well as the important part our communities play in supporting our efforts in education, conservation and outreach.

Fun – We look for humor, fun and fulfillment in our daily work. We want our organization to have a positive, unique and memorable impact for our guests and employees. We celebrate and embrace our diversity and each person’s individuality.

REVENUE
- $4,552,441 Earned Revenue 36.1%
- $1,683,466 Membership 13.4%
- $5,938,832 Management Fee 47.1%
- $280,720 Contributions/Education/Special Events/Temporary Exhibits 2.2%
- $152,704 General 1.2%

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

EXPENDITURES
- $3,108,138 Administration 24.7%
- $1,943,711 Guest Services 15.4%
- $2,226,885 Facilities & Grounds 17.7%
- $499,080 Education/Special Events/Temporary Exhibits 4%
- $3,840,332 Animal Conservation & Science 30.5%
- $964,410 Zoo Improvements 7.7%

ADDITIONAL FOOTNOTES:

Some of the funds included in these lines are reported differently on our audited financial statements due to reporting classification.

Total Expenditures does not include depreciation expense or in-kind contributions such as utilities paid for by the City of Tulsa.
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The Gelvin Foundation

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Celeste Czarniak Zoological Curator
Rachel Dearman Attractions & Ride Operators
Alesha Dodd Veterinary Technician
Cameron Dunford Horticulturist
Wendy Dunlap Attractions & Ride Operators
Jordan Duvall Environmental Services Technician
Randy Eller Attractions & Ride Operators
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Beth Ferguson Environmental Services Manager
Brittany Findley Zookeeper
Eric Flossic Zookeeper
Seana Flossic Zookeeper
Kilangi Forringer Education Instructor
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Todd Johnson Assistant Security Manager
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Stephanie Kain Zoological Manager
Aleksandra Kalenak Zookeeper
Mathew Kee Guest Services Ambassador
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Jordan Piha Zoological Curator
Staci Pinkerton Guest Services Ambassador
Brenda Pixley Accounts Receivable Coordinator
Dennis Porebski Zookeeper Assistant
Kristin Powers Zookeeper
James Poyer Security Officer
Shari Putman Guest Services Ambassador
Krystal Ramsey Guest Services Ambassador
Aaron Reeves Attractions & Ride Operators
Kelly Reynolds Horticulturist
Barkley Rogers Zookeeper Assistant
Bobbi Rolig Guest Services Ambassador
Thelma Rosado-Galindo Benefits Broker Representative
Jay Ross Horticulture Curator
Nikolaus Sauer Assistant Attractions Manager
Jessica Scallan Zookeeper
Robert Schaeffer Attractions Operator
Jenna Schmidt Zookeeper
Katherine Schulze Education Instructor
Kim Sevier Zookeeper
Blake Shearrer Environmental Services Technician
Eldon Shinpoch Operations Supervisor
Scott Shope VP of Facilities & Construction
Ryan Shostack Zookeeper
John Shuman Security Officer
Melissa Smith Attractions & Ride Operators
Jaclyn Smith Attractions & Ride Operators
Delacy Smith Zookeeper Assistant
Carriese Smithwick Assistant Environmental Services Manager
Samantha Soderquist Guest Services Ambassador
Kayla Stirling Attractions Operator
Nicolas Stolusky Private Events Sales Supervisor
Erik Storjohann Zookeeper
Katie Story Zookeeper
Kaylin Strausbaugh Zookeeper
Jeremy Stutler Zookeeper
Denae Swearingen Guest Services Ambassador
Craig Swenty Attractions & Ride Operators
Marcie Tarvid Curator of Behavioral Husbandry
Zachary Taylor Attractions & Ride Operators
Peggy Thompson Environmental Services Technician
Mary Thompson Attractions & Ride Operators
Morgan Thompson Guest Services Ambassador
Deidre Timms Zookeeper
Trevan Torbett Assistant Attractions Manager
Sarah Van Bavel Zookeeper
Mikal Velez Attractions & Ride Operators
Trent Veppert Zookeeper
Johnny Walker Development Special Projects
Nick Walters Guest Services Ambassador
Amy Watson Group Sales Manager
Elizabeth Wegner Zookeeper
Patrick Weiss Guest Services Director
LJ Wethey Operations Technician
Johnny Wheeler Attractions Manager
Ronald White Maintenance Mechanic
Megan Whittaker Attractions & Ride Operators
Heather Willhite Safety Manager
Christopher Williams Zookeeper
Karen Williamson Group Sales Coordinator
Veda Williamson Guest Services Ambassador
Michael Willis Security Officer
James Wilmott IT Manager
Jessica Wright Accountant
Jarrod Wyatt Special Projects Manager
Madison Wyatt Guest Services Ambassador
Matthew Yockey Zookeeper
Jarrett Yoder Zookeeper Assistant
Margaret Zambrano Zookeeper Assistant

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THE LOST KINGDOM
NOW OPEN