



# DEFINING

# the future

**2011 ANNUAL REPORT**

Blank Park Zoo Foundation, Inc.



IOWA'S WILDEST ADVENTURE



**To inspire and appreciation  
of the natural world through**

**con·ser·va·tion** [ kònssər váysh'n ]  
*preservation, management and care of valuable natural and cultural resources*


**ed·u·ca·tion** [ èjjə káysh'n ]  
*the act or process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills*

**rec·re·a·tion** [ rèkree áysh'n ]  
*an activity that a person takes part in for pleasure or relaxation*



**One the cover**

Blank Park Zoo is deeply saddened over the passing of one of our African lions, Cha Cha {1996-2012}. It is difficult to say goodbye to our dear friend.



Dear Zoo Friend,  
Hopefully you have had a chance to see the amazing advancements the Zoo has made in 2011 - milestones showing what we can do when we work together.

**thanks** [ thanks ]  
*an expression of gratitude for something*

...to the City of Des Moines for its partnership, financial contributions and cooperation in growing Blank Park Zoo.

...to the State of Iowa for voting us the 2011 Outstanding Attraction of the Year.

...to the more than 413,000 people who took part in the Zoo adventure in 2011.

...to our corporate, foundation and individual donors who continue to support the Zoo despite touchy economic times.

...to our board of directors for their vision and leadership.

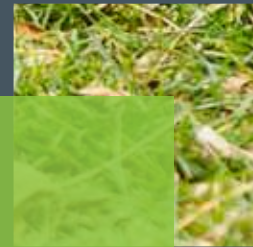
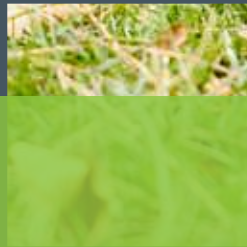
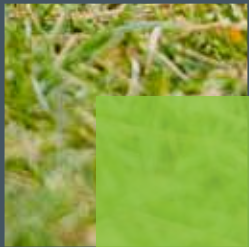
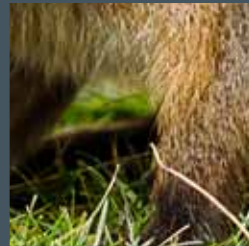
...to our staff for caring so passionately and professionally for our animals and visitors every day.

...to our over 10,000 member households for your loyalty and support year after year.

And, finally we would like to **thank you** for your past and future participation and support in achieving our many major milestones - milestones for all Iowans!

**Matt Fryar**, Outgoing Chairman

**Mark Vukovich**, President & CEO



**u'nique** [ yoô'neêk ]  
*being the only one of a kind*

Blank Park Zoo is Iowa's only AZA accredited zoo. While this alone makes the Zoo's adventure like no other in Iowa, it is certainly not the only reason Blank Park Zoo stands out as extraordinary.

**Blank Park Zoo is the only place in Iowa where you can...**

- ▲ Hand feed 250 parakeets
- ▲ Drive a jeep with a tiger in the back
- ▲ Eat lunch next to a gibbon
- ▲ Make a boomerang in Australia
- ▲ View sea lions underwater
- ▲ Ride a camel while trick-or-treating
- ▲ Take a photo next to a giraffe
- ▲ Touch a baby alligator



Over the past year Blank Park Zoo has added  
**a few new friends.**

**Births / Hatchings:**

- 6 trumpeter swans
- 1 Magellan penguin
- 6 Chilean flamingoes
- 1 Mauritius pink pigeon
- 1 scarlet-chested parakeet
- 2 giant kingfisher
- 7 Bennett's wallabies
- 4 goats
- 2 speckled mousebirds
- 1 black-tailed prairie dog

**Animal Acquisitions {\*New}:**

- 1 Chilean rose tarantula
- 2 Aldabra tortoise
- 1 cornsnake
- 2 Australian shelduck
- 1 sun bittern
- 1 East African grey-necked crane
- 1 Stanley crane \*
- 2 green-winged dove
- 3 Nicobar pigeon
- 1 pheasant pigeon
- 2 blue-faced honeyeater \*
- 1 Virginia opossum \*
- 1 nine-banded armadillo
- 4 Bennett's wallabies
- 1 Agouti \*
- 2 Harbor seals
- 1 llama
- 1 donkey
- 1 red panda
- 3 Meishan pigs \*
- 2 ostrich
- 6 fantail pigeon
- 1 double-wattled cassowary \*
- 2 dwarf zebu \*
- 6 emu
- 10 guineafowl
- Fish: spotline peacock cichlid, bignose unicorn tang, ducktailed rainbowfish, mandarin fish, red lionfish, chocolate surgeon, Spanish hogfish \*
- Invertebrates: red reef hermit, three-colored hermit crab, elegant hermit crab, mantis shrimp, fighting conch \*
- Coral: yellow star, mushroom

