

JUNE JULY AUGUST | 2013



Lincoln Children's
ZOOtracks



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50 YEARS**
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Learn firsthand.

Lincoln Children's Zoo

1222 South 27th Street
Lincoln, NE 68502
402.475.6741

LincolnZoo.org

OPEN DAILY

April 13 - October 19
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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John Chapo with ZO&O Train



The Lincoln Children's Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums



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Mission: To enrich lives through firsthand interaction with living things.

AFRICAN ADVENTURES

ARTICLE ON PAGE 3



THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS



AWE-INSPIRING AFRICAN ADVENTURES

WITH JOHN CHAPO

BY JESSICA SIMPSON

“Awe-inspiring. Life-changing. Amazing,” is how travelers in Zoo CEO John Chapo’s African Safari group described their experience with a sense of marvel and wonder.

“It was life-changing. I can tell you this. It was absolutely life-changing. The people, the animals, the air, the whole feel to the country. I see things differently now. Every minute was jaw-dropping,” Cindi Weiss explained. “It was so moving and profound.”

Chapo, who had been to Africa three times already, still described the trip as overwhelming for himself. He leads a different trip each year to exotic locations, immersing participants in nature and wildlife. This year

18 Lincolnites accompanied him to Zambia and Botswana, Africa in mid-February.

“I want to teach people to appreciate wildlife and be in awe. The Zoo’s mission is to enrich lives through firsthand interaction with living things,” Chapo said. “We enrich lives here on the zoo grounds, leading special education and adventure camps for kids. I take adults to faraway countries so they can learn firsthand, too. And I love taking people to Africa to help them really experience wildlife. You can see it on the Discovery Channel or Animal Planet, but you don’t really appreciate it, enjoy or cherish it until you’ve been right there and an elephant just walks up to the Jeep and flaps its ears at you.”

After spending 12 days in African camps surrounded by native wildlife, the participants understood what Chapo meant.

Upon arriving in Africa, Chapo, the guide and the safari group started out in Botswana exploring the Okavango Delta, then they

crossed the Zambezi River and finished in Zambia and Victoria Falls. The safari guide traveled with them to each of the four camps they stayed at.

“We stayed in permanent tents and dined with our guides and drivers who were different at each camp. It’s a great cultural exchange. The camp staff showed us traditional dances, and we showed them to line dance. They prepared delicious local cuisine, and we conversed around the bonfire,” Chapo described.

Around the camps, wildlife flourished. From monkeys to insects, and birds to hippopotamuses, animals would come right up to the tents. Camp guides are all trained professionals who know how to handle animals that could be a threat to the group within, ensuring no one was in danger. One evening the cook had to shoo away a hippo, Chapo said. When provoked, hippos can be dangerous, so guests made sure to leave the task to the trained personnel.



During the day, the group divided among three Land Rovers and ventured into the African wild.

“We spent 10 hours a day in Land Rovers with very experienced guides who took us all over the wonderful landform. They taught us about trees, plants, birds, animals, and how the ecosystem of the delta and grasses and desert is all linked together and interdependent,” said Dr. Marilyn Moore, another traveler. “I’ve traveled internationally to many wonderful places, but I haven’t had any wildlife experience that compares to this—just none.”

The Land Rover excursions were filled with up-close sightings of animals. Guides knew where to look and how to follow animal tracks leading to elephants, giraffes, hyenas and lions.

“Botswana is known for elephants; they have the largest herd in the world,” said Moore. “We saw many of them and their size alone is so distinctive. On some occasions we heard them trumpeting. That’s a sound unlike any I had ever heard; it was so amazing.”

Another breathtaking moment for Moore upon entering a savannah area ringed by Acacia trees and shrubs was seeing giraffes, Kudu antelope and a herd of zebra emerging

from the trees. It’s rare to see so many animals at once. “It was truly an African moment that lives forever in my mind,” she said.

