www.emporiazoo.org
emporiazoo@emporia-kansas.gov
620-341-4365

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Fall, 2026

Keeping In Touch

Dear Friends of the Zoo,

As we move into the fall season, I want to take a moment to reflect on the exciting activities that have brought our community together this half of the year and to express my sincere appreciation for your continued support of the David Traylor Zoo.

Our **June Open House** welcomed many visitors, helping contribute to strong overall zoo attendance throughout the year. In August, supporters enjoyed a successful **Botanical Bingo**, and in September, our **Zoo Brew** and **IHOP Fundraiser** brought together friends of the zoo for fun and fundraising. Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, sponsored, or donated.

As we move into the fall and holiday season, we look forward to **Boo in the Zoo** in October and **Happy Holidaze** in November, a cherished tradition that helps celebrate the season and bring our community together

The success of these events and the continued growth of the zoo would not be possible without the dedication of our members, volunteers, sponsors, and community supporters. Your generosity helps create memorable experiences for visitors and supports the future of our zoo.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for helping the David Traylor Zoo thrive. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and celebrating another successful year together.

Sincerely,

Megan Tajchman
Board President
Emporia Friends of the Zoo



Is Accredited By ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS and a Species Survival Plan Participant



Director's Notes

Dear Friends,

As the cooler temperatures work their way back into our daily routines it causes us to stop, take a breath and reflect on where we have been, where we are, and where we are going. This past year has, as is often the case, sped by faster than we could have ever thought. Busy hands, hearts, and minds have kept the zoo buzzing with progress, innovation, and passion these past months and we are honored to have you alongside us the whole time.

You, our members and community, have stood by us and supported us this past year in some of the most amazing ways. Your continued excitement and participation in our Annual Round Up Auction, Open House, and Stroll-n-Show reflects how traditions are the foundation of our growth. Your investment in the David Traylor Zoo goes well beyond any fundraiser or event, it is at the core of this community, and it shows. Especially when we host new endeavors such as our first ever Summer Camp for 1st and 2nd graders, Wildlife Superheroes, and our most recent event, Botanical Bingo in collaboration with Goodway Gardens and the City of Emporia's Horticulture staff. You make these events successful.

As community does, you have also been our steadfast champions as we faced both good and bad times. You have patiently walked alongside us as we brought our dream of an expanded exhibit space for our King Vultures to reality and increased their space by 171%, upgraded our filtration system for our Trumpeter Swans, welcomed new ambassador animals to our collection and renovated an old shelter so our Emu can have a new place to be this winter. The outpouring of support and caring when Bill our bull bison, Lucky our llama, and Twix our Netherland dwarf rabbit passed provided strength and encouragement as our dedicated staff processed their grief. You have been a catalyst for perseverance and for this we are eternally grateful.

I have been thinking about how we, the David Traylor Zoo, show up and support our community and what that should look like as we continue to move forward with our efforts to provide a place where community and conservation intersect. How can we, as an organization, not only provide you with educational opportunities around the conservation of the beautiful wildlife and wild places you call home but also provide you with a place where you, your family, and friends can stop, take a breath and be at peace or simply enjoy a fun day out. I hope you will continue to walk alongside us while we ponder our collective future and how we can continue to do amazing things, together as community.

Sincerely,

Brenda Young, Zoo Director

FOREVER FUND set up for EFOZ!

Your support of the Emporia Friends of the Zoo and the David Traylor Zoo of Emporia reflect what you value – Animals, Conservation and Education. Our goal is to secure a financial future for the Zoo to ensure this beautiful treasure is enjoyed for many decades to come. By planning a gift to Emporia's Zoo, through the Emporia Friends of the Zoo, you can ensure that what has brought joy to your life will be here for future generations. By leaving a legacy gift with the Fund, you will protect the animals and the Zoo you love. Give us a call today at 620-341-4365 to discuss the many possibilities in making your legacy happen!



Looking for a paws-itively perfect gift for the animal lover in your life?

