

IMPACT REPORT

MAY '22- APRIL '23



**VALLEY
ZOO**
DEVELOPMENT
SOCIETY™

ABOUT THE VZDS WHO WE ARE

The Valley Zoo Development Society (VZDS) is a registered not-for-profit charity working in partnership with the City of Edmonton to secure a bright future for the beloved Edmonton Valley Zoo (EVZ.)

Our mandate is to raise funds and foster awareness to support the ongoing development of the Zoo, as well as its vital education and conservation programs.



2022-23 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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THE ZOO IN 2022

OUR LEADERS

CITY LIASON: GARY DEWAR

The EVZ welcomed 345,000 guests during 2022. A conservation coordinator joined our team, creating a guide that ensures future activities align with our Vision, Mission, and Values. We celebrated the opening of the Conservation Carousel and the release of 325 Northern Leopard Frog tadpoles in BC. We welcomed many babies to our collection and introduced Avro, a hand-reared Wallaby, to his mob. Sadly, we mourned the passing of Zeus, the Bald Eagle; Guimauve, our baby Bactrian Camel; and Shilah, the Arctic Wolf. To keep our birds safe from Avian Flu, we removed the collection from display and emptied the ponds. Our accreditation from CAZA (Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums) was renewed following a thorough inspection. Partnering with Free the Wild resulted in an independent review of Lucy's health by four qualified veterinarians and husbandry experts. This assessment yielded several recommendations and confirmed Lucy is unfit to travel.

We received considerable media and public attention following the release of the City's 2023-2026 Capital Budget, which incorrectly indicated several enclosures did not meet CAZA standards, when in fact, these enclosures will need future replacement to meet evolving industry standards. During Budget deliberations, it was decided to reduce most funding for NWB Phase II. While this was disappointing given the progress made on this capital project, the Council's approval of a \$35.9 million investment in our existing animal closures will help ensure we continue to provide high-quality care to our collection.



PRESIDENT: SHAYE GANAM

My commitment to the EVZ and VZDS began in 2012 when I hosted my first ZooFest. I enjoyed supporting the organization and looked forward to seeing the changes to the Zoo.

I joined the board in 2018 as we completed our commitment to NWB Phase 1 with a \$3 million gift to the City. When I became board president in 2021, I fully expected to complete NWB Phase II as approved by the City Council in December of that year. If the pandemic taught us anything, it was how to adapt while still making a difference.

The cancellation of the NWB Phase II project tested that adaptability. Our board, staff and donors remain dedicated, passionate, and committed to progress. We've pivoted to support initiatives like Pay It Forward and educational videos, smaller capital projects like the Conservation Carousel, EcoKiosk, washrooms, and a new map app, as well as critical conservation programs.

I'm proud of the board we've developed and our commitment to a new Masterplan for the Zoo. I'm excited and hopeful about the upcoming projects we'll announce later this year. But, most importantly, I am awed by our donors' generosity and commitment to this vital facility. **Thank you.**

MANDATE IN ACTION

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

"If we don't have a place for nature in our heart, how can we expect nature to have a place for us?" Abhijit Naskar

CONSERVATION CAROUSEL BUILDING

A commitment to building a temporary structure for the Conservation Carousel completed a seven-year journey to refurbish the 1959 Herschell Spillman's Carousel into an endangered species and Edmonton Valley Zoo inhabitant animals educational showcase.

The incredible artwork by the Fort Edmonton Park carvers allows us to educate future generations of kids about the animals we share the planet with and continues a tradition that started when the Zoo opened in 1959—while raising money for those exact causes.

The building and carousel were completed in October 2022. **They were funded by Gregg Distributors and The Canadian Community Revitalization Fund Grant.** 2023 will be its first full year of operating and raising funds for Conservation.



NATURE'S WILD BACKYARD PHASE II

The driving force of the Society for the last six years was a 6 million commitment towards the completion of Nature's Wild Backyard Phase II, which was approved for construction in December 2021.

In December 2022 City Council revoked their portion of funding for this project. The Society has worked with our donors to reallocate or return the funds already donated and to find new opportunities for future donors and sponsors.



WASHROOM & ECO KIOSK

The Society and EVZ successfully secured a Tourism Relief Fund Grant, via the Government of Canada and Prairies Can, to improve visitor amenities and events, among other things. We constructed a set of mobile accessible gender-neutral washrooms and an eco-kiosk at the top of the Wander, both of which will be operational for the 2023 season!

MANDATE IN ACTION

EDUCATION & CONSERVATION

"In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we have been taught." Baba Dioum

CONSERVATION

Completing the Capital project to house the Conservation Carousel allowed the society to add another important funding element to our conservation fundraising. In 2022, we supported the conservation efforts of the International Elephant Foundation, Polar Bears International, Red Panda Network, Grevy Zebra Trust, Snow Leopard Trust, and the Lemur Foundation. The Zoo and the Society launched our first-ever Conservation membership in the spring of 2023. With the Zoo's hiring of a new Conservation Officer – we hope to fund many more vital conservation efforts.



VIRTUAL VIDEO PROGRAMMING

Supported by a Civil Society Fund Grant and the Rotary Club of Strathcona, the society was able to fund the filming of three virtual video programs—Canadian Carnivores, Nocturnal Animals, and Tigers. These videos will be available for booking anywhere in the world, expanding our education content to those outside our geographic area and providing physical and financially inclusive opportunities.