**an·i·mal** [ ˈænɪməl ]  
*a living organism with independent movement*

It all begins with the animals. Blank Park Zoo exists to inspire people, young and old, to conserve our natural environment by imparting new knowledge in every visitor about the life on our planet and what can be done to preserve it. The animals we exhibit are the conduits for this inspiration. They connect our communities to nature, building a deepened awareness and understanding of the vast animal world around us.





**To enrich each visitor's experience with the magic of life,** the Zoo must care for its animal collection with the most stringent industry standards of ethics and care.

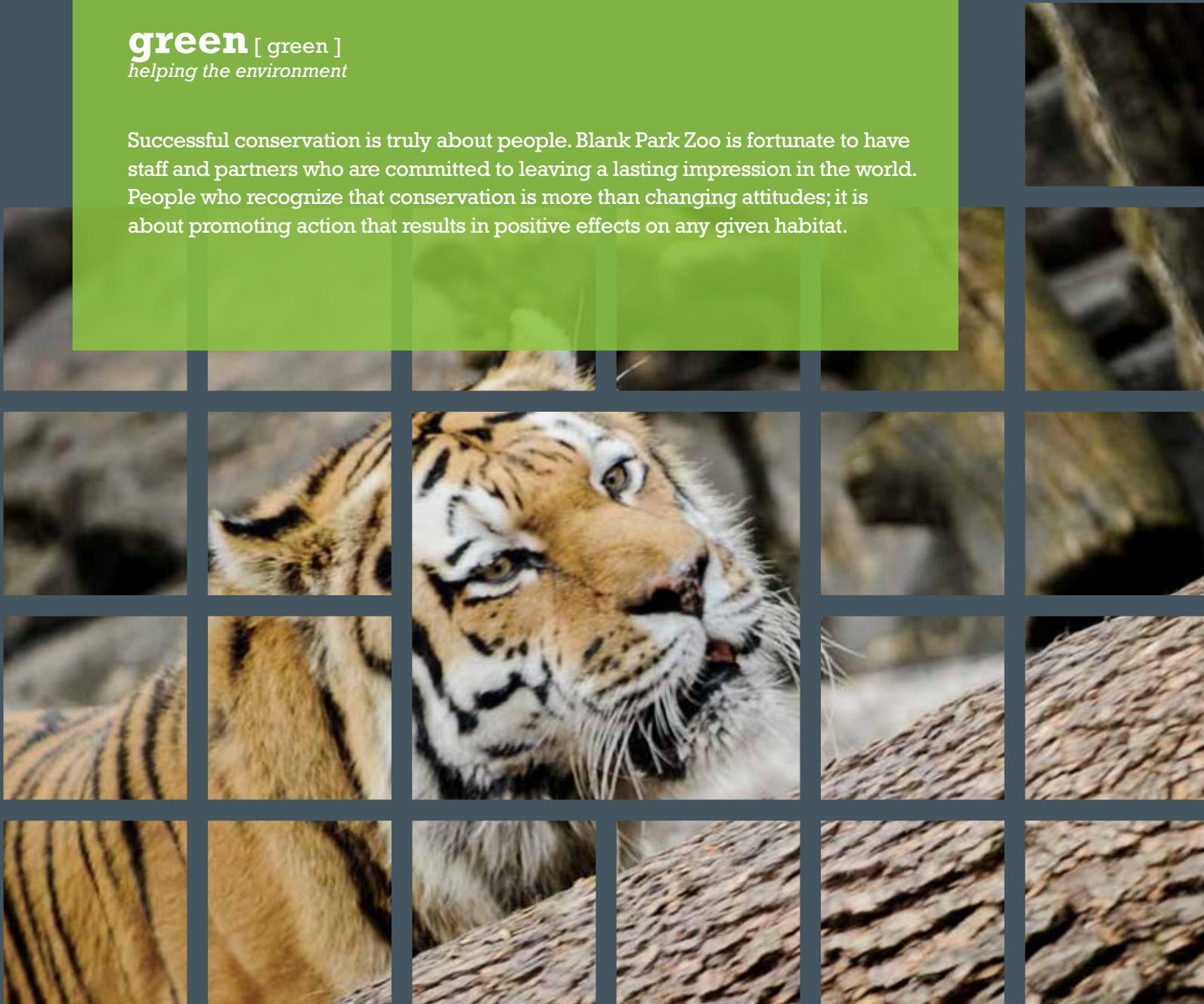


**Highlights:**

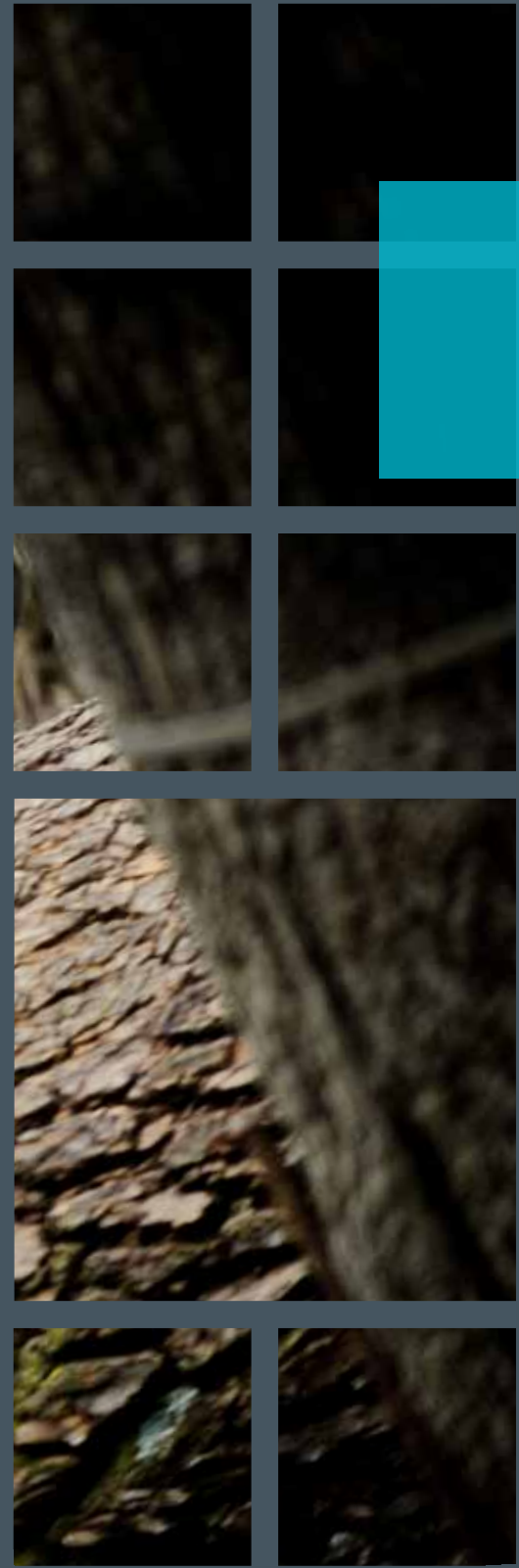
- ▲ To help ensure the genetic diversity of captive animal populations, Blank Park Zoo staff manage four Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) studbooks: Bennett's Wallaby, Green-wing Dove, Harbor Seal and Red-fronted Macaw.
- ▲ Blank Park Zoo has established a valuable collaboration with Iowa State University Veterinary College, providing advanced care for our animals and exotic animal experiences for students.
- ▲ The new David Kruidenier Australia Adventure opened in July. This expansion has allowed the Zoo to further its work to bring more genetic diversity to the wallaby populations in the United States, and it has also added the critically endangered cassowary to the Zoo's animal collection.
- ▲ The Zoo has further developed and taken back on-site management of our popular Kid's Kingdom – where children now have a hands-on feeding experience with goats, llama, donkey, pigs and more.
- ▲ To raise the level of the Zoo's animal care and to accommodate future growth with our expansion, we decided to re-structure the "Animal Care Department" to one that allowed for taxonomic specialization and consistency. We went from a two curator team to one general curator/five area supervisors group. The five area specialties are: large mammal/primates; aquatics; avian and reptile; small mammal/Kid's Kingdom; and behavioral management/veterinarian support.
- ▲ Blank Park Zoo's Seal and Sea Lion exhibit has for years been a guest favorite, however instead of watching sea lions swim, in 2011 guests watched as our pool was rebuilt from the ground up. These renovations will provide guests with not only a closer view of our animals, but an underwater view! For the animals the new pool provides eye protection with shade structures, ramps and stairs into the pool important for animal breeding, and the framework for a water filtration system.

