# FALL/WINTER 2024 **ZOOO Review**

### APE-SOLUTELY ADORABLE!

Meet our new baby orangutan and learn about her species. **PAGE 4 & 5** 

### CONSERVATION SPELLED WITH 3 C'S

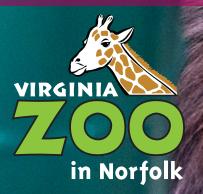
Read about how the Zoo approaches conservation and the part you can play!

PAGES 8 & 9

### FEATHERED FRIENDS ON THE TRAIL

Learn about our birds that live in the Asia: Trail of the Tiger aviary.

PAGES 14 & 15



Poppy, the baby Bornean orangutan with mom, Dara.

**这个资源的常期发展在Y**2000年1月

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**ZOO PROJECT CORNER** 

The team in World of Reptiles has been working hard to design new exhibits in the Conservatory. This space will be home to a new large lizard species moving to the Zoo in the coming months!

3500 Granby Street, Norfolk, Virginia 23504 ZOO HOURS: Open Daily 9:30 am - 4 pm Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day PHONE: 757.441.2374 • FAX: 757.441.5408 VIRGINIAZOO.ORG

Do you have any questions or ideas for the next issue of the Virginia Zoo Review? We'd love to hear from you. Email info@virginiazoo.org.

**Mewsletter is printed on recycled paper.** 





Dear Zoo Friends,

I want to take this opportunity to thank all Zoo fans and supporters for visiting and contributing to the Zoo's past, present, and future success; this is a significant expression of your commitment to wildlife, wild places, and our local center for conservation learning. Thanks to you, our combined passion for wildlife is furthering a mission that encourages the future stewards of the planet and its wildlife ecosystems.

This summer our breeding programs for endangered species took a leap forward with the birth of our female Bornean orangutan, **Poppy**. This little girl, who makes an important addition to the genetic population for this critically endangered great ape species, along with several other important births we've had this year, provides an incredible opportunity to watch conservation in action as we witness them inspire connection amongst our community.

And I hope you and your loved ones had the chance to join us for this past summer's 2024 event season! We had sold-out attendance for a record number of events and programs such as ZooGrooves, Adult Nights, Bike Night, Safari Camp, and more. Zoo events and education programs are community-centric, and we feel privileged to engage with both the people and animals that make them possible.

Last, but certainly not least, I am thrilled to say we hosted our groundbreaking for the **EdVenture & Exploration Campus** bringing us to within dollars of our overall campaign goal! And with the announcement of the Brock Challenge, all present contributions double in value! I know this challenge for amazing new projects will inspire action that brings us to the campaign finish line. Please be part of the EdVenture! You can learn more at edventureandexploration.org.

See you at the Zoo!

Executive Director, Virginia Zoo

A

The ZooFarm has some new faces! Meet **Peggy**, **Bucky**, and **Captain**, the all new mini pigs. Be sure to stop in and visit them during your next Zoo trip!

#### B

We're ape-solutely excited to announce that our baby orangutan was named **Poppy**! She can be found with her parents, Dara and Solaris on exhibit now.

Ever thought about going to space? Well our new tree has! The Zoo was gifted a tree from NASA that has been to space and orbited the moon to study the effects of space travel on plant growth. You can find "**the moon tree**" in its own garden near Nature Play.

A new girl has ssslithered into the World of Reptiles! Meet **Angie** the green anaconda during your next stroll through the Hall of Giants.

#### NEW AT THE ZOO



Chick this out! Our white-naped cranes, **Bill** and **Nina**, hatched their first two chicks in the beginning of July. See them on the Asia: Trail of the Tiger!

#### G

Ssseriously ssso many sssnakes! Our green tree pythons in the World of Reptiles recently laid a clutch of eggs. The young snakes are currently living behind the scenes.

#### G

Our tawny frogmouths, **Robin** and **Wembley**, had their first chick, **Inala** in April! She can currently be seen in the Chinese hwamei habitat on the Asia: Trail of the Tiger boardwalk. Learn more on page 14!



#### C

What a Finntastic new name! Thanks to the help of our generous supporters, our juvenile siamang born on March 15th was given the name **Finn** this summer. Finn joins his parents, **Malana** and **Bali**, as well as his brother, **Lovejoy**, on the Asia: Trail of the Tiger!

