

BRANDYWINE NEWS

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The Zoo News is a publication of the Delaware Zoological Society.

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On the Cover

Sandhill Cranes travel up to 7,000 miles annually: They fly from northern Mexico, California, Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico to summer breeding grounds in the Rocky Mountains, Canada, Alaska, and even Siberia. They make the return trip in the fall with their fledged young on the wing. This years migration totals were more than 650,000 Sandhill Cranes.



Photo by: Jim Smigie



Saturday Dec. 14 & Sunday Dec. 15 9:00-10:00 AM

Celebrate the holidays by enjoying a pancake, egg, & sausage breakfast with Santa! Share your holiday wishes,

bring your camera to take photos with Santa and some animal friends, and enjoy a few up-close animal encounters

all before the zoo opens. Plus, watch a few animals get their breakfast!

Breakfast provided by Janssen's Market.

All participants ages 18 months and up must pay program fee.

Pre-registration required. Space is very limited for this event, so please register early.

Members: \$19 | Non-members: \$22

WATCH ANIMALS GET THEIR BREAKFAST



www.brandywinezoo.org

New Enrichment for Snakes

By: Aliana Raulerson, Program Animal Apprentice

The Brandywine Zoo's Education Department debuted our new snake climbing board during a Saturday Creature Feature in September! The board consists of wooden pegs and rockclimbing holds that our snakes can scale to demonstrate climbing abilities they would exhibit in the wild. This board is one example of enrichment, which are items animals can interact with to encourage natural behaviors. Several of the snake species in our ambassador animal collection are semi-arboreal or arboreal, meaning they spend at least part of their lives in trees, and this board provides a new method of enrichment for those species. On the snake board, our snakes are free to move whichever direction they please and climb as high as they want, allow-

ing more opportunities for movement than they usually have when we present them in hand. The snake board was my Demonstration of Learning project I completed as the Brandywine Zoo's Program Animal Apprentice, and I am glad our snakes now have more opportunities to practice and show off their amazing climbing skills.



The snake board is both an enrichment opportunity for the snakes and an educational opportunity for our visitors. Visitors get the chance to see how these snakes move in the wild, an especially exciting experience since many people wonder how snakes are able to climb with no arms or legs! Watching them contort their bodies around the holds and use their muscles to push off sections of the board provides a more clear demonstration of how snakes move. Guests that have seen our snake board in action enjoy watching the snakes move freely, including our large red-tailed boa who can look intimidating at first! It is my hope that this board can

help us spread the message that snakes are intriguing, misunderstood animals and that they are not to be feared. Now that the weather is getting colder we will be bringing our ambassador reptiles into the zoo less often, but be on the lookout next spring and summer for our snakes showing what they can do on the snake board!



Sandhill Cranes by the Thousands

By Katherine Ward and Jim Smigie



Nearly four feet tall, with a wingspan of about six feet, Sandhill Cranes travel up to 7,000 miles annually: They fly from northern Mexico, California, Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico to summer breeding grounds in the Rocky Mountains, Canada, Alaska, and even Siberia.

They make the return trip in the fall with their fledged young on the wing.

Late last March, we flew a thousand miles to the small town of Kearney, on the North Platte River in central Nebraska, to witness the migration of what, in 2019, was more than 650,000 Sandhill Cranes. With powerful downstrokes of their large wings, or by gliding on thermals, the cranes had flown nearly that far – at about thirty miles an hour - to reach their annual stopover along the North Platte to rest, feed and gain weight, and to find a lifelong mate. There, the river is wide and shallow with farmland largely free of trees and shrubs

on either side, making the waterway a haven for the birds. With a 360-degree view from the middle of the river that enables them to see any predators, the cranes stand tightly

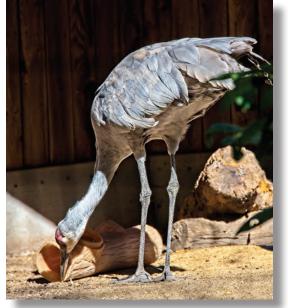
packed, but safe, on sandbars all night, and feed in nearby fields all day.