**green** [ green ]  
*helping the environment*

Successful conservation is truly about people. Blank Park Zoo is fortunate to have staff and partners who are committed to leaving a lasting impression in the world. People who recognize that conservation is more than changing attitudes; it is about promoting action that results in positive effects on any given habitat.





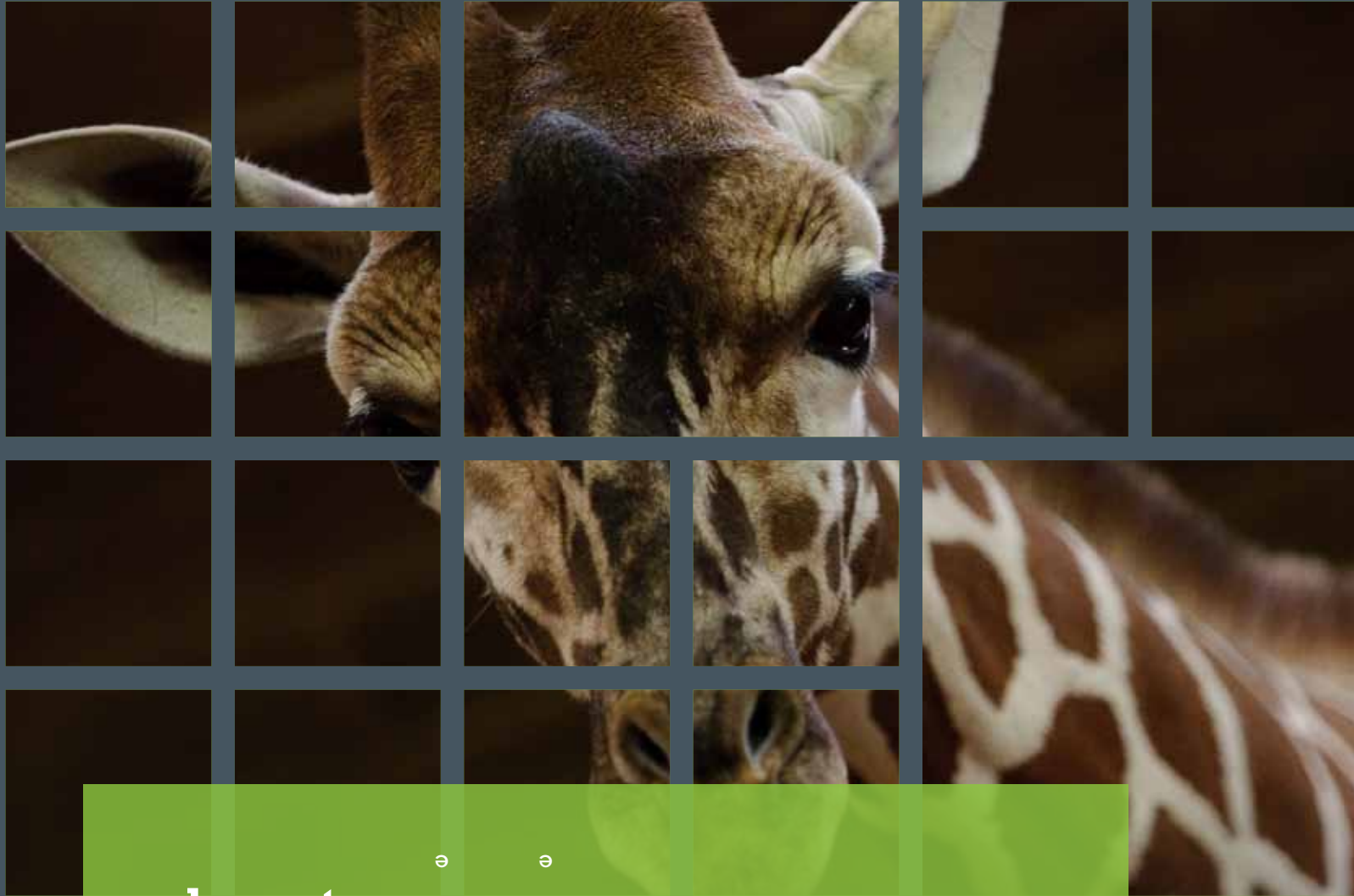


When it comes to conservation, the challenges often seem too big for the average person to address. While there are a myriad of ways to protect our planet and the animals that reside on it, one way is to simply visit Blank Park Zoo.