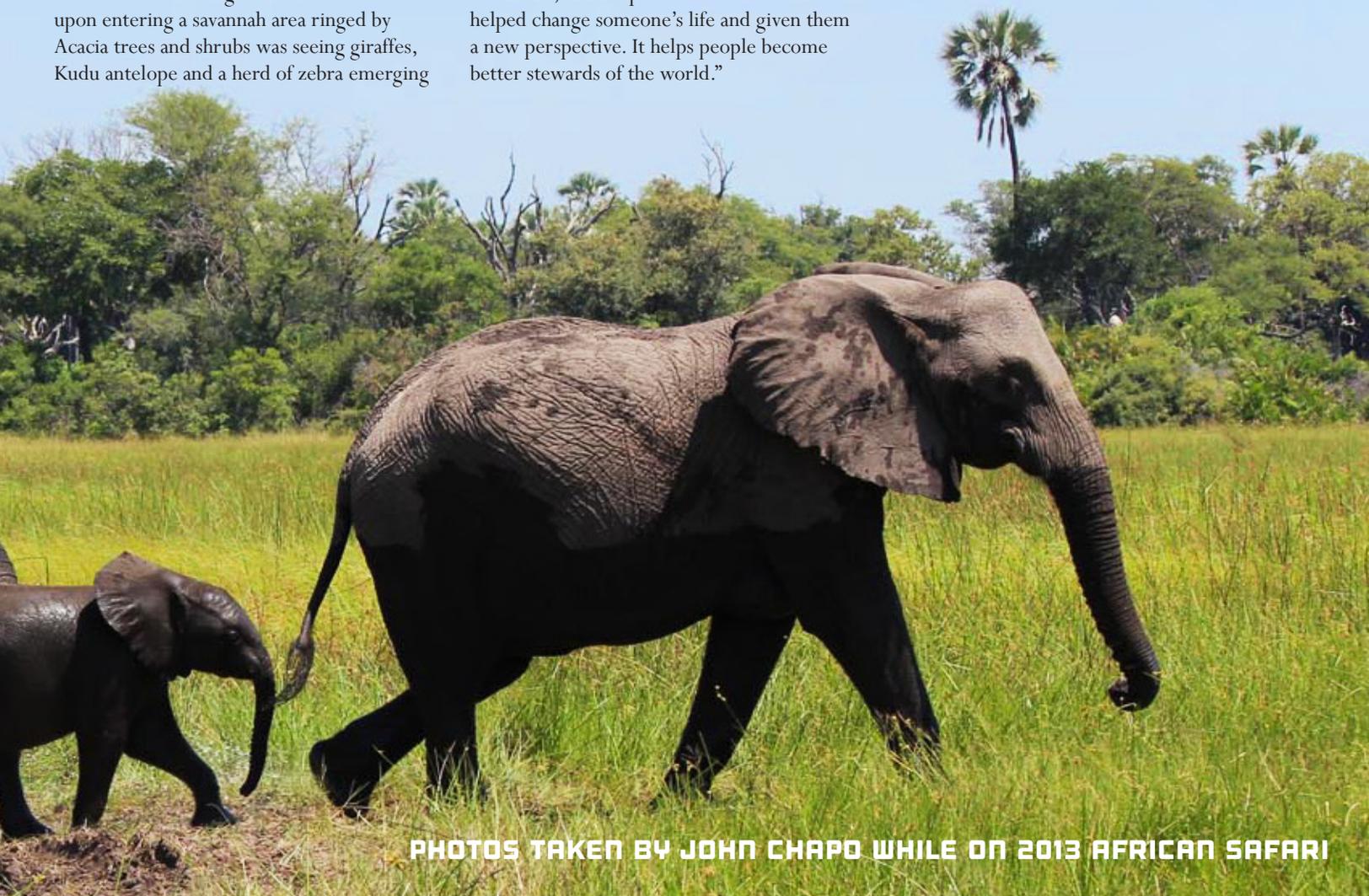
For Weiss, spotting two male lions was a memorable experience. “The first day we were out we saw two male lions just after dawn, and they were just laying there. I couldn’t even believe I was seeing it. Our driver said it was very unusual to see two males together, and that was when we learned that if you stay in the vehicle just sitting down the animals won’t perceive you as human. We could almost reach out and touch them.”

For Chapo, Victoria Falls was a memorable and indescribable experience. I’ve never seen a waterfall as phenomenal as Victoria Falls,” he said. “It was breathtaking, indescribably beautiful and impressive. The volume and thundering of the water was incredible. It was truly unbelievable.”

Although this year’s trip was his fourth to Africa, Chapo said every experience is unique. “I’d never seen a Black Mamba, one of the most dangerous snakes in the world, which I saw on this trip. You’re never too old to discover something new. There’s always a new adventure, and it’s powerful to know I’ve helped change someone’s life and given them a new perspective. It helps people become better stewards of the world.”

