

JOHN BALL ZOO NEWS

Fall 2019





JOHN BALL ZOO NEWS

Volume 36 Issue No. 3
Fall 2019

Mission Statement:

We inspire our community to be actively engaged in the conservation of wildlife and our natural environment.

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JBZoo News Fall 2019 © John Ball Zoo 2019
Design and layout by Susan Hinkle



DEAR FRIENDS,

The excitement is building!

As summer turns to fall, excitement builds at John Ball Zoo – the excitement of continuing toward our goal of having a Zoo for All!

An important part is having an entry that is not only welcoming but also easily accessible. With the service drive relocation already in progress, the guest areas of the Entry Valley will begin their transformation in early November.

A new winding ADA compliant pathway will greet guests in spring 2020, along with new restrooms, concession stand and groundwork to bring new animals into the Zoo family.

In the park, the universally designed playground is taking shape and will be ready for play in late October. The design will allow anyone to access the playground to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. It also includes sensory features for the visually impaired.

We are also excited as our mob of meerkats will be exploring their new habitat and will be ready for guests to enjoy in spring 2020!

We have other exciting things to come in 2020 as well. You can learn more about them in our next Zoo News and future communications, so stay tuned!

Thank you for your continuing support of John Ball Zoo. We are committed to making sure you and your family can enjoy the Zoo today, tomorrow, and in the future.

Sincerely,



PETER D'ARIENZO

Chief Executive Officer



RUTH JONES

Honoring A Champion

For those who knew Ruth Jones, they remember her legacy as a lifelong, ardent champion for children, all children, with a special connection to those who are underserved.

As a former John Ball Zoo board member, Ruth wanted to make sure that all families, as families, could enjoy the Zoo together. To bridge this gap, Ruth imagined and helped create the JUMP program. Starting in 1998, the JUMP program began to offer a free household admission pass for families who meet the income guidelines for free or reduced school lunches.

Zsanara continued, "Anyone who knows our mother knows she was a visionary leader. It was her mission to ensure that all children not only had a quality education but that children and families had access to the same opportunities and experiences regardless of their background. She worked tirelessly in our community to remove any barriers that stood in the way of them becoming the leaders they were destined to be."

RUTH JONES-HAIRSTON
EDUCATOR & JUMP PROGRAM FOUNDER
YOUR LEADERSHIP & LOVE OF CHILDREN
WILL BE REMEMBERED ALWAYS



Ruth's children - Zsanara and Skot

In August, family, friends and former co-workers gathered at Red's Hobby Farm in the Zoo to dedicate a bench in Ruth's honor. "The bench is a small token of the Zoo's appreciation to Ruth for her vision for the JUMP program and her lifelong dedication to children," commented Mike Lomonaco, JBZ's Chief Development and Community Engagement Officer.

"She was a visionary leader"

Ruth's children Skot Welch and Zsanara Hoskins were also at the dedication and we recently talked with them about their mother, the JUMP program, and her legacy.

"The JUMP program was consistent to how my mom operated," said Skot. "It's how she did business. She would ask how we put kids and those disadvantaged first. It was her signature."

"We see her legacy but don't know the truly expansive nature of it but we do know the question Mom would ask us is 'What will your legacy be?' concluded Skot.



"The bench is a marker of sorts to part of the legacy she left behind," said Skot. "The fact that community members would take the time and opportunity to acknowledge in some fashion her legacy and what she still has left behind is the beginning process of recognizing her posthumously." Skot added, "It was also a nice time for the young people of our family who we are constantly teaching to recognize her legacy for some of what she has left behind."

Skot added, "When mom was a member of a board, she didn't do it for the prestige or to represent herself. She was sitting at the table for those who don't have a seat."

"That was her purpose for creating programs like JUMP, as well as all of the other extensive work she did in our community sowing and investing in children and families," said Zsanara.

"We thank the board and John Ball Zoo for honoring her and her work in our community. And for allowing her to bring a piece of her vision alive through John Ball Zoo," added Zsanara.