**Changing attitudes and promoting actions that positively impact our environment is integrated throughout the Zoo's programming** and includes species survival, re-establishment of animal populations, educational messaging and exhibits, research, events, green efforts, and collaborations with a variety of other organizations.

**Highlights:**

- ▲ The Zoo continues to donate 25 cents of every admission, or \$1 of every membership, to conservation efforts locally, nationally and internationally through our Coins for Conservation program.
- ▲ The Zoo endorses local and global conservation projects protecting animals such as turtles, elephants, apes, wolves, frogs, penguin and polar bear.
- ▲ Blank Park Zoo has teamed up with Health and Harmony, an organization protecting the biodiversity of rainforests by educating Bornean children about the importance of the rainforests and how their choices impact these important lands.
- ▲ Through the establishment of a new interdepartmental committee, the Green Team, the Zoo is improving the world by reducing the ecological impact of the Zoo's daily operations as well as inspiring all guests to make similar choices.
- ▲ The Zoo has begun work with the Chimpanzee Sanctuary & Wildlife Conservation Trust in Uganda, specifically supporting a community-based habitat monitoring, where 25 Chimpanzee Ambassadors carry out field activities involving wildlife nest census, mammal surveys and chimpanzee tracking in local forests.
- ▲ The monarch migration is truly one of the world's greatest natural wonders. Threatened by habitat loss, the Zoo has constructed a monarch habitat that provides resources necessary for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration.



ad·ven·ture [ d véñch r ]  
*an exciting or extraordinary event*

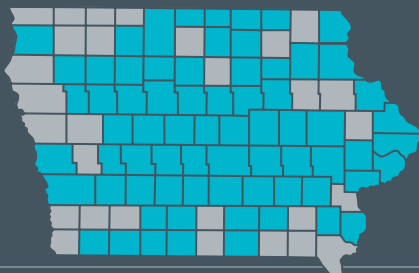
Blank Park Zoo's mission to inspire through education doesn't simply mean teaching an individual about the natural world - it means motivating people to think, to act, and to take responsibility for our local resources and the resources found far beyond. The Zoo is committed to compelling and engaging educational programming for all, from child to adult, from student to teacher, from our community to yours.

**In recent years the Zoo has realized to be truly effective at our mission we cannot simply show off our amazing animal collection, we must engage, interact and connect our visitors to the magic. Experience the EdVenture at Blank Park Zoo!**

**2011 Highlights:**

- ▲ Don't miss your chance to sit in the pouch of a wallaby, hear a lion roar, hopscotch a frog's life cycle, or sit in the driver's seat of a safari jeep – all a part of the Zoo's new hands-on educational interactives.
- ▲ For nine weeks children explored the lives, habitats and conservation of animals around the world at the Zoo's Summer Safari Camps. In 2011, the Zoo hosted 749 kids.
- ▲ The Zoo continues to offer workshops at a nominal fee to teachers around the state. These programs provide tools and guides to educators so they are able to implement simple studies on climate change, animal habitats, water systems and more. This program has reached 958 teachers impacting nearly 50,000 Iowa children.
- ▲ In an effort to expand educational impact and enhance visitor experiences, the Zoo has implemented a specialized program, Exhibit Interpreters. This program provides guests the opportunity to interact and exchange information with professional staff whose primary job is to facilitate communication and educate our 400,000 guests. With the ability to accurately answer questions about our animals, this program provides the ultimate interactive experience as guests discover what they can't read on any Zoo sign.
- ▲ Blank Park Zoo's education department hosts hundreds of education programs annually including messages of how our actions, positive or negative, effect our immediate and global environment and that changes in our lifestyle can make a direct impact to improve the environment.