Not only did the group members experience wildlife in a new and profound way, but they also established strong friendships in only 12 days of spending time with each other. “No one knew anybody, and now we have 20 close friends,” explained Weiss. “I’ve never seen this kind of human dynamics. It was amazing there were all these different personalities, and everyone really came together. Everyone was having a really inspiring experience.”

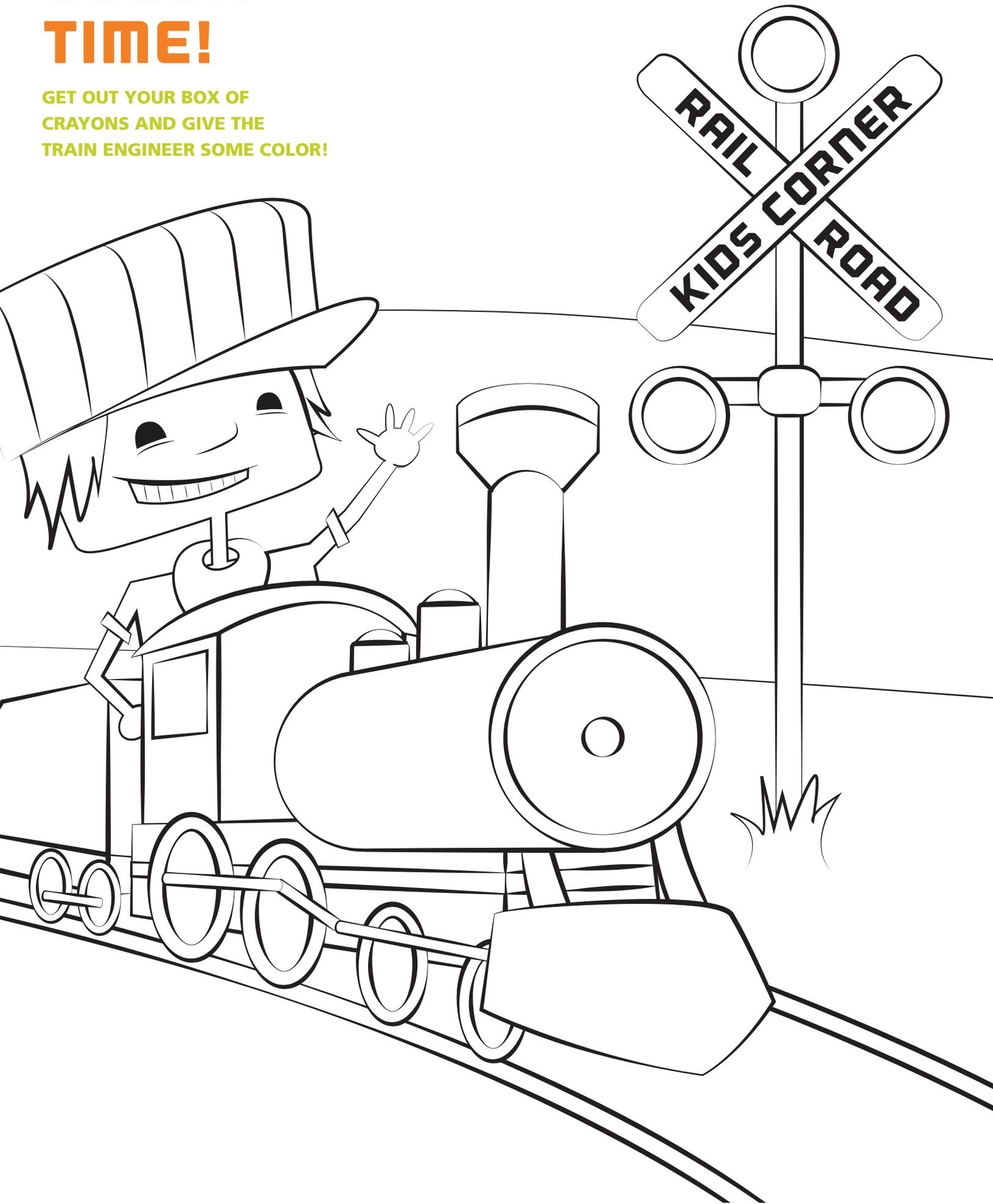
Now that the trip is over, Moore believes it absolutely furthers the Zoo’s and Chapo’s mission. “The trip was so congruent with the Zoo’s mission. We didn’t go to museums or plays; we were immersed in the environment. We learned from the guides and from John Chapo. The trip spotlights one of the wonderful ways the Zoo makes education possible and teaches that we’re all interconnected in a global system.”



