

# Bergen County Zoological Park Monthly Newsletter

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**James J. Tedesco, III**  
**County Executive**

**Board of Chosen Freeholders**

**James Koth,**  
**Director of Parks**

**Marianne Vella**  
**Zoo Director**

## ADDING TO OUR SAN CLEMENTE GOAT HERD

The Bergen County Zoo welcomed four (4) additional San Clemente Goats to its herd. The goats (all female) were received from Miller Park Zoo, IL on November 21, 2017. This is not the first time that we conducted business with the Miller Park Zoo; we received another San Clemente Goat “Tabitha” from them October 2016.

Our new goats, Bella, Becca, Scarlet and Rogue were quarantined in the hospital for approximately one (1) month—as is the policy with all new animals. During the quarantine period, they were examined, vaccinated, tested and treated as necessary by our veterinarian Dr. Boren.

After the quarantine period, Tabitha, was brought to the hospital for a re-introduction to Bella (mom) and Becca (sister)



**Bella, Becca, Scarlet & Rogue while on quarantine**  
Photo by Carmen Baca

as well as an introduction to Scarlet and Rogue. The group was closely monitored during this time to ensure that all the animals were eating well and behaving normally.

All goat herds have a hierarchy. There is always a dominant animal (in our herd this is currently Bella). All other goats in the herd have a specific place also. When a new animal is introduced, the herd needs to re-establish everyone’s place in the hierarchy. Goats do this through rearing and head-butting behaviors you may be see on exhibit from time-to-time, but are normal for these animals.



**Goats about to enter exhibit**  
Photo by Carmen Baca



## ZOO CAMP PROGRAM

Zoo Camp is a week-long, half a day program for children ages 5 to 15 years old. This program is opened only to Bergen County Residents or Bergen County Zoo Members. There are four groups in our program: Lambs, Hawks, Gators and Jr. Zookeepers.

The camp runs Monday—Friday 9am—1pm. There is a fee of \$150 for the week which includes a zoo camp t-shirt. Enrollment into the program is done via a “lottery” system.

If you are interested, please

visit the Bergen County Zoo’s official webpage for the brochure and application. Applications are due back at the zoo by March 15th.

For more information please contact [zoocamp@co.bergen.nj.us](mailto:zoocamp@co.bergen.nj.us) or call 201-634-3125/3124.

## SPOTLIGHT ANIMAL: AMERICAN BALD EAGLE

The American Bald Eagle is a large and beautiful bird. It is the only eagle with its range exclusively in North America. As adults, bald eagles are typically characterized as being of brown coloring with a white head and a white tail (their feet and beak are yellow in color).

Both the male and female share incubation duties with their eggs (but the female does the majority of the

incubation). The young take first flight between 72-75 days, and are ready to leave the nest at 10-12 weeks of age.

Due to the success of conservation efforts aimed at reclaiming and preserving habitats and ecosystems, the Bald Eagle was removed from the endangered species list (however they are still on the protection list)

Although eagles will eat other food such as birds and mammals, their diet consists primarily of fish. Their population are greatest in areas where fish are abundant and clean water is essential to their existence.

The Bald Eagles at the Bergen County Zoo have permanent injuries that prevent them from surviving in the wild and from flying from the enclosure.



Photo by Tricia Gunther

## COMMUNITY HOP-PENINGS

By Katie Jamer

The Education Department is proud to announce the expansion of the Animal Encounters program. This program is offered to local long term care facilities to bring some joy and happiness to the residents that live there. We have successfully added four new facilities to our program bringing our total number of facilities to twelve. We reach a variety of residents from veterans to Alzheimer-dementia patients and even those from different cultural backgrounds.

This program would not be possible without the help of our docents. These docents volunteer their time to take a rabbit to each facility and visit with the residents. During their visits, they take the time to educate residents while also providing them with an opportunity to touch our animal. Our docents love visiting these facilities and come back knowing that that they made someone smile.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the Animal Encounters program or becoming an Animal Encounters docent, please email us at [ZooOutreach@co.bergen.nj.us](mailto:ZooOutreach@co.bergen.nj.us).

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: ZOO BABIES

Join us for our five week Zoo Babies program! This program was developed for toddlers to use their senses in order to explore the world of animals through stories, activities, songs, an animal visitor and a "stroller safari". This is one of our most popular programs we offer aimed for children ages 15-36 months. Seats fill fast so sign up now!