With a $25 Adopt-an-Animal donation, you can help support the David Traylor Zoo and delight your loved one with:

- 5×7 photo of their chosen animal (Bobcat, Prairie Dog, Fox, Bison, Highland Cattle or Dexter Cattle)
- A personalized Adoption Certificate
- Recognition in the Zoo Newsletter

Creating a Memorial for a Loved One

When you walk through the Zoo entrance, you may have noticed the new memorial plaza with plaques attached to the wall, that are inscribed with the names of loved ones. The plaque commemorates the life of someone who loved the Zoo (ex. a spouse, close friend, or family member). The memorial makes a statement about what that person has meant to you. At the same time, it provides financial support for the Zoo and its mission of wildlife, conservation, and education.
To begin your memorial plaque, we will need the following information:
Name of your loved one, how you would like their name to appear on the plaque.
Next of Kin and their contact information.
A minimum donation of $50 or more to establish the memorial.
Checks made out to the Emporia Friends of the Zoo (EFOZ).
Contact the Zoo Office at 620-341-4365 or visit us at 75 Soden Road to finalize the memorial.

Donations have been received in Memory of….
(established since last newsletter)

2026

Evora Ann Rees Wheeler
Lanny & Dennis Linebarger
Dale Lewis Moore
Sandra Jean Rathke Graham
Bennett W. Anderson
Bonnie Lee Turney Schmidt
Ellenor "Ellie" Hunt
Gordon & Jackie Ames
June A. Fultz
Marsha Johnson
Dr. James M. Geitz
Ted "Lonewolf" Carr
Robert L. "Bub" Kewley
Jerry Whitsitt
Harry Stephens
Consuelo V. "Connie" Roblez
Janice "Jan" Utech
Ruth Joan Parks
Laura Joyce Gilger
Joan Ellen Phillips Fowler
Wiletta Kay Lewis
Marian Glidewell
Andy Emch
Jack & Arleyne Kaufman
Guy Robert Bacon
Carolyn Ann Koch
Schepheka Kay Hahn
Marvin "Mike" Glenn Haag

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Courtney Ward, *V. Pres.*
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Terri McAlister, *Sec.*
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Kevin Mayer
Colleen Mitchell
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Phillip Marsh
Skylar Nicholas
Anthony Fast
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Zach Holub
Amanda Hollingsworth
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Derek Miller
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Lori Heavener
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Lori Cline
John Welsh
Siara Fager
Daniel Rosales
Rick Clark
Bert Halfmann

Encountering Education

As we are entering the fall season, I am reminded to look back at what we've accomplished in spring and summer. Thanks to the continued hard work and dedication of our volunteer and docent teams, these past months have been productive and rewarding. Let me take this opportunity to share some of our experiences with you!

In April, Education hosted their annual Party for the Planet during which area organizations set up stations around the zoo offering messages of conservation and how to live more sustainably. I'm always looking for new organizations who have chosen to make a difference in the world. REACH OUT IF YOU'D LIKE TO BE A PART OF THIS DAY NEXT YEAR! zeducation@emporiaks.gov

Throughout April many students, teachers and families from area schools were welcomed and circulated throughout the zoo and education center for their yearly field trips. These visitors enjoyed scavenger hunts, animal encounters with our Ambassador Animals and coloring sheets in the ambassador's likeness. Teachers book your trips early to ensure the date you hope for!

In May, two educators traveled to Manhattan, Kansas this year and hosted a fun and interactive table at the Flint Hills Festival. An estimated 700 people attended this event! We shared information about David Traylor Zoo and encouraged travel to Emporia in general. This was a great space to introduce the zoo and our community to those who were not aware of what we can offer.

June is always a busy month! Open House, Stroll n Show, summer reading program library visits, and local summer camp visits are all in full swing during this month! Stroll n Show offered the zany animated feature, Zootopia! This was an extra fun family night with a craft, obstacle course, popcorn and a movie. Outreach to area libraries and camps were appreciated spaces to share our messages of wildlife and conservation as well. Contact zeducation@emporiaks.gov if your organization needs a program!

July was all about Zoo Camp! We hosted our annual 3rd & 4th grade camp this summer focusing on Endangered species. A couple of weeks later we switched gears to host a NEW CAMP for 1st & 2nd graders! These campers had fun learning about animals and their superpowers in the wild! We are excited to extend the zoo camp experience to more age groups in the future. Look for both camps to happen again NEXT summer!

Currently, I'm working on the final arrangements for this year's Safari Edventure Days and I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in the holiday season ahead! BEST WISHES to all!

Mark your calendars for:

- Boo in the Zoo, Saturday, October 31st from 4:00 – 5:30 pm
- Happy Holidaze, Tuesday, November 24th at 5:00 pm
- Holiday Stroll, Saturdays, December 12th, 15th, 19th , 22nd , & 26th from 5 – 8pm.

