



5400 N. Pearl Street, Tacoma, WA 98407
Larry Norvell, Executive Director (253) 404-3663
lnorvell@thezoosociety.org | www.thezoosociety.org

The Zoo Society fosters the relationship between Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and our community by raising funds and generating community support.

The Zoo Society supports the mission of PDZA by providing financial and in-kind resources for the Zoo's recreation, education and conservation programs, its animal collections, and its permanent and temporary exhibitions.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium (PDZA), founded in 1905, is located on 29 acres within Point Defiance Park. The facility exhibits some 5,000 animals representing 297 species. The Zoo is owned and managed by Metro Parks Tacoma, which is governed by an elected board of park commissioners who supervise the Metro Parks Executive Director. The Zoo facility is supervised by the Director of Zoological and Environmental Education Department, which includes PDZA, Northwest Trek and the Tacoma Nature Center. The PDZA Deputy Director serves as Site Manager.

The Zoo Society, a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, was founded in 1949 and incorporated in 1951 to support PDZA. A dozen local citizens formed the society in response to deteriorating conditions in the original Zoo mammal house. The membership has grown to over 16,000 households in 2009. The Zoo Society has 4 full time staff providing development services to PDZA.

The Zoo Society (managing partner of PDZA 1996-1999) funded the 1999 election campaign that secured \$35 million in tax support for capital improvements and the 2000 regional funding campaign that ensures 1/10th of one percent of county sales tax is earmarked for operating cost subsidy for the Zoo, Northwest Trek and city and county parks.

The Paul Titus Carousel housed in the De Falco Family Pavilion on the James & Carolyn Milgard Family Plaza was a \$1.34 million capital project funded by Zoo Society donors that opened July 15, 2006. In 2007, The Zoo Society initiated a \$7.15 million capital campaign to match bond funds for Kids Zone Phase II, to replace the Red Wolf exhibit and to create a Clouded Leopard exhibit at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, as well as to build an endowment fund for Zoo and conservation initiatives.

In 2014 the community supported a \$199 million bond which provides \$65 million for capital improvements at the Zoo including a new aquarium slated to open in 2018.

A volunteer Board of Directors representing community leaders governs The Zoo Society. Several working committees, which include non-board volunteers, address specific projects and needs of the Zoo. Each volunteer has specific responsibilities related to financial, development and fundraising programs. Supervised by the Executive Director, The Zoo Society has a staff of 4 career employees. The Zoo Society is responsible for Events and Development as well as fundraising for capital projects and specific programs. More than 75 volunteers assist The Zoo Society with the Zoobilee black tie gala held the third Friday in July.

The Zoo's mission is to promote responsible stewardship of the world's resources through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities. PDZA has a full time staff of 62, with an additional 35-50 seasonal, part time employees. The education and zoological departments also use trained volunteers and docents to help with public education and grounds keeping.

The Zoo is accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), a leader in global wildlife conservation. The AZA logo is your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. With more than 200 accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation and your link to helping animals in their native habitats.