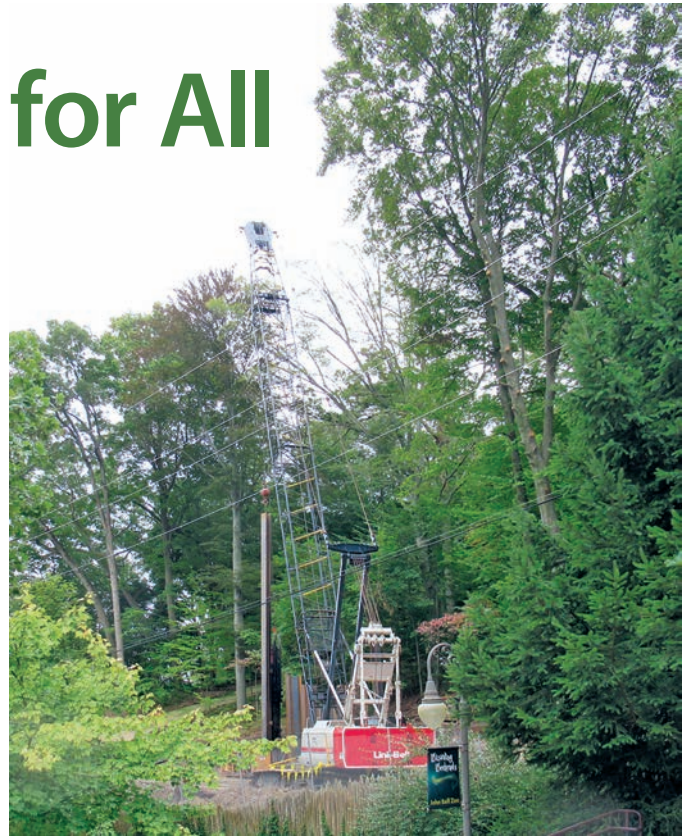
Your Zoo - A Zoo for All

The excitement is building!

John Ball Zoo is continuing with our plan to remove physical barriers by building a new inclusively designed pathway (ADA) for the Entry Valley. If you have visited the Zoo recently, you will have seen work already started on the service drive.

The renovated Entry Valley will allow all guests to readily access the Zoo from the moment they enter. Not to mention we are also making way for some exciting new animal friends to join our family in the future!

Construction on the guest area of the Entry Valley will start soon after we close for the season in early November. We anticipate construction to be completed and ready to welcome you and other guests in spring 2020!



Holding Hands

With A Chimpanzee

By Sue Thoms, Spectrum Health Beat
Reprinted with permission from Spectrum Health Beat

As a hand surgeon, Peter Jebson, MD, doesn't usually make house calls. But when his patient is a 180-pound chimpanzee, he makes an exception.

Dr. Jebson, the department chief for orthopedics at Spectrum Health, left his familiar operating rooms to drive to John Ball Zoo, a 128-year-old zoo nestled into a hill on Grand Rapids' West Side. His patient, a 32-year-old chimp named Susie, had a mysterious lump on the back of her right wrist.

The keepers who care for the zoo's six chimpanzees noticed the swelling a couple of months earlier, said Ryan Colburn, DVM, the zoo's veterinarian. The veterinary team monitored the swelling, using Susie's training to get her to show her wrist for examination. But a full diagnosis required a more comprehensive exam. When Dr. Colburn examined the round, one-inch lump, many possible explanations occurred to him - anything from a harmless cyst to a malignant tumor. He decided to consult a specialist.

As the zoo's vet, Dr. Colburn provides health care to more than 2,000 animals, encompassing 210 species. He treats everything from colds to cancer in creatures great and small, from nose to tail and beak to claw. And at times, he calls in other veterinarians, as well as dentists and physicians who treat human patients.