PHOTOS TAKEN BY JOHN CHAPO WHILE ON 2013 AFRICAN SAFARI

COLOR TIME!

GET OUT YOUR BOX OF
CRAYONS AND GIVE THE
TRAIN ENGINEER SOME COLOR!



SECRET MESSAGE

CAN YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT THE TRAIN ENGINEER IS TRYING TO TELL YOU?

KEY

1 = A	6 = F	11 = K	16 = P	21 = U	26 = Z
2 = B	7 = G	12 = L	17 = Q	22 = V	
3 = C	8 = H	13 = M	18 = R	23 = W	
4 = D	9 = I	14 = N	19 = S	24 = X	
5 = E	10 = J	15 = O	20 = T	25 = Y	

A A B

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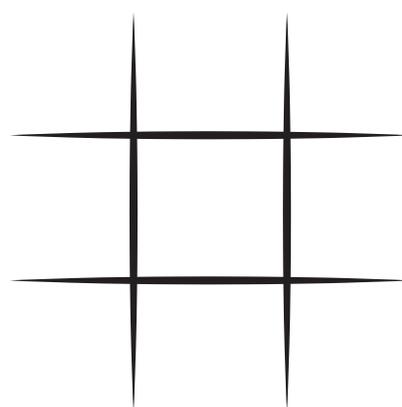
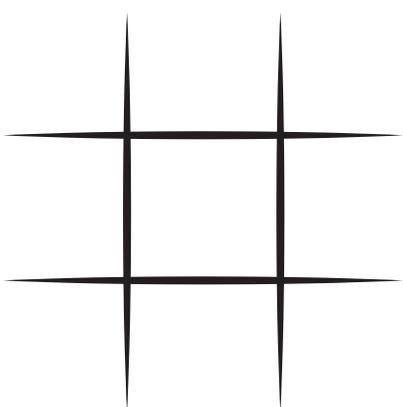
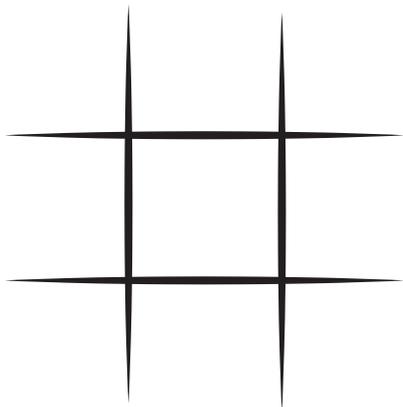
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20 18 1 9 14

TIC-TAC-TOE TIME

FIND A FRIEND AND PLAY A FEW ROUNDS!





TRAIN CELEBRATES 50 YEARS



BY RYAN GROSS

In the summer of 1963, workers were in the midst of constructing a permanent children's zoo in Lincoln. It had been just five years since founder Arnott Folsom had begun planning for the new zoo. While buildings and exhibits around the property were being constructed, work on the Zoo's train had come to a conclusion. With the train track laid and the locomotive ready to operate, Folsom had the idea to sell tickets to ride the train, named the Iron Horse. The train tickets sold would help raise money for the completion of the Zoo.

Throughout 1963, part-time train crews were hired to give passengers a ride around the Zoo. "Guests could actually watch the Zoo being constructed as they rode the train," Zoo president and CEO John Chapo said. At this time there was less vegetation and passengers could easily see much of the Zoo while riding. Folsom hoped this would get people in the community excited about the Zoo and in turn help fund the project.

The summer of 1963 was such a success that Folsom decided to hire a full-time crew to start running the train in the spring of 1964. That year the train drove approximately 2,800 miles. Newspaper articles from 1964 reported that over 150,000 tickets had been sold during the two-year span prior to the Zoo opening. "Mr. Folsom was an amazing person. He was able to build anticipation for the Zoo opening with all those train rides and at the same time raise money," Chapo said.

The following year Lincoln Children's Zoo would open to the public. It garnered great praise from families, media and community leaders. The Iron Horse Railroad became an instant must-see attraction at the Zoo. Some of the early engineers recalled how every child who visited the Zoo would beg their parents for a ride on the train.