We arrived on March 27, a balmy 74-degree day. On the way to a Nebraska Parks Department potluck feast of tasty downhome cookin', we caught our first glimpse

of the cranes. On their dark, stilt-like legs, they were feeding among the furrows in a field and "dancing" to attract a mate. Their necks and bodies – long and lean – were covered with gray feathers, punctuated with some that were black along wing tips and tails and white around the eyes. Foreheads of the adults were crimson capped, but with skin, not feathers.

At five the next morning, by then in the frosty 30s, we entered a Crane Trust blind on the edge of the Platte River. While shivering in the covered blind in the dark, we heard an unbroken cacophony of crane cries, even

above a booming thunderstorm. At daybreak, we could see an estimated 60,000 cranes standing on sandbars, some beginning to fly off against the rising sun to forage. That afternoon it snowed.



The rest of the week we drove along solitary country lanes and dirt roads to photograph cranes feeding in fields almost ready for spring planting. Cranes eat whatever is available when there is no more waste corn: seeds, berries, and tubers as well as things they can catch, such as worms and insects, and even snakes, frogs, and mice.



On March 31, from an Audubon Rowe Sanctuary blind, we beheld a blazing sunset with thousands of cranes calling, calling, calling, and stretching in long lines across the slowly darkening left the blind that

night, dazzled by the age-old ritual of 100,000 cranes that flew back to the river and, with wings stretched wide, legs dangling, floated down and down until their feet touched the dark Nebraska river that has nurtured them and kept them safe for thousands of years.

Every year, from mid-February to mid-April, about

eighty percent of the migrating cranes stop along the same 70-mile stretch of the

North Platte near the vast Sandhills

sky when returning to the sandbars. We around much longer than that. The most ancient crane fossil, estimated to be ten million years old, was found in northeast Nebraska; the oldest fossil known to be that of a Sandhill Crane dates back 2.5 million years, making these primeval birds possibly the oldest avian species on Earth.

The Brandywine Zoo is fortunate to have a Sandhill Crane. Come visit Sandv and learn more about these fascinating birds that have a "vocabulary" with at least ten distinct calls and body language that varies from "standing tall"



to dancing to stick tossing - used for countless eons to communicate with their fellow travelers.

Katherine Ward, executive director of Delaware Press Association, is a national award-winning author and editor.



New Arrivals in the Education Department

By: Emily Culkin, Program Animal Coordinator

Over the past year, we have added several individuals to our Program Animal Collection within our Education Department. These are the animals that travel off site to schools and libraries with our Traveling Zoo, and interact with visitors at the zoo during our Wildlife Shows and Creature Features. We have had a variety of new arrivals this year and they have greatly increased the diversity of our collection.

Boas:

We had two new snakes join our collection. Bibilava (meaning snake in Malagasy), the Madagascar Ground Boa and Cusco, the Red-Tail Boa. Both are young animals, but they have already doubled in weight since they arrived last winter! Snakes are an integral part of our curriculum and are used heavily to teach about respecting wildlife, anti-bullying, and adaptations. While neither of these species are native to Delaware, they are a great way to teach, both children and adults, how important snakes are for the ecosystem. As these snakes grow, they will definitely be show stoppers, with Bibilava potentially up to ten feet long, and Cusco growing up to eight!

Guinea Pigs: In the mammal collection, we

In the mammal collection, we welcomed a father and son pair of Guinea Pigs: Machu (Father) and Picchu (Son). Along with the rats and chinchillas in our collection, these rodents (not pigs!) will make a great addition for talking about how essential rodents are to the overall food chain. Guinea pigs are also an important way to discuss how different cultures view the same animal. Guinea pigs are considered cherished pets in the United States, but are a main ingredient in many traditional South American dishes!









Hermit Crab:

Our most recent acquisition is neither a reptile nor a mammal, he's an invertebrate! As a representative of our Hermit Crab colony, Lenny, the land hermit crab, has definitely added important messaging to our curriculum. As Delaware is a seaside state, many of the popular tourist beach towns sell these charismatic critters. However, hermit crabs require a lot more care and resources than people expect and are unsustainably harvested from the wild. Lenny will play an important role in teaching about responsible pet ownership!