"When you're practicing zoo medicine, you are the ultimate generalist," he said. "Our expertise comes in caring for so many different species. Partnering with specialists can give us their focal knowledge when we need it. By working together, we can provide the best care possible for all our patients." For Susie, it made sense to consult a surgeon with expertise in treating human hands. For chimpanzees, one of their closest relatives is the human being."

Dr. Colburn and zoo staff members did an online search for local orthopedic doctors and started contacting their offices. When he got the call, Dr. Jebson readily agreed to help out. He and his wife love animals. They have traveled to Africa, New Zealand, Australia, the Cook Islands and the Galapagos Islands to see creatures in their natural habitats. And he brought considerable expertise to the case - in his 23 years as a hand surgeon, he has examined thousands of hands. All human, however. This case was a first.



Photos by Chris Clark | Spectrum Health Beat



Anesthetizing Susie

At John Ball Zoo, the keepers took special precautions to prepare Susie for the exam. With long arms and powerful hands, chimps possess much greater strength than humans. Although Susie is usually a calm, easygoing creature, she could become dangerous if alarmed.

A couple of weeks in advance, the keepers had her practice raising her arms and sitting still for a pre-surgery shot, said Bill Flanagan, the curator for the chimpanzee exhibit. The workers kept a mesh screen between them and Susie for safety. They tweaked her routine every day, so she wouldn't become suspicious and uncooperative on exam day. "Chimpanzees are so smart," Flanagan said. "Even when their routine is a little bit off, they know something's up."

The preparations worked beautifully. On a sunny September morning, Susie sat calmly to receive the injection in her arm to put her to sleep. As she slept soundly, Dr. Colburn and another zoo team member put her on a stretcher and transported her down the hall to the exam room. They intubated Susie and inserted an intravenous line in her arm, so they could administer medication and fluids during the procedure.

A Diagnosis

Dr. Jebson examined the lump on Susie's wrist. He aspirated fluid from the mass and looked at X-rays and ultrasound scans. He believes the mass is a benign tumor. It is most likely a lipoma - made of soft tissue, or a fibroma - made of fibrous or connective tissue. He saw no need to remove or treat the mass that day. The zookeepers said it didn't seem to bother Susie: she didn't pick at the bump or favor her right hand. "At this stage, our decision is just to observe it for now," he said. If it grows or changes, he may someday remove the lump and perform a biopsy.

Dr. Jebson also examined a second area of concern - a swelling on the back of Susie's knuckles. He determined it was a post-traumatic hematoma - a bruise caused by striking something. Chimps hit objects with the backs of their hands as a form of communication, so the finding did not surprise the zookeepers.

Throughout the procedure, a zookeeper held Susie's left hand. In addition to a variety of anesthetic monitors, this is one of the ways to monitor the depth of the anesthesia, Dr. Colburn said. If Susie's grip tightened, it could be an early sign that she could wake up. "We need her to be as safe as possible, but we also can't have her waking up on us," he said. "We have to balance those two things."

While Susie was under anesthesia, Dr. Colburn made use of the time to fully examine her. He performed an abdominal ultrasound, had her teeth cleaned and drew blood for routine blood work. An echocardiogram of her heart was performed by Robert Sanders, DVM, a veterinary cardiologist from Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine.



Fascinating



For Dr. Jebson, the experience offered an eye-opening window into human-chimp connections. “It’s fascinating”, he said.

“You’re looking at relatively the same anatomy.” Compared to humans, Susie had an exceptionally long palm, a short thumb and long, slender fingers. But the same creases stretch across her leathery palm. She had the same arrangement of finger bones and knuckles. Similar connecting tendons gave her the ability to grasp and release.”

“Our norm is the human wrist and anatomy,” Dr. Jebson said. “Switching from that and taking what we know about human anatomy, morphology and patho-anatomy into a chimpanzee is amazing. It’s very cool.”

