

# AGENDA

**Potter Park Zoo Advisory Board**  
1301 S. Pennsylvania Avenue ~ Lansing, MI 48912  
Telephone: 517.342.2776; Fax: 517.316.3894

The Board information packet is available on-line by going to [www.potterparkzoo.org](http://www.potterparkzoo.org), selecting "About," clicking on "Zoo Advisory Board" and clicking "November 13, 2024".

## POTTER PARK ZOO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, November 13, 2024  
6:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the October 09, 2024 Meeting Minutes
3. Limited Public Comment – *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion*
4. Late Items/Deletions/Consent Items
5. Action Items
  - a. 2025 Meeting Dates
6. Director's Report
  - a. Finance Report – Cynthia Wagner
  - b. Admission and Parking Reports- Cynthia Wagner
  - c. Director's Report – Cynthia Wagner
7. New Business
  - a. AZA Accreditation Progress Report
  - b. AZA Trends Report
8. Old Business
  - a. Animal Health Facility Progress – Cynthia Wagner
  - b. Feline Primate Renovation Progress – Cynthia Wagner
  - c. Fundraising Update – Amy Morris-Hall
9. Board Comments
10. Limited Public Comment - *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion*
11. Upcoming Meeting
  - a. Zoo Advisory Board Meeting December 11, 2024 at 6:00 PM
12. Adjournment

Official minutes are stored and available for inspection at the address noted at the top of this agenda. Potter Park Zoo will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting for the visually impaired, for individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon five (5) working days' notice to the Zoo. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Zoo by writing to: Zoo Director, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing, MI 48912, or by calling 517.342.2776.

**MINUTES – INGHAM COUNTY  
POTTER PARK ZOO ADVISORY BOARD**

**1301 S. Pennsylvania Avenue,  
Lansing, MI,  
October 9, 2024**

**BOARD MEMBER**

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Pawar, Vice Chair Kyle Binkley, Dr. Richard Snider, Emily Linden, Mary Leys, Samantha Harkins and Caitlin O’Rourke

**ALSO PRESENT:** Cynthia Wagner, Zoo Director

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Tennis, Chair Cheryl Bergman, Dr. Jack Kottwitz, Kasey Kent and Julie Pingston

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting called to order at 6:01 p.m.

**MINUTES:** At 6:20 p.m. the minutes were moved by Samantha Harkins and supported by Commissioner Pawar to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2024 meeting as written, **Yes-7; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

**LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**LATE ITEMS/DELETIONS/CONSENT ITEMS**

None

**ACTION ITEMS**

None

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Director Wagner reported the 2024 year to date overall revenue is up compared to 2023. She stated that camel ride revenue was down in 2024 even with an increase in rates. Director Wagner stated she is continuing to monitor the financials closely as there have been some emergency repairs, but overall expenses have been in line with budget. She stated that the zoo is moving in the low revenue months and that the bulk of revenue is in for the year. Caitlyn O’Rourke asked if the zoo gets a percentage of parking passes purchased at other parks. Director Wagner replied that the zoo does not get a percentage, but that the zoo also does not have to pay a percentage for those purchased at the zoo.

Commissioner Pawar stated there have been times the gift shop has been closed at after hours events and asked if there is a reason for the closure. Director Wagner replied the goal is to have it open for all events, however there have been instances where staffing was an issue and the gift shop had to be closed.

### **ADMISSION & PARKING REPORT**

Director Wagner reported that admissions is up for the year compared to 2023 and that she expects to have over 200,000 visitors in 2024 for the first time that she is aware of. Ingham County Free Day had over 1,000 attendees receive free admission. College Day had 348 college students come to the zoo and get free admission.