Although these five new Animal Ambassadors are incredibly diverse, they all came to the Brandywine Zoo the same way: As relinquished pets. The Zoo gets dozens of requests from the public every year to take unwanted pets. As Brandywine Zoo is not a rescue organization, we are unable to fulfill these requests. Any new animals added to the collection at the Brandywine Zoo are subject to rigorous scrutiny: What role will that animal play in the collection? Do we have the resources and staff to care for them appropriately? What is their lifespan? Will we be able to care for them, or find appropriate facilities to continue their care, for the duration of their life? These questions are not specific to zoological institutions. These are questions that everyone should ask themselves anytime they want to get a new pet, from a simple goldfish to more complex reptiles. Responsible pet ownership is a key element, not only to making sure your pet has a long and healthy life, but also in reducing the amount of unwanted pets that are released into the wild, which have a negative impact on native wildlife.

Be on the lookout for any of our amazing Animal Ambassadors at future Brandywine Zoo programs. Scheduled programs and more information can be found on our website.

Volunteer Update

By Danielle Leverage, Volunteer Manager

Cha-cha-changes! In Summer 2019, we embarked on a quest to create streamlined volunteer program involving two distinct and specialized volunteer opportunities: VolunTEEN (14-17) and Docent (18+). No longer are we admitting volunteers on an informal or rolling basis. This ensures that all acting individual volunteers in our zoo are trained and prepared with appropriate language, safety procedures, mission-driven practices and interpretive skills to provide guests with the most rewarding experience possible. The application window for Docent Program is September 1st, 2019 to January 10th, 2020 and our VolunTEEN program takes applications from February 1st to April 1st, 2020. We'd love to have you in the Zoo!

Our internship program is changing too! Starting Nov. 1st, 2019, all Delaware State Parks internships that will complete 300 or more hours during their term are eligible to simultaneously enroll as an AmeriCorps Member during their service. This additional portion of their internship will give them the opportunity to freeze their student loans during service (forbearance) and secure them an EdAward Grant that can be used to pay both past, present or future federal student loans or education costs.

AmeriCorps benefits extend after completion of service too, and there's a large professional network and free or reduced tuition at participating universities.

Once last #HumbleBrag: For the quarter of July – September 2019, Brandywine Zoo topped the chart at 5,683.5 volunteer service hours (which includes our intern program); that is **the most out of all 17 Delaware State Parks!** We could not be more grateful for all

the work our volunteers and interns do all year long. If you're in the zoo and see a volunteer, make sure to thank them for their dedication.



If you or someone you know is interested in the Docent, VolunTEEN or Internship program, please visit www.brandywinezoo.org/volunteer.



A tremendous thank you to our sponsors, members, volunteers, staff, patrons, restaurants and brewers

that supported our **Brew at the Zoo**

Managan W

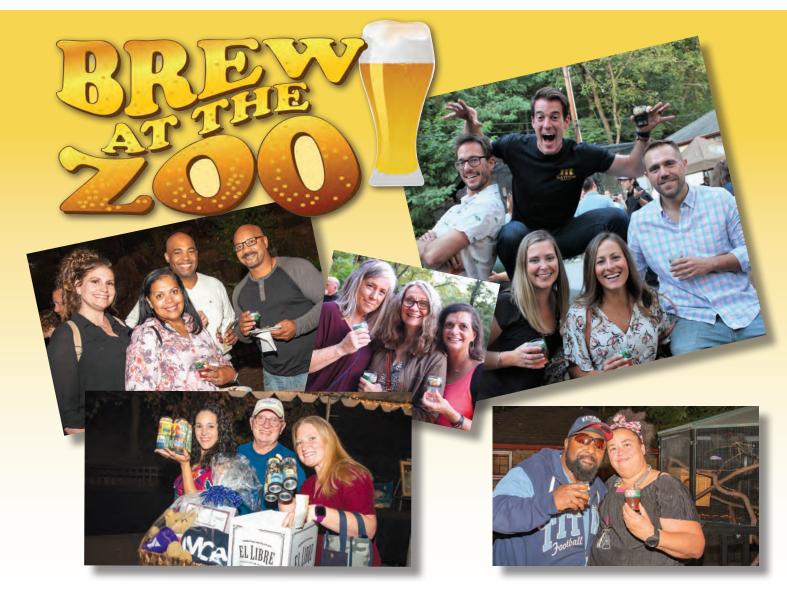
on September 27.
Without their contributions, this fundraising event could not be possible.