## **Oh Baby! We** Love Orangutans!

Story by Asia: Trail of the Tiger Keeper, Rachael Pipitone

What is an orangutan? Orangutans are one of the four great apes, and the only ones who live outside of Africa. The word "orangutan" translates to "person of the forest". On its own, "orang" translates to "person", but we do not typically use this word as an abbreviation because it can be disrespectful to the people native to where orangutans live. Where do orangutans live? They live in Indonesia, specifically in the forests of Sumatra or Borneo. Orangutans are arboreal, which means they are tree dwellers.

Here at the Virginia Zoo, we have 5 orangutans that live in two separate groups. In the wild orangutans are considered solitary, yet social, so they don't like to live in big family groups like other great apes. We have an

older group with a female named **Pepper**, 44 years old, and a male named **Schnitz**, 42 years old. Our other group is our younger family with a female named Dara, 25 years old, a male named Solaris, 21 years old, and their infant female named **Poppy** who was born on June 29, 2024. Usually in the morning you can see our younger family group in their big habitat yard, weather permitting, and in the afternoon, we switch the groups so Schnitz and Pepper can have some fresh air if they choose. When keepers work with the orangutans, it's all about building trusting relationships and giving them as much choice as possible. Schnitz and Pepper tend to prefer the inside area where it is climate controlled and less noisy.

Orangutans look and act similar to humans in many ways, but they definitely speak their own language and have other ways of communicating. "Anthropomorphize" is a fancy term that means to put human characteristics onto something else, like orangutans, usually because we want to make a connection. Concerned Zoo patrons may think the orangutans "look sad", but this is just because of our different styles of communication. When we approach another human, we usually smile as a greeting. When other primates



show their teeth, like we do while smiling, they are actually baring their teeth to show how much damage those chompers can do. When we talk to a fellow human, we usually face them and make eye contact. If a great ape does those same behaviors, they can be sizing up an opponent and squaring their body up for a fight! If you were about to get in a fight, would you turn your back to your opponent? Probably not, that is a very vulnerable stance to take. When people see the apes looking "sad" they are usually trying to show you respect by looking up (not a direct stare), over their shoulder (making sure their body is saying I don't want to fight), and have their mouth closed (not baring their teeth). The same behavior people can be concerned about it actually our apes saying, "Hi, who are you? You look cool, but I don't want to threaten or fight you. Wanna hang out?" They have lots of choice in their habitat to walk away if someone is being bothersome, like banging on the glass, so when they stay near you, they are choosing to.



How can you tell orangutans apart? As infants, juveniles, and adolescents, orangutan males and females mostly look the same. As they mature, we start to see some differences. Males can be about double the size of the females. When you see an orangutan with cheek-pads on the sides of their face, those are called flanges (pronounced flan-ges). Part of growing into a flanged male is having long dreadlocks, flanges, and a throat sac. All these new features are to help males look bigger and less approachable to other males or threats, and to also make them look bigger and more attractive to females.





Supporting the Virginia Zoo, which helps educate about orangutan conservation is something we and our apes thank you for! If our apes could share some time and information with you, I'm sure Schnitz, our shy and calculating male would probably help you search the web to see which candy is Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) certified this year. Pepper, our guick-thinking female would probably explain to you which of her favorite trees in the rainforest she would love to eat, both bark and leaves. Dara our nurturing mother would love to show you and her ever-growing infant how to find the best fruits, especially the ones high up in the trees near her and her infant's nest. Orangutans learn best by observing their mothers! Solaris would charismatically show you how to make a tool to open a hard to acquire fruit like durian or palm, since his large hands aren't always nimble.





Photos courtesy of Chicago Zoological Society

Schnitz as an adult

#### **GIFT GUIDE**

## **The Virginia Zoo Gift Guide** 10 Zoo gifts to give this season

#### **GIFT TICKETS**

Share your love of the Zoo with a friend or family member and give them the chance to come visit the Zoo and all we have to offer! Available online, these tickets are valid for 365 days after the date of purchase. \$20+

#### ZOODOPTIONS

A gift that makes an impact could be on your list! Consider symbolically adopting a Virginia Zoo animal with a variety of Zoodoption packages. Choose from digital, physical, or Grab & Go Zoodoptions to best suit your gift giving needs. Please allow 10-15 days to process and create your custom Zoodoption package. Grab & Go Zoodoptions are available in the Membership Office every day. \$25+

#### ZOO GIFT SHOP

Be sure to swing by our Gift Shop after your zoo visit! With a wide variety of things for the whole family, we are confident you will find something you love! Our selection is always changing as we continue to grow our Eco-Friendly, Sustainable, and Handmade products.