The years that followed brought many changes for the train. The track was expanded three times as the Zoo grew. Two trips around the Zoo now account

for over a mile. A storage building was added to house the train as well as act as a tunnel for it to travel through. A visit to the Zoo isn't complete without hearing children yell as they travel through the tunnel. In 2002, funding was completed for a new locomotive and the railroad was renamed ZO&O.

This July, the Zoo will celebrate 50 years of the train encircling it. Today the train is operated by dedicated volunteers who work each day to ensure the train runs whenever the Zoo is open.

"The train is iconic—we have grandparents who rode the train when they were young now riding with their children and grandchildren," Chapo said.

Lincoln and its little zoo have greatly changed over the last 50 years but one thing has remained constant—a ride on the old Iron Horse still produces a smile and a wave from the tens of thousands who ride each year.

WALLABY JOEY

BY RYAN GROSS

During your next visit to the Zoo, be sure to check out the new tammar wallaby baby. The joey was born approximately seven months ago at the Zoo and is only one of three born in captivity in North America in the past year. Its parents, Peanut and Moe, have been Zoo residents for the past year.

“We are proud and ‘hoppy’ to have this adorable and rare birth happen right here in Lincoln,” said John Chapo, president and CEO of the Zoo.

Native to South and Western Australia, they are among the smallest of the wallabies. When full grown they are a little larger than a rabbit. The joey at the Zoo is currently about the size of a squirrel.

Like kangaroos, tammars move by hopping. They can travel up to 24 feet per second. This amazing speed allows them to easily escape danger. They are able to convert hopping into energy and use their weight to move faster. This is helpful when female tammars are carrying joeys, as the extra weight allows them to move at a higher speed.

Tammar wallabies have amazing senses. They have 324 degree peripheral vision. This vision makes it possible for them to see nearly the entire area around their body. The pinna (ear) is mobile, allowing them to hear sounds without having to move their head. They are also able to point their pinna at an object and then amplify their hearing.

The tammar wallaby joey, along with its mother, can be found next to Laura’s Butterfly Pavilion. They currently share a home with three Bennett’s wallabies and a muntjac.



ZOO CALENDAR

WE WILL SEE YOU AT THE ZOO

JUNE

FRI 7

GARDEN PARTY

6 p.m. | Lincoln Children's Zoo | Zoo closes at 2 p.m.



SUN 16

FATHER'S DAY

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Lincoln Children's Zoo

Dads receive free admission and one free train ticket.



SUN 30

ROCK WITH THE CROCS

4 - 7 p.m. | Lincoln Children's Zoo

Rock with the Crocs featuring 2013 Grammy Award winner, The Okee Dokee Brothers plus special guests, The String Beans. Tickets available online at LincolnZoo.org
Members \$3 plus tax | Non-Members \$8 plus tax (includes Zoo admission)

JULY

SAT 13

BREWS & BLUES AT THE ZOO

6 - 11 p.m. | Lincoln Children's Zoo

This is a night for the adults to enjoy the Zoo. Sample an array of local and premier beers all while listening to the Levi Williams Band.

Tickets available online at LincolnZoo.org.

\$25 in advance | \$30 at the door



FRI 19

ZOO CLOSED

Zoo will be closed for a private function.

AUGUST

SAT 17

STATE FAIR DAY AT THE ZOO

10 a.m. - 3 p.m. | Lincoln Children's Zoo

Visit the Zoo for carnival games, fair food, special animal demonstrations, photo opportunities and more.

WILD WEDNESDAYS
Zoo is open late 'til 8
June, July, & August

Check LincolnZoo.org for
special Wednesday activities.

MEERKAT MANIA! ZOO'S NEWEST CREATURES

BY JESSICA SIMPSON

“Oh, look at the meerkats! They’re so cute!” Lincoln Children’s Zoo zookeeper Sarah Jurgens heard visitors exclaim when they noticed the Zoo’s newest guests.

The two male meerkats, Sekani and Runako, came from the Red River Zoo in Fargo, N.D., in mid-April, and so far they’ve adjusted well to their new home in Lincoln, Neb.

“Meerkats are naturally curious animals,” explained Jurgens. “They are still in a new environment, checking things out and adjusting to their new space and me. When I feed them or clean their area, they sniff my legs and shoes to get used to me.”