### **ZOO DIRECTOR REPORT**

Major Elements Reported by Director Wagner:

- The Horticulture and Maintenance Supervisor position is posted.
- It is AZA conference season and many staff are traveling for professional development opportunities.
  - Brian Fisher presented about drills at the AZA facilities conference.
  - Zookeepers have attended Felid TAG, HAZWOPPER, and AAZK.
  - Sarah Foote attended Registrar conference.
  - Mariah Martinez presented about DEAI plans at AZA.
- Crosswalks were painted between admissions and the parking lot. This is a great example of a concern brought up by a staff member at the Safety Committee which was then implemented.
- The Conservation Engagement Department is very busy with education programs, conservation stations, education days, teen programs, Big Zoo Lesson and the high school class.
- Boo at the Zoo will incorporate many conservation stations that are themed for Halloween.
- The September Zoo Nights private event was very successful and most attendees participated in the Feline & Primate tour. These events will continue in future years.

7:13 Kyle Binkley arrived

- The zoo received a grant from the City of Lansing for a Story Walk along the river trail and it is in place.
  - Emily Linden asked if it is being promoted at all through the City. Director Wagner stated she did not think it had been.
  - Commissioner Pawar asked if there was collaboration with CADL for Story Walk. Director Wagner said they would check with their ZIYN contacts to see if there were opportunities.
- Commissioner Pawar asked if there was a program through Sparrow for new parents. Director Wagner stated there was a partnership with Sparrow and the Zoological Society for a sponsorship of Boo at the Zoo. Director Wagner stated she would have Amy Morris-Hall send Commissioner Pawar the details.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Emergency Memo Penguin Chiller**

Director Wagner stated the repair for the penguin chiller was \$4,280.93.

### **Wild Wanderers Survey Results and Program Recap**

Director Wagner reported the program was very successful. She stated Heath Thurman put together a survey and that they are discussing what can be improved for next year. She also stated they are looking for a sponsor to cover the cost of the program. Samantha Harkins asked if there could be more than one sponsor. Director Wagner replied that they could have more than one sponsor and work with the organizations on what they would like.

Director Wagner shared a few results from the survey that show the program reached non-members and that some of them purchased zoo memberships as a result of the program. Kyle Binkley asked how many total guests came in for Wild Wanderers. Director Wagner replied that 2,234 people attended to walk. He also asked how many were repeat visitors. Director Wagner replied she did not have that information with her, but could get it. Dr. Snider stated this program was an opportunity to reach new moms. Discussion ensued regarding future Wild Wanderers program opportunities.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Animal Health Facility Progress**

Director Wagner reported the bond sold and the money will be deposited October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Excavation should start in the next couple of weeks. The zoo is waiting for the City to sign off on plan review and permits before more work can be done. The first bond payment is due May 1 for both a principal and interest payment. There is an additional bond payment due each November 1 for interest only.

Director Wagner also stated the water main replacement RFP did go out for bids and the pre-bid meeting is tomorrow.

#### **Feline Primate Renovation Progress**

Director Wagner reported the Feline Primate RFP went out for design services and pre-bid meetings are next week. Internal meetings are taking place to discuss what species should be housed in the indoor exhibits after the renovation. Six keepers, the animal care supervisor and the Director went to Toledo Zoo to tour their large cat, reptile and hoofstock facilities. Staff found it very helpful to see how another older zoological facility is renovating facilities.

Director Wagner reported the goal is still to start construction in 2026. She stated the goal will be to move the necessary animals toward the end of 2025.

Kyle Binkley asked if the indoor exhibits would stay the same size. Director Wagner replied that it was yet to be determined during design, but that it likely would be a similar footprint.

#### **Fundraising Update**

Director Wagner reported the Zoological Society hired a fundraiser for major gifts. She will officially start the first of the year, but will spend some time getting set up and ready to start in November and December.

#### **Core Values and Vision Statement Update**

Director Wagner stated it is not finalized yet with staff, but that she would bring it to the board when finalized. She stated the four core values that had been voted on by staff were Respect, Teamwork, Sustainability and Compassion. Commissioner Pawar asked if this in line with the County's Strategic Plan. Director Wagner replied they began the

process by referencing the County's plan with staff and are making sure it aligns with the County's goals. Dr. Snider stated critical thinking should be incorporated in the core values.