Location: Bergen County Zoo Education Building

Dates: Wednesdays, February 28-March 28, 2018

Time: 10:30 A.M.-11:30 A.M.

Cost: \$50/child

HIGHLIGHT EMPLOYEE: TRICIA GUNTHER



Target training with our scarlet macaw  
Photo by Tricia Gunther

An aspect that the Bergen County Zoo likes to promote is that of taken an individual's love of animals and having it turn into a career. Perhaps the individual begins as a volunteer or a seasonal employee but with time, dedication and experience that same individual can become a full time employee. One such example is Tricia Gunther.

Tricia Gunther arrived at the Bergen County Zoo as a seasonal employee in the summer of 2011. She would work in our seasonal exhibits and in certain animal exhibits. Ms. Gunther would return every summer, during her breaks from the University of New Hampshire where she was pursuing her B.S. in Wildlife and Conservation Biology in 2015.

After graduating and receiving her degree, Ms. Gunther remained at the

zoo and became a per diem employee and continued to further her education (by receiving her M.A. in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology from Columbia University in 2017). "On her graduate experience, Ms. Gunther has stated, "What I love about conservation, especially in a zoo setting, is that there is always something new to learn, always ways we can improve and better serve our animals". She focused her studies on captive breeding and for her master's thesis she worked with Dr. Pat Thomas at the Bronx Zoo to look at how personality affects reproductive success in captive snow leopards.

Due to her commitment, passion for the animals and her excellence as an employee, Tricia Gunther became a full-time animal keeper that same year.

Since becoming a full-time employee, Ms. Gunther dove right into ways she could better take care of the animal collection. She found her niche working within the Enrichment Committee.

One of the main things that she has done is to update the enrichment logs in accordance with the standards of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Ms. Gunther has stated, "Logging enrichment is very important, it allows the keepers to efficiently keep track of what enrichment our animals are getting, how often they receive

enrichment, how they react to it, and other observations".

Producing enrichment is creative, collaborative and essential to being a zoo keeper. Ms. Gunther is frequently in chats with keepers from other zoos and/or down loading information from other facilities to get new and fresh ideas for enrichment. She will be attending a conference on Environmental Enrichment for Zoos and Aquariums in March. Ms. Gunther is very passionate about her role on this committee, " I love being on the enrichment committee because it is so important for the daily lives of our animals, keeping them physically and mentally healthy leads to happy animals".



Tricia Gunther with our Belgian Draft Horse, Dolly  
Photo by Carmen Baca

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION CELEBRATING

Annually, the County of Bergen recognizes its employees for their hard work and dedication during their years of service. They do so by conducting a breakfast and/or lunch for employees that hit the milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, etc years of service.

At these gatherings, the employee is formally recognized by the County Executive, the Board of Chosen Freeholders and their respective Department Heads.

At this years appreciation ceremonies, the Bergen County Zoo has the honor of acknowledging the following employees for their years of service not only to the zoo but to the County of Bergen .

Celebrating 5 years of service:

Mitchell Buchheister, Jack Gidney, Lindsay Rasmovich

Celebrating 10 years of service:

Francis Baratta, Gary Lentini, Nancy McTamane, Catherine Walsh

Celebrating 20 years of service:

Della Carroll

Celebrating 25 years of service:

Vince Muti

## WAYS TO SUPPORT THE ZOO

There are numerous ways to support the Bergen County Zoo:

- Consider becoming a zoo member
- Sponsor an Animal
- Enroll in our docent/volunteer program
- Purchase Animal Art

Information on all of these programs is available at the Zoo, our website or by calling 201-634-3100 ext. 3110



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[www.co.bergen.nj.us/bcparks](http://www.co.bergen.nj.us/bcparks)

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## ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS

The Bergen County Zoo is proud to be an AZA Accredited Zoo.

The Association of Zoos & Aquariums provides its members with the services, high standards, best practices, and program coordination to be leaders in animal welfare, public engagement, and the conservation of species.

Looking for a summer job? The Bergen County Zoo offers several seasonal positions such as maintenance, animal keepers, vet technicians, camp counselors and attraction personnel. Please reach out to [cbaca@co.bergen.nj.us](mailto:cbaca@co.bergen.nj.us) for more information.

**James J. Tedesco, III**

**County Executive**

**Board of Chosen Freeholders**