CHELSEA TAVERN





Thank You for your support and to all the Restaurants and Beverage Sponsors that help make this event possible:

Bellefonte Brewing Co. Big Oyster Brewing Breakthru Beverage Delaware Chelsea Tavern Crooked Hammock Brewery DelPez Mexican GastroPub Dogfish Head **Ernest & Scott Taproom** Fordham & Dominion Iron Hill Brewery Kid Shelleen's Charcoal House & Saloon Left Hand Brewery Liquid Alchemy Beverages Midnight Oil Brewing Co Mispillion River Brewing

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Thanks to our Silent Auction Donors who donated a wide variety of unique and clever items:

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Jayne Harwell
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Michael T. Allen
Mt. Cuba Center
Nemours Estate
Painting with a Twist
Philadelphia Flyers

Philadelphia Phillies Philadelphia Union Pizza by Elizabeths Richard Rothwell Rockwood Museum Six Flags Great Adventure & Safari Tom & Carole Webber Vickie Innes William S. Montgomery Wilmington Blue Rocks Wilmington Riverfront Wilmington & Western Railroad Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library Woodside Creamery

Special Thanks to
Animal Behavior
& Conservation Connections, Phung Luu
and Delaware Office
of Highway Safety and
Spokey Speaky for
being at the event!

YMCA - Middletown



Year in the Life of a BAAZK Member

By Katelin Stroman, Brandywine Zoo Animal Caretaker

As we enter the fall and very soon winter time of the year, we have a recap of how things with the Brandywine Chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers, **BAAZK**, has gone. So what is BAAZK? For those who may not know BAAZK, is a chapter of a non-profit organization. Our chapter is run by the Brandywine Zoo keepers, education animal caretakers, and the veterinary technician staff. The National AAZK's mission is to advance the animal keeping profession, support deserving conservation projects, and promote the preservation of our natural resources and animal life.

Another aspect of AAZK is for professional development of our members. This year two of our members, Katie Muse (President) and Janey Kramlik (Vice President)



dent), were able to attend the National AAZK conference held in Indianapolis, thanks to BAAZK. By supporting our members to attend conferences

like this one, they are able to learn about new methods of animal husbandry, training, as well as behavioral enrichment. When members come back from conferences they are then able to share their knowledge with other staff to help keep improving animal care and welfare. BAAZK is able to help support our members professional de-

velopment opportunities through additional fundraisers like our Bi-Annual Painting for a Purpose event, as well as our restaurant events.

For the 2019 year, BAAZK has raised over \$3,000 for different conservation efforts by hosting events. In the spring, we hosted *Quiz* for a Cause at the Trolley Tap House to raise money for the Red Panda Network, and *Throwing for Tamarins* at You Bet Your Axe for Save the Golden Lion Tamarin organization. During the summer, Bowling for Rhinos was hosted at Main Event for Rhino Conservation, and *Ventur*-



ing Out for Vultures raised funds for the Vulture S.A.F.E. (Saving Animals From Extinction) program.



Part of our outreach efforts are hosting lectures and workshops. The workshop consisted of the Canine Training Part 1 and 2 were conducted by one of our very own BAAZK members, Leah Newman, to

teach dog owners obedience techniques for their furry family members.

The first lecture this year was about animal dental health, *Happy Mouths Equal Happy Pets*. Dr. Smagala and vet tech Gillian Chapin, came to teach us about how professionals clean your animals teeth, and how you can properly clean their teeth at home. Lastly our other lecture, *Feathered Friends and Enemies*, we had guest speakers come from

Radford University to discuss the social interactions over different species of birds.

We would like to thank everyone for coming to our events and helping to support these conservation efforts and our members. Please tune in on our Facebook page, Facebook.com/BZAAZK, for our future 2020 events.





FACTS: Cranes are among the oldest living birds on the planet. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the earliest unequivocal Sandhill Crane fossil is estimated to be 2.5 million years old and was unearthed in the Macasphalt Shell Pit in Florida.