Part of the mongoose family, meerkats usually stand 10 to 12 inches tall and weigh about two pounds, and their average lifespan is about 10 to 14 years old. At ages 7 and 8, Sekani and Runako are in the prime of their lives and very energetic.

“These two definitely have playful personalities. They’re always on guard, hunting, digging and interacting with me or Zoo visitors,” Jurgens said.

At the Zoo, Jurgens tried replicating the meerkats’ natural habitat as closely as possible, filling their space with dirt, sand, rocks, a log and a tree for climbing. As one of the meerkats’ prime caretakers it’s her job to try to recreate the animals’ natural conditions. In the wild, meerkats live in the savannah and desert areas of southern Africa.

“Meerkats like to dig burrows and tunnels, so I wanted to give them that opportunity here. Their environment is as similar to their wild habitat as possible given they live in an enclosed space here,” she said.

In addition to replicating their habitat, Jurgens monitors the meerkats’ health and diet. In the African savannah, meerkats feast on insects, bird’s eggs, scorpions and lizards—primarily a carnivorous diet. At the Children’s Zoo they still eat insects on a regular basis, but

Jurgens also feeds them feline meat and cat food, as well as fruits and veggies.

“Their food is always weighed out precisely, ensuring they get the same amount twice daily. We maintain their weight pretty closely and may trim their nails if needed,” Jurgens explained. “I also clean their area every day. Keeping them on a routine schedule helps keep them at ease.”

Just like people, meerkats have individual personalities, and Jurgens has already noticed Sekani and Runako’s unique habits. “In the wild, meerkats live in groups of five to 30, and everyone has a specific duty. They work as a team. Sekani and Runako are no different. I usually see one sleeping and one keeping a lookout, just like they would naturally,” she said.

When meerkats are in their natural habitat, there is typically an alpha female and an alpha male in the group who are the main breeders. Another meerkat is considered the sentry, meaning they’re on the lookout for predators. While on sentry duty, the meerkat stands on its two hind legs and uses its tail for balance.

“They use their tails as a tripod for balance so they don’t tire as easily while watching for predators,” Jurgens says.

When the sentry meerkat sees a predator, such as an eagle, jackal or snake, they let out a watchmen’s call alerting the group of meerkats. Each call is specific to the predator, letting the meerkats know how to react.

Jurgens added, “They also use scent marking and body language to communicate. I’ve heard Sekani and Runako communicating, and it’s cool to see them networking. Every little quality they have is really special and unique.”

And, just like all of the Zoo’s animals, Sekani and Runako are well loved by Jurgens and the rest of the zookeepers.

“The animals I take care of are like my pets at home,” she said.



BIRTHDAY PARTIES AT THE ZOO!

Give your child the wildest party in town! The Lincoln Children's Zoo offers party packages with unlimited train rides, animal encounters and treats to ensure the best birthday possible.

Visit LincolnZoo.org to book your party today!



RENT THE ZOO

Host your event next to the Humboldt penguins! Lincoln Children's Zoo has a variety of outdoor and indoor locations to create the perfect setting for any occasion.

To enhance your event, add special behind-the-scenes tours, animal demonstrations and train rides. Grill out or dine in by utilizing the Zoo's wide array of catering options.



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- Reunions
- And more...

AMENITIES

- WiFi
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- White-erase board
- Easels
- Catering selections
- And more...

For more information or to book your event, call Erica at 402.475.6741 ext. 127

THE ZOO'S NOAH

When Harvey Hales passed away five years ago, I lost a dear and kind friend and the Lincoln Children's Zoo lost its Noah. Please allow me to explain. The Bible shares the story of Noah, a kind and gentle man whose mission was to go out and bring animals back to the ark to save them. For over 25 years another kind and gentle man, along with his late wife Betty, had a mission to bring wonderful and different animals to the Lincoln Children's Zoo. His name was Harvey.

Betty and Harvey Hales loved nature and the plants and animals residing in it. They celebrated that love for animals and nature with an annual gift to the Zoo. The vast majority of those gifts provided the funds for acquiring new animals here at the Zoo.

I had the great honor to know Harvey and to enjoy many talks about the Zoo as well as an abundance of discussions about wildlife, traveling, elder hostels, collections and his passion for woodcarving. A Harvey Hales hand-carved frog graces my desk along with my family photos. Many of those visits resulted in Harvey either providing the funds for the Zoo to add new homes for our animals or for the actual acquisition of new animals to the Zoo for our guests to enjoy.