**BOARD COMMENTS**

None

**LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

DRAFT



# NOTICE

## REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE POTTER PARK ZOO BOARD

# FOR 2025

The Potter Park Zoo Board meetings commence at 6:00pm and are held at Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Education Bldg., Lansing, Michigan

January 08, 2025  
February 12, 2025  
March 12, 2025  
April 09, 2025  
May 14, 2025  
June 11, 2025  
July 09, 2025  
August 13, 2025  
September 10, 2025  
October 08, 2025  
November 12, 2025  
December 10, 2025

In the event of a special meeting, rescheduled meeting or cancellation of a regularly scheduled meeting, a notice of same will be posted at the office of Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing, Michigan, at least 18 hours prior to the time of the meeting or canceled meeting.

The Potter Park Zoo will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting for the visually impaired, or individuals with disabilities at the meeting, upon five (5) working days' notice to the Potter Park Zoo. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Potter Park Zoo in writing or by calling the Potter Park Zoo Office, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing, MI 48912~ Phone: (517)342-2715.

**A QUORUM OF POTTER PARK ZOO BOARD MEMBERS MAY BE IN ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING**

1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave. | Lansing, MI 48912 | p: 517-342-2776 | f: 517-318-3894

**POTTER PARK ZOO  
BALANCE SHEET - PRELIMINARY  
AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2024**

**ASSETS**

CASH	\$ 1,640,466
DEPOSITORY CASH	231,380
IMPREST CASH	8,000
TAXES REC - CURRENT LEVY	-
IFT TAX RECEIVABLE	(12,378)
TAXES REC - DELINQUENT	42,932
ESTIMATED UNCOLLECTIBLE DELINQUENT TAXES	(18,601)
ACCOUNTS REC-OTHER	428
PROPERTY TAX RECEIVABLE	-
INTEREST RECEIVABLE	2,627
DUE FROM STATE	-
DUE FROM OTHER FUNDS	-
INVENTORY	171,296
INVESTMENT YIELD ADJUSTMENT	1
PREPAID EXPENSES	56,509

**TOTAL ASSETS**

\$ 2,122,661

**LIABILITIES**

VOUCHERS PAYABLE	3
DUE TO ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY	133,312
TAX LEVY LIABILITY	19,100
SALES TAX PAYABLE	12,118
REFUND NOW	(61)
REFUND APPLY	(865)
ACCRUED PAYROLL	-
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	24,113
DEFERRED REVENUE - DELINQUENT TAXES	26,628
DEFERRED REVENUE - PROPERTY TAXES	-
DEF REVENUE -POTTER PARK	14,942

**TOTAL LIABILITIES**

229,289

**FUND BALANCE**

UNSPENDABLE	256,679
UNRESTRICTED FUND BALANCE	1,636,693

1,893,372

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE**

\$ 2,122,661

*NOTE: The Fund balance beginning balance is based on figures posted in the 2023 Ingham County Audit.*

Prepared By: Eric J. Thelen

**POTTER PARK ZOO**  
**YEAR TO DATE BUDGET/ACTUAL REPORT - PRELIMINARY**  
**FOR 10 MONTHS ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2024**