#### 2025 CALENDAR

Keep track of all your important dates next year with the Zoo's 2025 calendar! With fantastic fan photos of the animals and a selection of Zoo coupons, this gift is sure to delight everyone on your list. \$5+

#### **GIFT MEMBERSHIP**

Present the gift of the Zoo to someone special so they can visit all year long! Available online, select your recipient's membership level. You'll be emailed a code that is valid for a membership. Their membership won't start until they activate it. \$79+

### THE VIRGINIA ZOO EXPRESS

All aboard the Virginia Zoo express! Train rides are \$3 for ages 2 and up. Punch Cards are available for \$12 and that covers 5 rides! Do you or your family really love the train? We also offer a Train Engineer For a Day experience, check out the details on our website! \$3+



Looking for a good stocking stuffer? A Virginia Zoo Who-doption is the perfect gift! These popular mystery animal Zoodoptions are back with a new series. They will be available in the Membership Office through December. Don't wait because they are sure to sell out! \$15

### BEHIND THE SCENES

There isn't a more memorable gift than a once in a lifetime experience of a Behind-the-Scenes Tour! Learn about the animals that call the Zoo home from the keepers that care for them every day. **NEW THIS YEAR** join our Africa Keepers on a tour with our Eastern bongo, **Charlie**! This new tour will give guests the opportunity to meet Charlie, with the chance to feed her. It's an opportunity you won't want to miss! \$50+

#### WHO-DOPTIONS



#### VIRGINIA ZOO GIFT CARDS

Gift Cards can be used in the Gift Shop, Membership Office, restaurants or on the Zoo Train! Available as a physical card (in the Membership Office) or a digital card - emailed directly to your recipient! Not sure how they would use their time at the Zoo? You can also load the value of a behind-thescenes tours, camp or Zoo special event. Please note: gift cards cannot be used for admission tickets.

#### **SAFARI CAMPS**

Every kid needs to unleash their wild side, might as well let them do it at the Zoo! Safari Camps provide a memorable experience for the young ones in your life by teaching them about the world around them and how they can be the conservationists of the future. With camps for kindergartners to 8th graders, there's sure to be an engaging experience for every child in your

experience for every child in your life! Spring Break Camp registration opens December 3 for members and December 10 for nonmembers. Visit our website for more info! \$325+

GIFT CARE

# Upholding Our End: How We Engage Guests in Zoo Conservation

#### Story by Nick Dzendzel

Did you know that by being a member of the Virginia Zoo, or even just visiting us, you are supporting wildlife conservation? With your support, our Zoo contributes to local and global conservation through fostering connection, providing care, and building community for a more sustainable future. Internally, these are also known as **the 3 C's of Conservation**.







#### Connection

We believe our animals connect us to a shared Earth that needs protecting. The animals you will encounter during a visit to the Zoo are remarkable in every way: they are beautiful, they represent species from incredibly biodiverse regions of the world, and they thrive in the face of innumerable challenges to their survival in nature. We help build memorable and lasting connections between our guests and our animals to foster empathy for wildlife and habitats worldwide. Want to learn more about our animals? Stop by a staff chat, animal ambassador pop-up, or catch a ZooLive! Stage Show. You can see our daily activities on the electronic boards at the ticket booth or on signs in the Fountain Plaza when you enter the Zoo. Or chat with one of our many volunteers or educators who are trail-hosting on grounds. Look for someone wearing a Zoo logo and ask about our animals. Not only will you make their day, but you'll also build an unforgettable connection to the animals and see their value in our world.