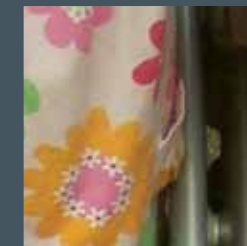
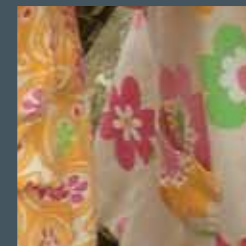
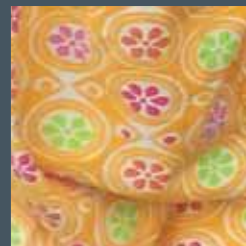
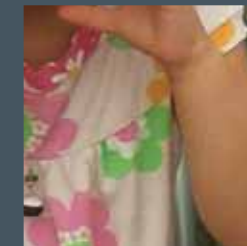
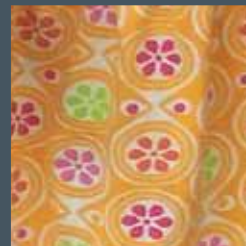
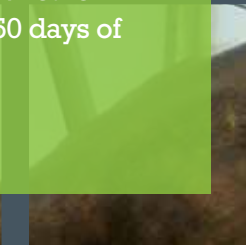
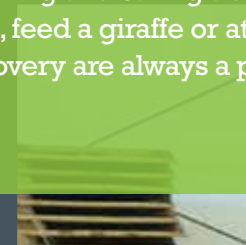
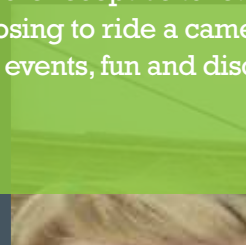
- ▲ In 2011, Blank Park Zoo's professional education team traveled to 70 counties around the state, providing important animal and conservation education to people young and young at heart.



# fun [ fun ]

*something that provides enjoyment*

Fun is an integral part of the Zoo's mission. We strive to create an upbeat environment full of exciting, interactive experiences. These opportunities not only increase our appeal to families, they engage our visitors and make them more receptive to learning and caring about the natural world. Whether it's choosing to ride a camel, feed a giraffe or attend one of the Zoo's 50 days of special events, fun and discovery are always a part of Blank Park Zoo.

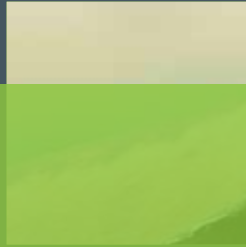
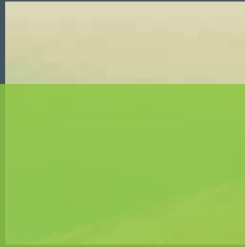
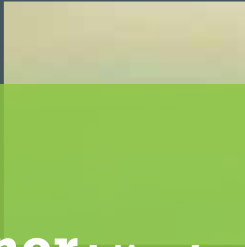
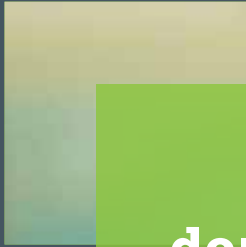
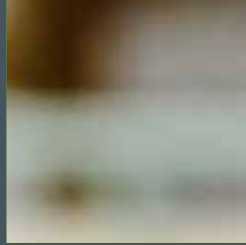
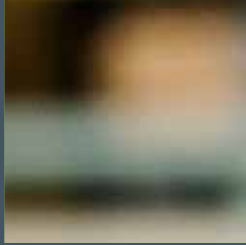


Whether young in years, or young in heart, Blank Park Zoo has something for everyone: exhibits, events, games and rides are ready to satisfy the playful side in all of us.

**Since opening its doors in 1966, there is only one thing that has remained consistent at Blank Park Zoo - that is the smiles found on the over 8 million visitors who have experienced the wild adventure found in our park.**

#### **Highlights:**

- ▲ Blank Park Zoo was voted Iowa's 2011 Outstanding Attraction of the Year!
- ▲ Since its beginning 21 years ago, 458,911 people have taken part in the Zoo's merry, not scary Halloween event, Night Eyes.
- ▲ The Zoo's new Australian Adventure provided guests a chance to step into the land down under. Guests learned how a boomerang works, took pictures next to a didgeridoo, enjoyed our renovated train station and, as always, enjoyed walking among our wallaby, emu and other Australian animals.
- ▲ Last year, Zoo guests took a step back in time to experience the mystery and magnificence of the dinosaur. Whether they learned what a pachycphalosaurus eats for a snack or the habitat of a family of maiasaura, there was no question the Zoo's prehistoric display was a hit. The dinosaur replicas ranged from full-scale to half scale with the largest spanning 32 feet long.
- ▲ While the Zoo's mission is to inspire an appreciation of the natural world through conservation, education and recreation, we believe that collaboration is key to healthy families, healthy animals and a healthy planet. This is why the Zoo implemented Adventure Days, a new summer series providing expanded educational experiences to Zoo guests. Whether working to conserve and enhance natural resources, promote healthy diets to children, or educate about the importance of sun protection, there is a way to connect to the natural world found at the Zoo.