Welcome Dr. Samantha King

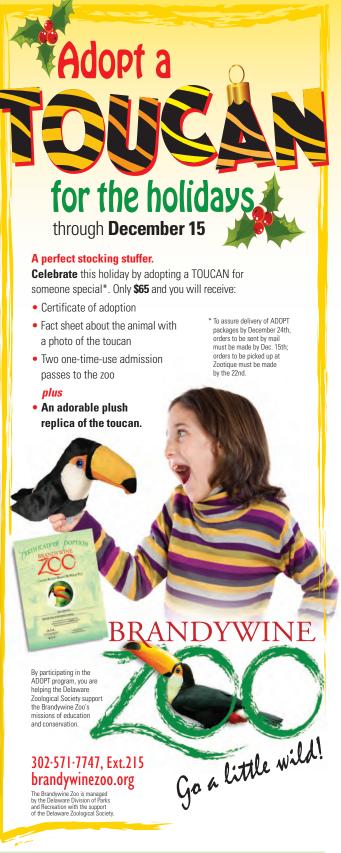
We are excited to welcome our new veterinarian Dr.

Samantha King. Dr. Sam is originally from Connecticut and received her Bachelor of Science degree from Delaware Valley University in Zoo Science and her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Tufts University in Massachusetts. At Tufts, she had the opportu-

nity to work with their onsite wildlife clinic, which gave her exposure to a broader array of taxa than a standard veterinary practice. While Dr. Sam is only at the Brandywine Zoo one day per week, she maintains an extensive list of clients, including other zoos and sanctuaries in the region. One of her clients is a small zoo in Massachusetts, where she worked as a zookeeper when she was in high school. In her spare time, she loves to play volleyball, bake, and travel. Please welcome Dr. Sam to the Brandywine Zoo family.



During a routine procedure, Dr. King looks at the heart of Savannah, the Serval, via ultrasound.



FACTS: An adult Sandhilli Crane is gray with a red crown (bald patch of skin); juvenile is browner overall and has a feathered crown.

Height: 3 to 4 feet Weight: 6 to 12 pounds Wingspan: 6 to 7 feet Lifespan: 20 to 40 years

Boo at the Zoo

By Emily Culkin, Program Animal Encounter

Thank you to everyone who came out to Boo at the Zoo 2019! This event continues to grow and we thank you all for continuing to enjoy our community trick-or-treating event. This year, we kicked off our Boo at the Zoo weekend on Thursday night! We had a dedicated group of visitors blow in with the high wind gusts and chilly temperatures for the first night. Friday and Saturday we had beautiful fall weather and great crowds. Thank you to all of our booth vendors and volunteers for coming out and having fun with us.

As always, we could not run this event without the amazing support of our community businesses. A special thank you to our Jack-o'-Lantern Level Sponsors (\$500+): MedExpress, MidCoast Community Bank, Metro by T-Mobile and Delaware College Investment Plan. We are always looking for new sponsors and vendors for this event. If you are interested in participating next year, please visit www.brandywinezoo.org/booatthezoo for more information. We hope to see everyone next year!

A special thank you to our Jack-o'-Lantern Level Sponsors (\$500+):















Scouts and the Brandywine Zoo

By Meghan Hoopes, Education Programs Coordinator

Is your Boy, Cub, or Girl Scout troop looking for an exciting group activity? Join us at the Brandywine Zoo to work on badge requirements, tour the zoo, and even meet some animals up close! Whether you are looking for a big scout event to get a head start on a number of badges, or hold a private event for your troop to focus on earning a badge together, this winter season has a lot to offer scout groups.

Does your troop wants to knock out an entire badge in one day? Check out Brandywine Zoo's Scout Workshops! Each workshop will focus on

shops! Each workshop will focus on completing as many requirements of one badge or adventure as possible, including touring the zoo and meeting some animals up-close. Some workshops are pre-scheduled, and open to scouts and their families, with or without their troop; all workshops require pre-registration at BrandywineZoo. org/scouts.

This November, Daisies can join us on the 9th to work on their 3 Cheers for Animals Birdbath award during the Animals and Me workshop, and Brownies can work on their Pets badge on Nov 16th at the For the Love of Animals workshop. Coming up in December, Wolf, Bear, and Webelos Cub Scouts are invited to work on their NOVA! Wild award at the Scouts Go Wild workshop on the 1st, and on the 8th, Juniors can work on their Animal Habitats badge at the Earth's Endangered workshop. January

brings the Sensational Senses workshop on the 11th for Brownies looking to achieve their Senses badge, and the Fur, Feathers, Ferns workshop on the 25th for Bear Cub Scouts to earn their Fur, Feathers, Ferns adventure. February has three workshops; Brownies working on their Pets badge can join the For the Love of Animals workshop on the 15th, Daisies can work on their 3 Cheers for Animals Birdbath award at the Animals and Me workshop on the 22nd, and Cadettes can work on their Animal Helpers badge on the 29th.