#### Care

As an AZA-accredited zoo and simply as an institution dedicated to wildlife, we are committed to excellence in animal care and welfare. Our commitment to our animals' wellbeing shows in both our daily activities and our long-term planning: from the daily care our keepers and vet staff provide, to the thoughtful planning of habitat spaces and gardens. You can see this in action every day. Stop by a Keeper Chat or join us at the Animal Wellness Campus for a Diet Kitchen Chat or to view an animal procedure. Signs and our website are updated daily to let everyone know who, where, and when you can witness animals being cared for by our amazing staff.





#### Community

We believe that, together, we have the power to save wildlife and their habitats, and we are excited to collaborate with our community to build a stronger, more resilient future. The Virginia Zoo is committed to our unique role in wildlife conservation, but we cannot do it without support and collaboration. Simply by visiting the Virginia Zoo, guests make a difference for wildlife by supporting our conservation funds and getting involved in our daily work. The Zoo makes active contributions to conservation organizations such as the Turtle Survival Alliance, Action for Cheetahs in Kenya, the Elizabeth River Project and more. Additionally, the Zoo participates in community (or citizen) science projects such as Monarch Watch, Frog Watch, and Caterpillars Count. These are projects where non-scientists collect data to help scientists with their research.

There are so many ways to work with the Zoo to save wildlife and their habitats: through creating and maintaining healthy habitats, careful consumer choices, disposing of waste in a thoughtful and responsible manner, responsible pet ownership, and using your voice and actions to help shape the future of species around the world through active engagement. Want to learn more? Catch us at one of our many guest engagement opportunities like Wild Walks on Wednesdays, Educator Chats, or pop-up animal encounters throughout the week. Don't forget to check our online special events calendar too and see what we have planned to bring our community together in our conservation efforts.









### Asia, the peacock

Alton

Photo by Louise Devenney

Male common peafowl are called peacocks, while females are referred to as peahens.

Indian peafowl appear in three different variations including white-feathered, pied (random white feathers in plumage), and black-winged.

These birds will walk or run rather than fly unless they need to escape predators or reach tree tops.













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wedding, corporate event, or any celebration, we've got you covered! Whether it's a small get-together or largescale affair, we guarantee the perfect space for your next bash. Scan the QR code to book your event today







**Party Animals Welcome!** 

### For full list of events, details, and ticketing information, visit virginiazoo.org/events. **ARE YOU A FAMILY-FRIENDLY FINN?**

You like events where you can bring your kids and experience some wholesome family fun! The best events for you would be:

- ZooGrooves May 30 & August 29 •
- Zoovies September 26
- ZooBoo October 18 & 19 •



#### WHAT ABOUT A CURIOUS CHRISTOPHER?

You want to learn all about the animals at the Zoo! You're looking for an event where you can talk with Zoo staff and volunteers to get all the info. The best events for you would be:

- Breakfast with the Animals March 8
- Member Nights June 26, July 24 & August 14



### **DAYTIME DARA.**

would be:

**2025 EVENTS** Which Zoo Event Is Right For You?



#### MAYBE YOU'RE A PARTY POPPY?

You like events you can leave the kids at home and really let your wild side out! The best events for you would be:

• Kiss & Tail - February 9 • Fall Fest - September 20 • Adult Night - April 5, July 12 & October 24



### NONE OF THOSE SOUND LIKE YOU? MAYBE YOU'RE A

You want to visit the Zoo during the day and have your visit enhanced by some extra activities! The best events for you

• Party for the Planet - May 17 • Back to School - August 2 Teddy Bear Clinic - August 23

# Meet the Asia Aviary Birds

Story by Kirstin Pendleton & Katie Pepperl

At the beginning of the Asia: Trail of the Tiger boardwalk, you will find some of our feathered friends. These birds have quite the story to tell. Let's meet them!

The Chinese hwamei habitat currently has a few residents, and not all of them are the same species! The incredible thing about birds is that many can share exhibits with other animals, which better imitates their natural environment where they would interact with these animals. In this habitat specifically, there are the Chinese hwameis and a young tawny frogmouth, Inala! Chinese hwameis are ground dwelling birds which means they spend a large amount of their time on the ground foraging for seeds and bugs. They are distinguishable by the striking white ring around their eyes which actually gives them their name, as hwamei means "painted eyebrow" in Mandarin!