**do·nor** [ dōnər ]  
*somebody who gives something*

Blank Park Zoo would define our donors as those who make it all possible. The Zoo is supported by our community in countless ways. As a non-profit, we rely on contributions from like-minded people who share our passion to educate, protect and enjoy life. Our 2011 donors have truly made it all possible, and Blank Park Zoo thanks them sincerely for their contributions and commitment.



## Forever in our Zoo

### Honoring the Kruidenier Family

Lisa Kruidenier, a Blank Park Zoo board member, can remember falling in love with our Zoo at a very young age. While the exact moment isn't clear, she was quick to make the connection between the animals she had seen on television and their real, live counterparts found at the Zoo and she was hooked. Without the support of Lisa and her parents, Elizabeth and David Kruidenier, Blank Park Zoo would not be what it is today. The Zoo was saddened by Elizabeth's passing in 2011 – we have lost a passionate animal lover, a Zoo supporter and a dear friend.



**Blank Park Zoo will forever be grateful for the commitment and passion shown to us by the Kruidenier family.**



# GENEROSITY...

TOWARDS THE FUTURE BEGINS TODAY.

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## Aldabra Society

Blank Park Zoo Foundation's Aldabra Society is a group of visionary, forward-thinking supporters who have made estate-plan provisions to give a lasting gift to the Blank Park Zoo Foundation.

Anonymous  
Myron and Jacqueline Blank\*  
John Stoddard\*  
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## Wild About Animals Capital Campaign Donors

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*November 1, 2010 – October 31, 2011*

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Prairie Meadows  
Principal Financial Group  
State of Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
Wells Fargo

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# Blank Park Zoo Foundation

## Financials

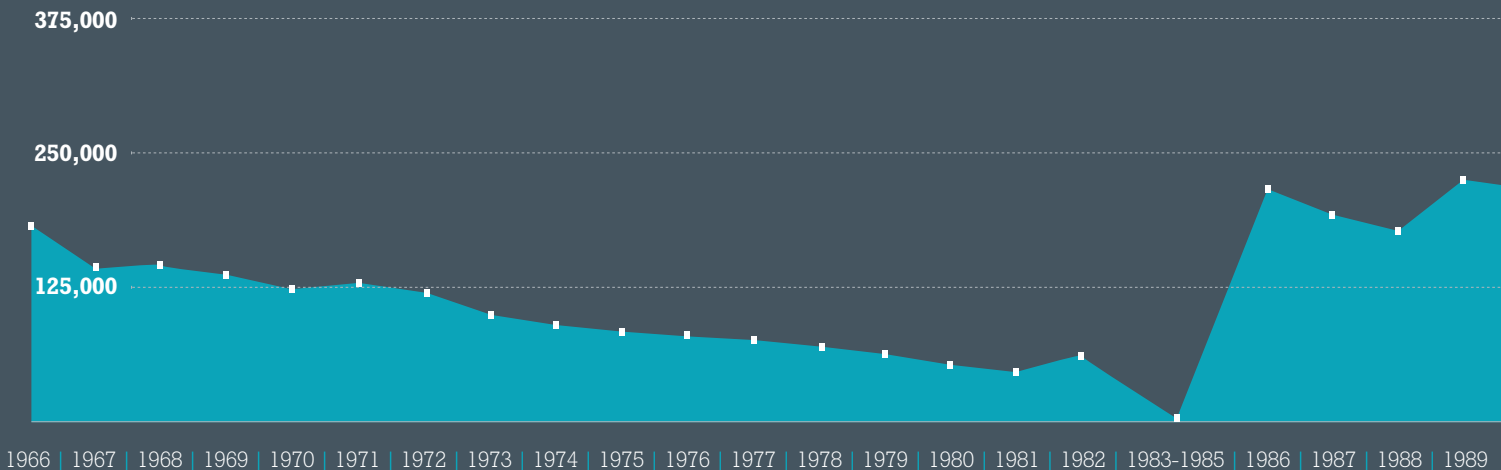
Fiscal Year November 1, 2010 – December 31, 2011