Harvey also commissioned local wildlife artist Cliff Hollestelle to sculpt a Great Blue Heron in memory of Betty. That statue is now gracing the waterfall pool here at the Zoo.

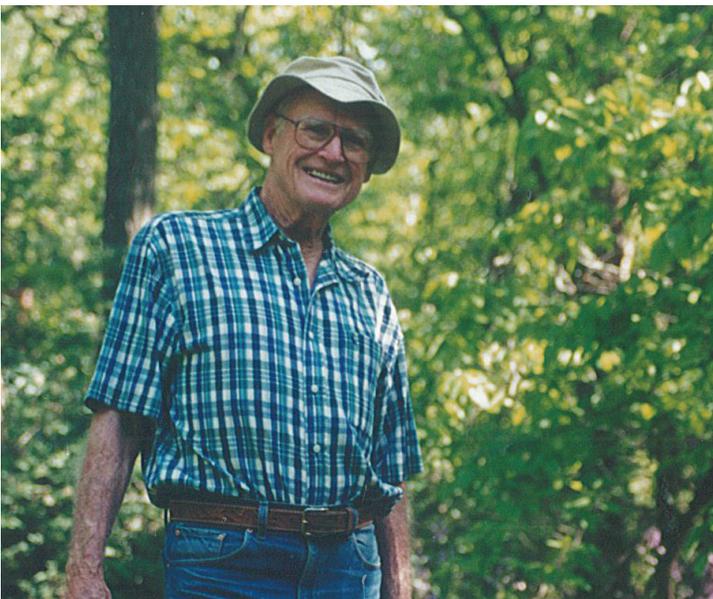
Harvey graciously left a gift in his estate for the Children's Zoo. This gift will provide the much needed funds to continue his mission of providing more new animals for the Zoo in perpetuity. Because of his generosity and forethought, millions of guests have enjoyed and will forever continue to enjoy and learn firsthand about the wonderful treasures of nature here at the Lincoln Children's Zoo. Thanks, Harvey!



John Chappo, President & CEO

ANIMALS HARVEY HELPED BRING TO THE ZOO INCLUDE:

- Naked Mole Rats
- Flamingoes
- Crowned Cranes
- European White Storks
- Bald Eagles
- Turacos
- Scarlet Ibis
- Matschie's Tree Kangaroos
- Red Pandas



BREWS & BLUES AT THE ZOO

JULY 13, 2013 6:00 PM - 11:00 PM



PLENTY OF HOPS TO GO AROUND!

Purchase tickets at Lincoln Children's Zoo
1222 South 27 Street • Lincoln, NE • 402.475.6741
\$25 in advance | \$30 at the door • 21 and older
Ticket includes 3 drinks and Zoo access.
Featuring the Levi Williams Band

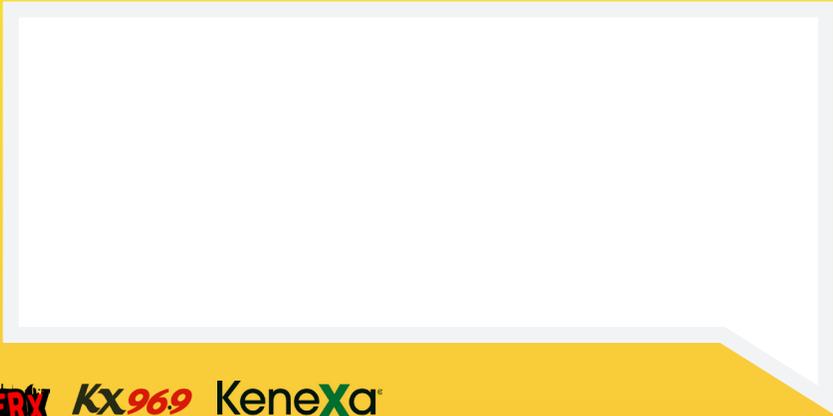
To purchase tickets online, visit LincolnZoo.org





Lincoln Children's
ZOO

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TICKETS AVAILABLE
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MEMBERS: \$3
NON-MEMBERS: \$8
(INCLUDES ZOO ADMISSION)



ROCK WITH THE **CROCS**

Family Music Festival | Sunday, June 30 | 4 - 7 PM | Lincoln Children's Zoo