### Chinese Hwamei Habitat



### Laughing Kookaburra Habitat

They may be laughing but they're not joking! Laughing kookaburras get their name from their distinct calls that resemble laughter, however this is a territorial call used to warn other birds to stay away. Our habitat is the home of male, **Shrimp** (13), and female, **Barbie** (18). Barbie is a bit more interactive with her keepers and has bluer wings than Shrimp. The two are big fans of foraging enrichment so their keepers will often scatter bugs around their habitat to encourage natural hunting behaviors. When hunting larger prey such as mice, laughing kookaburras will grab the animal in their mouths and hit it against branches to stun the prey. Our pair at the Zoo can be seen doing this occasionally to pieces of mulch they carry around.



### White-crested Laughing Thrush Habitat

Is that a part of the tree? No, that's a tawny frogmouth! Tawny frogmouths are masters of disguise and easily blend into the bark of the trees in their natural habitat. They are nocturnal birds, so this camouflage is crucial to their defense during the day. They are also often confused for an owl because of their appearance, but they are not considered a raptor, like owls, due to their lack of curved talons and beaks. This habitat is home to male, **Wembley** (2), and female, **Robin** (12) who can be found sitting together, pretending people don't exist (unless they come with food). These two are a Species Survival Plan (SSP) recommended mating pair and just had their first chick, Inala, in April who currently lives in the Chinese hwamei habitat. As this species is part of an SSP, Inala will soon leave the Zoo to start her own family at another facility!

Music fans are going to love our motherdaughter pair of white-crested laughing thrushes, Stacy and Stacy's Mom! Stacy's Mom is 11 years old and can be distinguished by a green leg band, while Stacy is 8 years old and can be identified by an orange leg band and one crooked tail feather. When visiting these two you may see them on the ground digging for snacks in the dirt because they are fantastic bug foragers! The duo are also big fans of taking a dip in their bird bath. White-crested laughing thrushes typically live in large social groups and have a variety of loud calls. They can also raise the crest on the top of their heads into mohawks to appear larger and more threatening to predators. Be sure to listen out for the loud calls of these two during your next trip to the Zoo!

## Tawny Frogmouth Habitat

#### **CREATURE FEATURE**

# Just squirrelin' around

A common native species to the Virginia Zoo is the gray squirrel, but have you ever visited the Zoo's resident squirrel, Kelapa? He is a Prevost's squirrel and he lives in the ZooFarm!

> Prevost's squirrels can be found in the trees of Southeast Asia and are identified by the distinct black, white, and reddish-brown bands in their fur. These squirrels are built for living in the trees with their sharp claws that help them climb and their tail that helps them balance while running. Aside from providing balance, their tail is also useful when they are jumping among the trees because they will use it like a rudder to propel them further! At the Virginia Zoo, Kelapa is a favorite among his keepers because he loves to engage in training and enrichment such as bags, nuts, and puzzle feeders. His keepers say he is definitely a foodie and has never turned down a snack! Unlike many ground squirrels, these tree squirrels do not hibernate and Kelapa has a "cat door" that he uses to scurry between his indoor and outdoor enclosures, so you can see him all year at the Zoo!

Kelapa has been taught many behaviors by his keepers to advance his care here at the Zoo including stepping up on a scale, moving to his kennel for exams, and dangling off platforms or meshing to reach a target!



Like many of the animals at the Virginia Zoo, Kelapa loves grapes! Can you find all the hidden purple grapes throughout this edition of Zoo Review? Answer on the back cover.

## **Diversity, Equity, Accessibility,** Inclusion

The Virginia Zoo has made DEAI (Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion) one of our focuses to address and actively work on improving in hopes in becoming a DEAI leader in the community. This year the Virginia Zoo is one of two recipients, from a large pool of applicants, that were awarded a grant from the Hampton Roads Community Foundation, a local non-profit who has dedicated themselves to philanthropic projects within the community in the Hampton Roads region. With this award, the Virginia Zoo is able to bring in a professional DEAI consultant

> for 18 months while working with the staff to craft and implement a plan. As the Virginia Zoo strives to consistently improve, this opportunity has allowed us to revisit our policies and practices with a racial equity lens, ensuring that we are doing the best to provide equitable opportunities for not only current and future employees, but also the visitors of the Virginia Zoo.