PAY IT FORWARD TO THE PLANET

After several years of planning, we launched the "Pay it Forward for the Planet" program to fund school field trips to the Zoo in exchange for the class undertaking a conservation initiative.

With the generous help of several donors, we funded 22 classes involving over 528 local students in 22 conservation projects. These projects have included schoolyard and community clean-ups, building and installing bat boxes, gardening initiatives, and more!

Read about those classes and their projects at buildingourzoo.com/pay-it-forward/.

22
CLASSES

528
STUDENTS

22
PROJECTS

MANDATE IN ACTION EVENTS AT THE ZOO



2022 EVENT ATTENDANCE

ZOOBREW: 3,600

ZOOMINESCENCE: 14,485

ZOOBREW

Last year's Zoobrew at the Edmonton Valley Zoo was a wild success, with 3,600 attendees across the two-day event! Guests enjoyed a variety of beverages with over 100 options, including beer, wines, and spirits from 32 different vendors from across the province. The live entertainment was a real hoot, with 11 talented performers taking the Amphitheatre stage to keep the party going all night. And let's not forget the highlight of the evening—the 12 unique animal encounters that left everyone roaring with excitement!

This year, we're thrilled to announce that we'll expand the festivities with three Zoobrews, each bigger and better than the last. Get ready to raise a glass and say cheers to conservation. We can't wait to see you there!

ZOOBREW 2023 DATES:
JUNE 24, JULY 22 & AUGUST 19



ZOOMINESCENCE: A FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

Celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2022, Zoominescence: A Festival of Light, brought thousands of guests to the Edmonton Valley Zoo to create special memories with all of our animal residents. The Zoo was illuminated by animal-themed artwork from Vignettes Showcase Inc., Retro Active Arcade Ltd., GABS Lanterns, and Ice on Whyte, while other winter festivals, including Flying Canoe Volant and Deep Freeze, donated pieces as well. Live entertainment—including character performers from A Charmed Affair and One Red Nose & Ten Happy Toes plus fire dancers from Acorn Thief Entertainment—added extra animation to the event! Going into our eleventh year, we are excited to bring even more creative animal light displays to our Zoo for all to enjoy this winter!

ZOOMINESCENCE 2023 DATES:
DEC. 1-3, 8-10, 15-23, 26-31 & JAN. 1-3

LOOKING FORWARD FUTURE PLANS

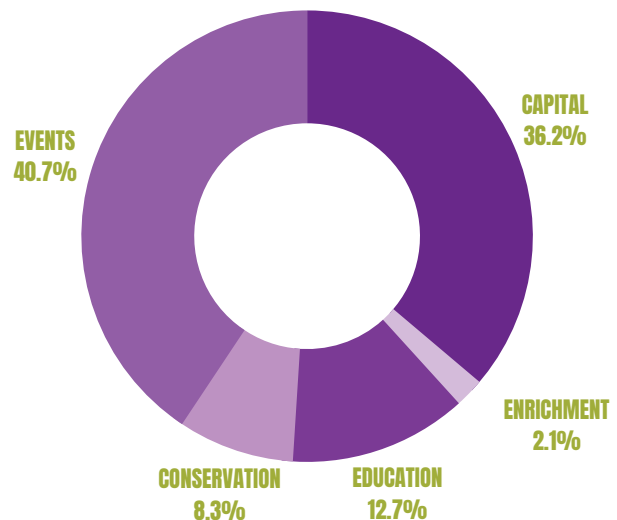
INCOMING PRESIDENT: GRAHAM BARR

What a year! We welcomed four new board members bringing our total to fourteen passionate, professional community members eager to make a difference. Under my presidency, the Society will continue its commitment to education initiatives by launching the remainder of the virtual video programs, highlighting our conservation and education messaging well beyond the average reach of the Edmonton Valley Zoo. We will continue to fund school groups to come to the Zoo after completing their own project to conserve and pay it back to mother earth, and continue our support of the Edmonton Valley Zoo's conservation initiatives and committees. We have recently announced our commitment to building a new wolf habitat at the Zoo and are working with the EVZ and the City of Edmonton to create a new masterplan that will guide the Zoo for the foreseeable future. I look forward to getting to know our donors and volunteers and working with our stakeholders to continue investing in the future of this facility.



2022 DONATION SUMMARY

TOTAL FUNDS RAISED: \$792,206



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Doug and Dorothy Warren are true champions of conservation and education. Doug is a long-time and generous supporter of the carousel building, both financially and through his countless hours of volunteer work. As the project manager and head carver behind the Conservation Carousel, he oversaw teams of skilled volunteers — creating a stunning historical work of art that is a powerful tool for raising awareness about endangered species. Doug's dedication brought the carousel to life, with his team ensuring its success. Alongside his wife, Dorothy, Doug made this project a reality. His commitment to conservation continues through his passionate support of Pay It Forward for the Planet, inspiring students to engage in conservation projects, take action, and positively impact the world around them. Thank you, Doug and Dorothy Warren, for your incredible support, hard work, and being role models for future generations.

THE VALLEY ZOO DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

THANKS YOU

FOR SUPPORTING OUR CONSERVATION &
REVITALIZATION EFFORTS



VALLEY ZOO DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

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