	2024 BUDGET	OCT 2024 YTD ACTUAL	BUDGET REMAINING	% OF BUDGET	OCT 2023 YTD ACTUAL	% DIFF LAST YR
<b>REVENUES</b>						
PROPERTY TAX	\$ 4,487,927	\$ 4,523,429	\$ (35,502)	100.79%	\$ 4,419,735	2.35%
UNALLOCATED PORTION OF TAXES (10 MONTHS)	\$ -	\$ (753,905)	\$ -	0.00%	\$ (736,622)	0.00%
ADMISSIONS	\$ 695,000	\$ 840,567	\$ (145,567)	120.94%	\$ 773,744	8.64%
CONCESSIONS, GIFT SHOP, VENDING	\$ 705,000	\$ 930,299	\$ (225,299)	131.96%	\$ 831,247	11.92%
PARKING FEES	\$ 180,000	\$ 189,939	\$ (9,939)	105.52%	\$ 169,863	11.82%
INTERACTIVE SITES	\$ 95,000	\$ 97,148	\$ (2,148)	102.26%	\$ 105,298	-7.74%
INTEREST INCOME	\$ 30,000	\$ 72,222	\$ (42,222)	240.74%	\$ 63,668	13.43%
OTHER REVENUES	\$ (324,576)	\$ 155,401	\$ (479,977)	-47.88%	\$ 176,274	-11.84%
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 5,868,351</b>	<b>\$ 6,055,100</b>	<b>\$ (940,654)</b>	<b>103.18%</b>	<b>\$ 5,803,207</b>	<b>4.34%</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>						
<b>PERSONNEL SERVICES</b>						
Salaries & Wages - Full Time	\$ 1,936,415	\$ 1,520,531	\$ 415,884	78.52%	\$ 1,482,295	2.58%
Salaries & Wages - Seasonal	\$ 695,284	\$ 775,003	\$ (79,719)	111.47%	\$ 748,148	3.59%
Benefits	\$ 1,120,034	\$ 882,410	\$ 237,624	78.78%	\$ 887,036	-0.52%
<b>Total Personnel Services</b>	<b>\$ 3,751,733</b>	<b>\$ 3,177,943</b>	<b>\$ 573,790</b>	<b>84.71%</b>	<b>\$ 3,117,479</b>	<b>1.94%</b>
<b>CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURES</b>						
Supplies	\$ 436,000	\$ 453,187	\$ (17,187)	103.94%	\$ 516,739	-12.30%
Animal Care	\$ 317,000	\$ 217,135	\$ 99,865	68.50%	\$ 235,008	-7.61%
Purchased Services	\$ 647,000	\$ 617,317	\$ 29,683	95.41%	\$ 758,013	-18.56%
Utilities - Telephone	\$ 23,125	\$ 16,059	\$ 7,066	69.45%	\$ 16,056	0.02%
Rentals & Leases	\$ 6,000	\$ 4,730	\$ 1,270	78.84%	\$ 6,692	-29.32%
Other Expenses	\$ 141,100	\$ 104,038	\$ 37,062	73.73%	\$ 109,914	-5.35%
<b>Total Controllable Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 1,570,225</b>	<b>\$ 1,412,467</b>	<b>\$ 157,758</b>	<b>89.95%</b>	<b>\$ 1,642,423</b>	<b>-14.00%</b>
<b>NON-CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURES</b>						
Utilities	\$ 240,000	\$ 170,151	\$ 69,849	70.90%	\$ 170,601	-0.26%
Insurance	\$ 90,000	\$ 77,547	\$ 12,453	86.16%	\$ 70,307	10.30%
IT Support Expense	\$ 215,899	\$ 206,042	\$ 9,857	95.43%	\$ 174,970	17.76%
Other Expenses	\$ 494	\$ 494	\$ (0)	100.06%	\$ 531	-6.92%
<b>Total Non-Controllable Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 546,393</b>	<b>\$ 454,235</b>	<b>\$ 92,158</b>	<b>83.13%</b>	<b>\$ 416,408</b>	<b>9.08%</b>
<b>CAPITAL OUTLAY</b>						
Capital Improvements	\$ -	\$ 127,668	\$ (127,668)	#DIV/0!	\$ 840,724	-84.81%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 5,868,351</b>	<b>\$ 5,172,314</b>	<b>\$ 696,037</b>	<b>88.14%</b>	<b>\$ 6,017,034</b>	<b>-14.04%</b>
<b>TOTAL CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 882,787</b>			<b>\$ (213,827)</b>	
<b>FUND BALANCE AS OF 1/1/24</b>						
NON-SPENDABLE		\$ 256,679				
UNRESTRICTED		\$ -				
		<u>\$ 256,679</u>				
<b>FUND BALANCE AS OF 10/31/24</b>		\$ 1,139,466				
<b>FUND BALANCE AS OF 10/31/24</b>						
UNSPENDABLE		\$ 256,679				
UNRESTRICTED		\$ 882,787				
		<u>\$ 1,139,466</u>				