#### **RightHear Beacons Bring Accessibility to the Zoo**

This past spring and into summer, the Virginia Zoo's Guest Engagement and Services teams have been investigating how to increase accessibility for people with different needs at the Zoo. A first step was to implement a braille guide for those who are visually impaired. This also includes tactile images of some of our popular animals. These are available in our Membership Office to check out during your visit.

This project led our teams to discover the company and accessibility app for smart devices, RightHear. RightHear provides talking signage, so everyone can interpret and understand their surroundings in real time. Using Bluetooth beacons strategically placed around the Zoo, the environment comes to life through audio descriptions delivered directly to a smartphone or tablet. This helps everyone to explore, navigate, and experience the Zoo safely and independently. The app also translates into 27 different languages! The RightHear app is free and available to download from the app store on your smart devices.

We will be having a grand opening this fall as we will be the first zoo in the United States to utilize the new RightHear technology. Visit their website at www.right-hear.com.

This is just some of the recent Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) efforts the Zoo has started exploring and implementing. Our team is dedicated to creating a Zoo that is accessible and enjoyable for all people, so stay tuned for more exciting projects and partnerships to come!

**18 FALL/WINTER 2024** 

#### Join today, virginiazoo.org/leadership

#### LEADERSHIP SOCIETY (AS OF OCTOBER 2024) Leadership Society members support the Zoo's daily commitment to animal care, enrichment programming, wildlife conservation, education and research initiatives across our community and beyond.

Kay Abiouness Caroline & Chad Ballard Vern & Nancy Barham Truman & Jacquelyn Baxter Reese Beeler Angela Benard Mrs. Carolyn Betz Richard & Anna Boykin Edward & Linda Bradley Alan & Deborah Budlond Lawlor-Caron Family Nicole Carry & Kim Keene Ms. Lynn Cobb & Mr. Warren Richard

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Grade Class

River Harris

Jesse Miner

WHITE RHINO

#### **NEW ZOOPARENTS**

Every animal at the Virginia Zoo is available for adoption, starting at \$25. Proceeds benefit various Zoo programs, including the Act For Wildlife Fund. Visit our website for more information.

**AFRICAN LION MASAI GIRAFFE** Sue Ann Frew The Capparelli's Dakota Davis Sue Mahoney Apollo Kosteli ALPACA NIGERIAN DWARF Mrs. Hagadorn's 2nd Grade Class GOAT

GIBBON Mrs. Cockrell's 2nd

Sally Adams ASIATIC BLACK BEAR PATAGONIAN CAVY Randall C Decke Morgan Fetterhoff

Buntin BINTURONG ORANGUTAN Nick Weinland

"In Memory of Paul Caitlin Bergendahl Blumka" Cody Evett

Holly Smith **RED PANDA** Philippa Vanier Carter Anne Bramme Emma Wiley Kamomski Liam Wiley CHEETAH Mrs Harris' First Grade

BISON

MACAW

Grade Class

Sadie Heninge **KING COBRA** Isabella Wolfe

SIAMESE CROCODILE Ms. Burrough's 2nd Lucy & Thomas Epps

Class

**ROCK HYRAX** Michelle Kreis

TAWNY FROGMOUTH MALAYAN TAPIR Adam Paul Stidham Philippa Vanier Kamomski

MALAYAN TIGER Daisy Troop 510

TWO-TOED SLOTH Marissa Halbig Sloane Harris

Adler Ray Jones



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Ms. Buchardt's 2nd Grade Class WHITE-CHEEKED



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Goody Tyler III Bob & Angie VanDyke Scott & Debbi Waitzer Elise Walthall Christina & Lee Westnedge Mrs. Judith Williams Rolf & Beth Williams Victoria Wittman Dr. Ann Marie Woyma & LCDR Timothy Woyma

### Making an **impact** in the community!

Over the summer, the Zoo hosted our first school supply drive and Back to School Event which benefited local youth organizations. Thanks to our generous donors we were able to make an impressive gift of supplies to Big Homies Community Outreach Program and Reck League for local children to use this school year. This donation drive and event would not have been possible without the help from Zoo supporters, Rivers Casino, our donors, and all the community members that got involved. We could not be more thankful to have such support and be able to make an impact in our community!