Save the date! Scout Night is April 4th, 4:15-6PM. This after-hours event is exclusively for Boy, Cub, and Girl Scouts and their families. Join us for exciting activities, games, a behind-the-scenes commissary tour, an up-close look at some animals, and work on a number of badge requirements, all in one funfilled night! Check out the Scout Night page on our website at **Brandywine Zoo.org/scouts** for more details and to pre-register.

Don't see your troop's level or can't make these programs? You can book a private scout workshop by visiting Brandywine-Zoo.org/scouts. Be sure to keep an eye out on the website; we're expanding the workshops we offer to cover even more badges and adventures!

WINTER BREAK: HOLIDAY HABITATS

Dec. 30-Jan. 3

Join us for winter break, as we learn about wild habitats and how animals survive the winter!
Each day will focus on a different type of habitat, with fun crafts, games, and zoo tours!

Each day is sold separately.

Registration Deadline December 28.

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY CAMP: BEASTLY FEASTS

Nov. 25-29 • Ages 6 to 13 Drop-off: 8:30-9am • Pickup: 3:30-4pm

Ever wonder what's on the menu for our zoo animals? Join us for Thanksgiving break, as we learn about carnivores, herbivores, omnivores, and more! Each day will focus on a different type of eater, with fun crafts, games, and zoo tours! Each day is sold separately. Registration Deadline November 16.

Members: \$40 | Non-members: \$50

Delaware Zoological Society Executive Director's Letter



Dear Members, Supporters, and Friends,

I hope that you have enjoyed our latest issue of ZooNews. As I am sure that you have read throughout this issue, it has been another great year at the Zoo. It has been fun to see all of the new animals and changes, which make me excited for the future of Brandywine Zoo.

We have started to plan for the next chapter in our history. The Delaware Zoological Society is excited about our upcoming capital campaign to see Our Zoo Re-imagined. While we look forward to the progress at the Zoo over the next year, we are looking further down the road to plan for even more improvements for the future. Stay tuned to ZooNews, our website, brandywinezoo.org, and our social media accounts for more details.

Best regards, Mike

Brandywine Zoo Capital Campaign



An evolving transformation that will benefit our animals, our guests, and our community

A New Look-New Exhibits
-New Guest Experiences

It's all happening as our

Brandywine Zoo is...re-imagined. A multi-year, multi-phased \$30 million Master Plan will bring dramatic changes to the Zoo. Kicking off with a \$10 million goal, The State Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control (DNREC) has already committed an initial \$5 million towards the first two Phases. Now, in support of the Brandywine Zoo's Master Plan, the Delaware Zoological Society embarks on a 3-year, \$5 million Capital Campaign to initiate and complete Phase 3: a new entry way to the zoo and an exciting South American Wetlands Habitat.

You Belong in the Zoo!

You can be a part of the re-imagining of our Zoo. We welcome your participation and support.

To learn more about donating or volunteering, BrandywineZoo.org/Reimagined



Delaware Zoological Society

1001 North Park Drive, Wilmington, DE 19802



Delaware Zoological Society supporting the BRANDYWINE ZOO



Gift Shop open weekends only in December, closed January and February.



The Brandywine Zoo is managed by the Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation with the support of the Delaware Zoological Society.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity and the diversity of its work force.

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Please let us know when you move; don't miss special invitations and Zoo News. Email to memberships@ brandywinezoo.org or call 302-571-7788 Ext. 215.

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Intern Open House: Summer Zoo Internships for **High School and College**

Students ages 14+ Sunday, Feb 9 • 1-2:30PM

Join us to find out about more about the Zoo's unique summer internship program for Zoo Camp and other internships! For more information please visit our website and look under volunteer opportunities.

Give a Gift that will last all year!

A Zoo membership includes: Free admission, quest passes, discounts on camps & programs and in our gift shop!

Free or discounted admission to other AZA zoos nationwide, too!

Call or join online today. BrandywineZoo.org 302-571-7747 Ext 215