NOTE: The Fund balance beginning balance is based on figures posted in the 2023 Ingham County Audit.

Prepared By: Eric J. Thelen



**POTTER PARK ZOO  
MONTHLY PARKING REPORT  
FOR MONTH AND YTD ENDING October 31, 2024**

ADMISSION TYPE								
	2023	2024 Gate	2024 Online	2024 Total	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY	2023	2024	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY
ANNUAL RESIDENT PASS	0	1	0	1	1	291	247	(44)
ANNUAL NON-RESIDENT PASS	0	0	0	0	0	31	37	6
PPZ MEMBER DELUXE/PREMIUM	492	678	0	678	186	2,481	3,447	966
DAILY RESIDENT PARKING	2,521	3,700	2	3,702	1,181	18,356	21,334	2,978
DAILY NON-RESIDENT PARKING	1,857	2,400	8	2,408	551	21,242	22,723	1,481
SOCIETY/EVENTS	0	142	0	142	142	827	1,660	833
ANNUAL PASS RESIDENT ENTRY	216	340	0	340	124	805	1,476	671
ANNUAL PASS NON-RESIDENT ENTRY	5	3	0	3	(2)	206	635	429
WAIVED ANNUAL PASS	18	2	0	2	(16)	59	43	(16)
OTHER (non-paying)	111	10	0	10	(101)	2,390	806	(1,584)
TOTAL	5,220	7,276	10	7,286	2,066	46,688	52,408	5,720

ADMISSION TYPE	
ANNUAL RESIDENT PASS	
ANNUAL NON-RESIDENT PASS	
RESIDENT DAILY PASS	
NON-RESIDENT DAILY PASS	

**POTTER PARK ZOO  
MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT  
FOR MONTH AND YTD OCTOBER 31, 2024**

ADMISSION TYPE	2023	2024 Gate	2024 Online	2024 Total	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY	2023 COUNT	2024 COUNT	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY
<b>GENERAL</b>								
CHILD RESIDENT	201	266	0	266	65	8,454	9,551	1,097
CHILD NON-RESIDENT	539	452	5	457	(82)	13,605	13,552	(53)
CHILDREN - UNDER 3	396	460	2	462	66	7,481	8,003	522
ADULT RESIDENT	1,718	2,474	12	2,486	768	25,252	27,412	2,160
ADULT NON-RESIDENT	1,262	1,064	59	1,123	(139)	25,671	29,413	3,742
SENIOR/MILITARY RESIDENT	125	186	1	187	62	2,709	3,390	681
SENIOR/MILITARY NON-RESIDENT	204	294	5	299	95	3,914	4,926	1,012
GROUPS	504	447	0	447	(57)	21,481	23,524	2,043
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>4,949</b>	<b>5,643</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>5,727</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>108,567</b>	<b>119,771</b>	<b>11,204</b>
<b>MEMBERSHIPS/PROGRAMS</b>								
PPZ MEMBERS/RECIPROCAL	1,661	1,399	0	1,399	(262)	18,645	23,104	4,459
SOCIETY PROGRAMMING/EVENTS	10,162	14,499	2,275	16,774	6,612	25,478	33,482	8,004
MONDAY PROGRAM	630	1,422	0	1,422	792	5,862	8,749	2,887
ZIYN	234	276	0	276	42	4,088	4,860	772
OTHER (non-paying)	440	245	0	245	(195)	5,168	6,006	838
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>13,127</b>	<b>17,841</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>20,116</b>	<b>6,989</b>	<b>59,241</b>	<b>76,201</b>	<b>16,960</b>
Ingham County Free Day College Day								
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>18,076</b>	<b>23,484</b>	<b>2,359</b>	<b>25,843</b>	<b>7,767</b>	<b>167,808</b>	<b>195,972</b>	<b>28,164</b>
Wild Wanderers	0	0	0	0		0	2,234	