As Susie recovered after the exam, Dr. Jebson went to the outside viewing area for the chimpanzee exhibit. A 21-year-old female chimp, Kiambi, sat on a bridge, her arm stretched up to grasp a rope. She watched her visitors intently. “She is the youngest and she tends to be very mischievous,” Flanagan said. “She also has a real high level of emotional intelligence. She keeps track of how the others are feeling. If one of them isn’t doing well, she looks out for them.”



Photos by Chris Clark | Spectrum Health Beat

As if scripted, a 41-year-old male named Sam showed how chimps use their hands. He jumped up to the viewing window and banged on it with the back of both hands, in a dramatic show for attention. And he used a stick to draw a smoothie mixture from a feeding spot, impressing Dr. Jebson with the dexterity of his long fingers.

“Amazing,” he said. “Absolutely amazing.”



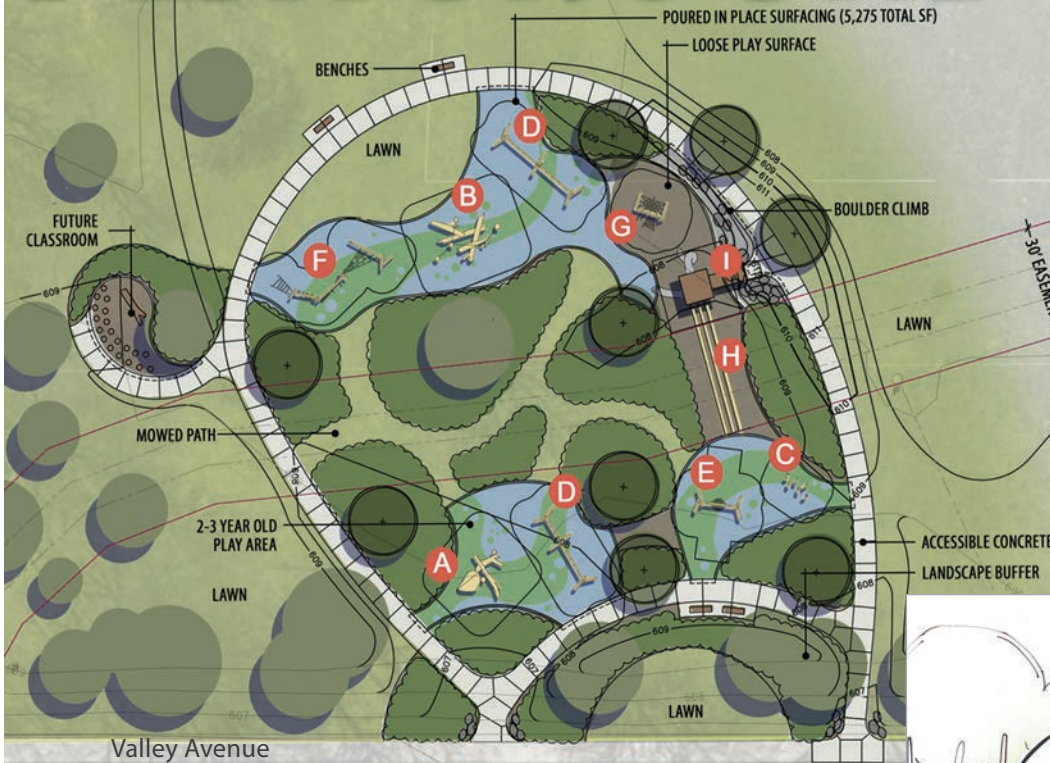
Photo by Kat Wille, JBZ

A Collaboration

The diagnosis for Susie was the “best news for her,” Dr. Colburn said. He appreciated the insights Dr. Jebson brought to her care. “He knows the human hand and diseases and processes and injuries that can happen,” he said. “We knew his expertise would help us narrow it down.”

Dr. Jebson hopes he and other Spectrum Health physicians can continue to serve as a resource for the zoo. “I think it’s a great collaboration,” he said. “And it’s fascinating to me because of the anatomy in contrast to the human hand. It was a privilege to be able to examine a chimpanzee like that.”