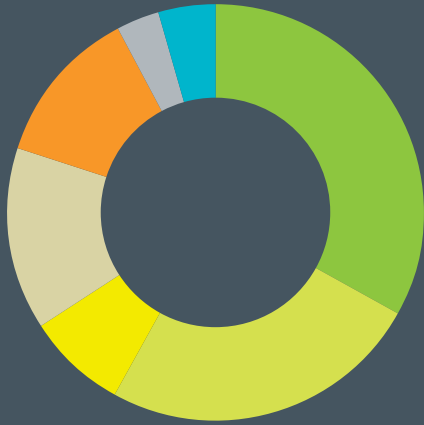
### Wild About Animals Capital Projects Expenditures

■ Animal Quarantine Building.....	1,300,000
■ Sea Lion Pool.....	1,300,000
■ David Kruidenier Australian Adventure .....	1,900,000
■ A.H. Blank Park Entrance.....	2,100,000
■ Africa .....	800,000
■ Hands On Education.....	200,000
■ Other Projects .....	900,000
	<b>\$8,500,000</b>

### Total Audience



Zoo closed for renovations



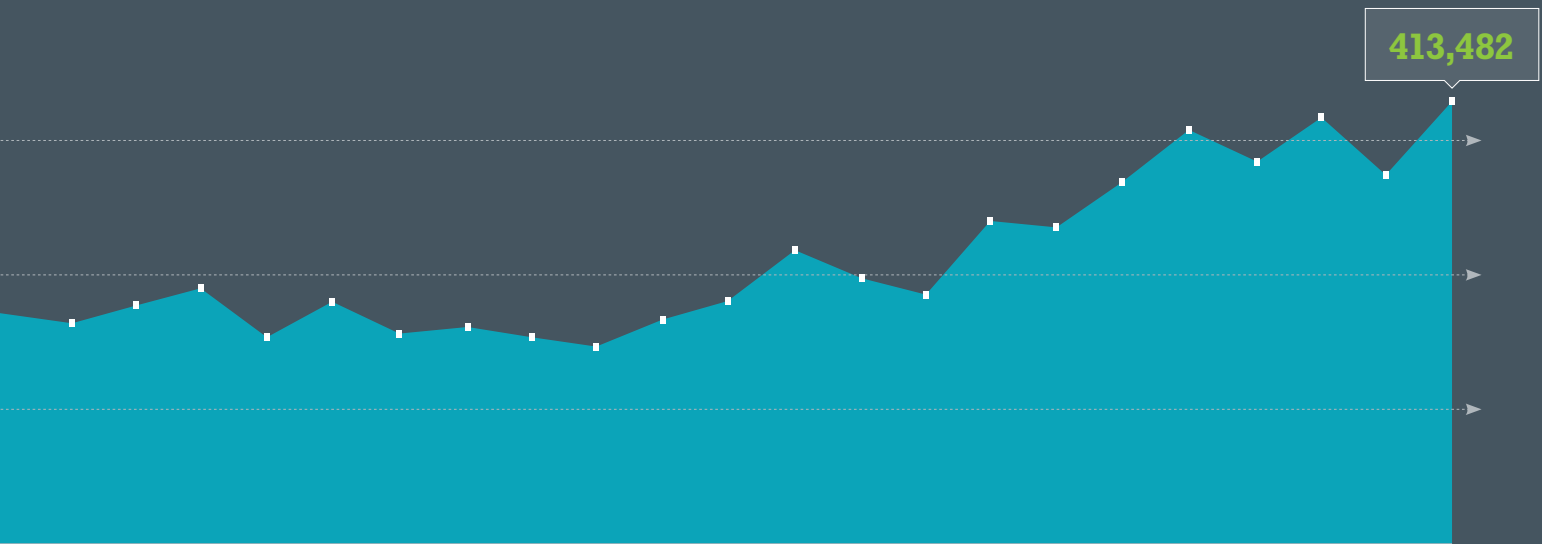
**Revenue**

■ Contributions.....	1,517,449
■ Admissions .....	1,137,854
■ Rental/Other .....	359,331
■ Membership .....	636,230
■ Gift Shop .....	555,584
■ Train Rides .....	153,341
■ Education Programs .....	200,526
	<b>\$4,560,315</b>



**Expenses**

■ Salaries .....	2,589,686
■ Utilities.....	211,259
■ Education.....	33,537
■ Animal Care.....	216,139
■ Concessions/Gift Shop.....	284,185
■ Repairs/Maintenance.....	231,872
■ Fundraising.....	194,048
■ Other .....	753,690
	<b>\$4,514,416</b>



1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011



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The Blank Park Zoo is proud to be a member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the premier association of zoological institutions in North America with unequal standards for animal care and management.

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