ADMISSION TYPE	DESCRIPTION
CHILDREN RESIDENT	Children, Ingham County ages 3-16 (\$5 April - October, \$3 November-March)
CHILDREN NON-RESIDENT	Children, Out of Ingham County ages 3-16 (\$5 April - October, \$3 November-March)
CHILDREN - UNDER 3	All Children, any county under age 3 (Free)
ADULT RESIDENT	Adult of Ingham County ( \$7 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
ADULT NON-RESIDENT	Adult Out of Ingham County ( \$13 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
SENIOR/MILITARY RESIDENT	Seniors/Military of Ingham County ( \$5 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
SENIOR/MILITARY NON-RESIDENT	Seniors/Military of Ingham County ( \$11 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
PPZ MEMBERS	Visitors holding membership at PPZ - one time payment
SPECIAL EVENTS - PPZ	Admission included in event fee
SPECIAL EVENTS - COUNTY	Admission included in event fee
RECIPROCAL ZOO MEMBERS	Reciprocal Zoo memberships (Discount varies)
RECIPROCAL ZOO MEMBERS (100%)	Reciprocal Zoo Members (Free admission)
GROUPS	20 or more guests paying together (\$1 off per person)
MONDAY PROGRAM	Ingham County and City of Lansing Residents free 9-12 PM on non-holiday Mondays
OTHER (non-paying)	Any coupon related attendee



## Director's Report November 13, 2024

### Staff

Interviews are taking place for the Horticulture & Maintenance Supervisor position.

### Guest Services

Wild Wanderers Update: Of the 1,000 Wild Wanderers members, 393 visited. Of those who visited, 230 came more than once. One person came 98 times, 53 people came more than ten times and 22 came 20 or more times.

The Dippin' Dots kiosk is closed for the season and the Savanna Grill is also closed until the first Wonderland of Lights event Saturday, November 23. During Wonderland of Lights, the Savanna Grill, along with a special cocoa and retail kiosk, will be open on all event nights through Monday, December 23.

We switched to our winter hours November 1. The zoo is open 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily.

The asphalt between the Welcome Center and gift shop was removed and replaced with cement. This change has alleviated puddles that started after the asphalt replacement.

Veterans and their families received free admission on Monday, November 11 in observance of Veterans Day.



The new entrance sign is up. Elements from the old sign will be preserved and on display in the zoo.



## Public Safety

Firearms training was held for the PPZ Emergency Response Team members on Tuesday, October 29. The training is led by the Ingham County Sheriff's department at their shooting range.

## Communications

We received some wonderful praise from a follower on social media—huge shout out to our entire zoo team! The work we do not only inspires others but truly makes a difference in the Lansing community and beyond through our online presence!

I've been a silent follower of your page for a few weeks now,

and I just feel I should let you know how impressed I am with the amazing work you're doing for wildlife conservation.

It's clear that you don't just care for these animals, you celebrate them like family, from giving them birthday cakes to feeding them their favorite foods.

You're creating a world where they feel loved and safe, and that's very special and commendable.

As a fellow wildlife lover, I'm grateful for all that you do.

Keep up the incredible work, and may you continue to make a difference for these beautiful animals.



## Conservation Engagement

In October the Conservation Education Interns embarked on a field trip to the Burke Lake Banding Station. It was an amazing opportunity for them to learn about migratory birds, observe conservation efforts in action, and connect with nature.