PLAYGROUND



FEATURES

- A - Custom leaf tangle
- B - Custom log jam
- C - Stilts
- D - Toddler & regular seat swings
- E - You and me swings
- F - Universal swing
- H - Suspension bridge
- G - Climbing net
- I - Custom 2-level tower with bridge & 2 slides



The excitement is building!

As John Ball Zoo moves ahead with plans to enhance the Zoo and the surrounding park, the construction of a new park playground is set for completion at the end of October 2019.

Breaking ground on August 14th, the universally designed playground will allow all guests to access the playground to the greatest extent possible and includes sensory features for the visually impaired. It is located at the southeast side of the park near Sacred Heart Academy.

Inclusiveness is a central component in both the design and the planning of the playground. The Zoo worked closely with Sacred Heart Academy and the west side neighborhood to build a playground that is for the community with input by the community.

"It is touching to see the broad level of collaboration we've enjoyed from the community as we designed and get ready to build a playground by and for all. The love of community which has consistently been demonstrated through this work is the result of genuine engagement by many stakeholders," said Peter D'Arienzo, CEO of John Ball Zoo.

"It has been a privilege to work with Peter D'Arienzo and the entire team at John Ball Zoo in partnership to bring a new playground to our west side neighborhood. The Sacred Heart Academy students are extremely excited about this new play structure and look forward to breaking it in this fall. Our Sacred Heart community is very fortunate to have such great neighbors," said Father Robert Sirico of Sacred Heart Academy and Catholic Parish.

"We are thankful for the partnership with Sacred Heart Academy as the lead donor for this new community playground," stated Michael Lomonaco, Chief Development and Community Engagement Officer at John Ball Zoo. "Their commitment to the community and supporting John Ball Zoo's vision for creating a 'Zoo for All' is inspiring."

John Ball Zoo staff met with Sacred Heart and the west side community multiple times, not only to announce their plan for a new playground but also to gain feedback on the design and location.

Lead funding for this project came from a variety of sources including John Ball Zoo donors and Sacred Heart Academy. The playground will be open for play, laughter and enjoyment for all in late October/early November.

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* Free general admission does not include special events (e.g. Monster Mash).

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In addition to the benefits above, Preferred Membership includes two guests each visit and free Funicular rides!

Find additional information on membership levels and add-ons at jbzoo.org.

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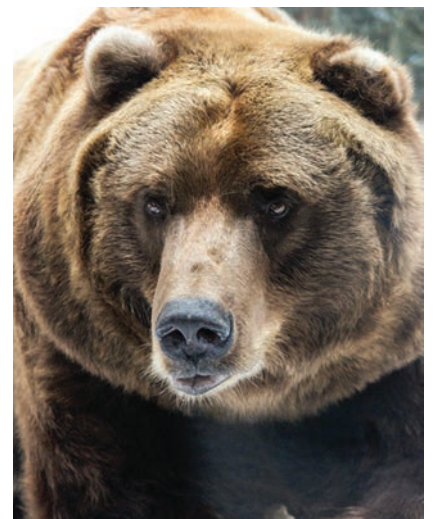
Animals! 🐾 Animals!

By sponsoring an animal, you not only help in the care and feeding of JBZ animals, you also support conservation programs near and far. We are home to more than 2,200 animals representing over 200 species. A portion of your contribution to this program supports conservation projects in Michigan and worldwide through our Wildlife Conservation Fund.

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For questions or additional details, email sstrasser@jbzoo.org or call (616)336-4301, ext. 1016.



30 Years of **RENDEZOO**



Thank you to everyone who joined us for and supported the 30th annual celebration of RendeZoo!

RendeZoo is the Zoo's largest fundraiser of the year. Proceeds directly support the Zoo's efforts to save and protect endangered species, educate children and families, and celebrate wildlife with our community.

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Save the date for RendeZoo 2020 - Friday, July 12th!





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Photo by Kat Wille, JBZ

SPOTTED TURTLE

The smallest and rarest of
Michigan's 10 turtle species