

# NEWS RELEASE



**Contact:** Winfield S. Danielson III  
Marketing and PR Manager  
Office: (757) 441-2374 ext. 223  
Cell: (757) 777-7899  
Email: winfield.danielson@norfolk.gov

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
June 26, 2014

## **KENYAN ARTISANS VISIT ZOO FOR FLIP-FLOP CARVING DEMO**

NORFOLK, Va. – Flip-flop animal artists from Nairobi, Kenya, are giving a carving demonstration at the Virginia Zoo 12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 30, 2014.

For the first time, Ocean Sole artisans are coming to the U.S., to exhibit at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., June 25 to 29 and July 2 through 6. As part of the Virginia Zoo's partnership with the Smithsonian and Ocean Sole, the artists will come to the Virginia Zoo for one day only.

"This is a unique opportunity for people to meet two of the actual Kenyan artisans who transform discarded flip flops into colorful works of art, to help conserve marine life and support sustainable development," said Greg Bockheim, the Zoo's executive director.

Flip-flop carver Jonathan Lento has worked for Ocean Sole for seven years. Before that he was a herdsman in Samburu and did various casual jobs in different places. A father of two, Lento said his job at Ocean Sole allows him to pay for school for his children and feed his family.

Flip-flop carver Francis Mutua Muvua was a wood carver before joining Ocean Sole. He has worked for the company for three years and said that his job at Ocean Sole enables him to pay for school for his children, too, and provides him with the opportunity to meet different people.

Zoo visitors will be able see and purchase autographed flip-flop animals, and watch them being created from discarded flip-flops by these artisans. The demonstration is included with regular Zoo admission.

- more -

## KENYAN ARTIST DEMO, 2 OF 2



**A Kenyan artisan puts the finishing touches on a flip-flop giraffe at Ocean Sole's Marula Studios in Nairobi, Kenya (Ocean Sole courtesy photo).**

**###**

*As an accredited Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) facility, the Virginia Zoo exhibits more than 400 animals on 53 beautifully landscaped acres. For more than a century, the Virginia Zoo has demonstrated a commitment to education and conservation, and offered a fun-filled day for visitors of any age. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and located at 3500 Granby Street in Norfolk. Daily admission prices are \$11 for adults, \$10 for seniors (age 62 and over) and \$9 for children ages 2-11. Children under 2 admitted free! Visit [www.virginiazoo.org](http://www.virginiazoo.org) or call (757) 441-2374 for more information.*