This year's Boo at the Zoo was even more interactive with the addition of the Education Station Passport. Guests collected stamps at each Education Station throughout the zoo. Once they completed their passport, they turned it in for a prize and made a pledge to protect one of the animals they learned about. As part of the pledge, they received a magnet of their chosen animal displayed on the Community Pledges Board.



Paul Buzzard will be at the zoo for a brown bag lunch conservation talk on Tuesday, December 3 at Noon. Please join us to learn more about the Pallas cat field conservation efforts the zoo is supporting.

Volunteers led by the Conservation Education intern, dug up the plants in the Pollinator Garden and relocated them to the Nature Play area. This project is in preparation for the directional boring needed to replace the water main while also turning the Nature Play into a Native Plant Walk for guests. The Pollinator Garden will be restored in the spring after the water main is replaced.

## Events

We wrapped up an incredible Boo at the Zoo on October 27, and what a memorable spooky season it was! This year, we set a record-high attendance with 15,846 visitors joining us for Halloween fun. We're incredibly grateful to our team, who kept the festive spirit alive with flexibility, resilience, and enthusiasm for our guests.



Sunday, December 1, from 5 to 8 p.m., we will host our annual Toys for Tots Toy Drive. We're anticipating a bustling evening filled with visitors eager to spread holiday cheer and donate new, unwrapped toys. Guests who contribute will receive complimentary admission to enjoy the light displays, so we expect a great turnout.

The events team is putting together a float for the Silver Bells parade on Friday, November 22.

## DEAI

In October we hosted our annual FALCONERS Boo at the Zoo. It was a beautiful night at the zoo and we had over 350 participants! What a fantastic night. Thank you to everyone who made it a success.

The next FALCONERS is Saturday, November 16 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Mariah Martinez and Heath Thurman have completed the audio tour of the Feline & Primate House and it is now on our website! This is another accomplishment in our accessibility and inclusion efforts. Although anyone can access our audio tours and use them, they primarily provide an important resource for those who are visually impaired. Whether they use the tour onsite or offsite, they will learn great information on animals we house in these buildings.

We have adapted our Animal Adaptations tour to fit the needs of those who are visually impaired. This tour is one hour and fifteen minutes in length. Marie Benner can schedule these tours.

We had over 500 guests visit with a Zoo In Your Neighborhood pass in October! Of those guests, 269 visited during Boo at the Zoo! This is an excellent way to ensure that everyone can attend our events without financial concerns.



## Animal Care and Research

We are continuing to work on with getting Kota in the tiger exhibit and Vik into the lion exhibit to give us additional housing options with our cats until the renovation.



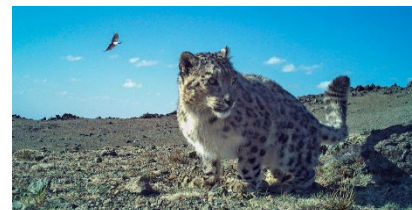
Keepers created fun themed enrichments for both the MSU vs U of M game and to promote voting in the election.



Elvis, our new male arctic fox, has been introduced to Sparkle, and they're getting along wonderfully.

## Snow Leopard Conservation Efforts

We're excited to share some field updates from the Snow Leopard Trust. Dr. Örjan Johannson and his Mongolian team have achieved a significant milestone in their collaring work, with curious cubs observing the process. This research is crucial for protecting these magnificent cats, and our support makes it possible.



In Pakistan, the Snow Leopard Foundation (SLF) is pioneering innovative climate resilience initiatives, including a "social fencing" project that encourages natural forest regeneration through community-protected zones. This approach aligns conservation efforts with local needs.

Additionally, a team in India has captured remarkable footage of a snow leopard mother with her cubs, showcasing never-before-documented sibling interactions. This exclusive glimpse reflects how our support helps unlock new insights into these elusive cats.