Kelli Proehl / Zoo Education Coordinator / 620-341-4372




CRAFT

















They look like they are having a lot of fun over there….games, crafts, learning fun animal facts and family time!

If you want to have that kind of fun too,

you should come join our EFOZ herd!



Visit us at:

https://efoz.org

call us at:

620-341-4365

EMPORIA FRIENDS OF THE ZOO

Emporia Friends of the Zoo

2026 *Membership* Marquee

We extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all those who have joined EFOZ as a 2026 member. The Membership Marquee serves to acknowledge these important individuals; and express our gratitude. EFOZ's extensive youth and adult education programming is made possible by our members.

EMPORIA, KS

James & Susan Aber
Gary & Eliza Ace
Lana Adkins
Mike & Patricia Alingh
Mary Alumbaugh
MarJean Anderson
Wayne & Dawn Anliker
Greg & Karen Bachman
Gary & Katie Bacon
Sidney Baldwin
William & Abigail Barnes
Ed & Sara Bashaw
Andy & Stacey Battenfield
Ken & Gayla Bazil
Carlene Bedner
Jim & Karen Belford
Richard Bennett
Michael & Tammy Black
Angela & Richard Blankley
Mary Ann Blaufuss
Bluestem Farm & Ranch
Janice Borla
Roy & Brandy Briggeman
Bradley & Kelly Brown
Larry & Sandra Browning
Sandra Brunkow
Bruce & Sheila Burenheide
Janel Burenheide
Rick & Tracy Buss
Denise Byfield
Heidi Cahoone
Ed Campbell
Scott Capes
Rick & Kay Carl
Craig Carlson
Phillip Castillo
Steven & Susan Cates
Jury Duty & Libby Chanley
Jamie Charpentier
Jack Chapman
Melinda Chiroy
Amy Christensen
Lloyd & Marilyn Christmore
Citizen State Bank
Clark Carpet & Tile LLC
Johnny & Shelby Clark
Gilan & Susan Cockrell
Coffelt Sign Co Inc
Sally Conard
Cooper Construction LLC
Gary & Nancy Crumb
Tyler & Melanie Curtis
Aaron & Lori Davis
Carolyn Davis
Margaret Davison & Betty Campbell
Patty Delmott
Payton & Oliva Delong
Cheryl Dial
Dorothy Deweese
Ron & Vickie Dinkel
Ginger Dody
Alice Dreier
Tyler & Callie Duncan
Tucker Eckols
Michelle Edwards
Alice Elkins
Joe & Susan Endres
Billy & Patricia England
ENVI Salon
Glenda Estes
Dusty Eubanks
Euler Family
Skip & Jan Evans
EVCO
Blake Eyman
Siara Fager
Bob Finlay
Marlin Flanagin DDS
Sandra Fleming
Flint Hills Optimist Club
Brian & Kristin Flott
John & Carol Flott
Harvey Foyle
Ron Fowlkes
Ivan & Loette Fowler
Stanley & Barbara Fowler
Stella Free
Ann Fullen
Kelsi Gadino
Roy Gallup
Nancy Garcia
Craig Garrison
Susie Garrison
Lee Garriott
Jackie Gay
Jon & Ali Geitz
Ryan & Tera Gifford
Corey Giger & Ryan Horsch
Greg & Julia Giger
Christopher Gilger
James Glenn
Gary & Marilyn Gooszen
Loren & Donna Goss
Mike & Monica Graves
Chuck & Margi Grimwood
Howard & Eunice Gunkel
Beth Hanschu
Donna & Kenneth Hanson
Ron & Becky Hanson
Michael Hudson
John & Jeline Harclerode
Erren Harter & Melanie Cates
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Don & Robbie Hill
Lane & Lisa Hollern
Deanne Howell
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Marilyn Humphrey
Steve & Patricia Jacob
Russ & Jeannie Jenkins
Marjorie Jennings
Dr Billie & Roxana Johnson
Ken & Julie Johnson
Randall & Venita Johnson
Russ & Myra Jones
Robert & Jerica Judd
Jean-Ellen Kegler & Russ Rogers
Cory Kemper
Jim & Kathy Kessler
Robert & Judy Kewley
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Lyle & Suzanne Klamm
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Dr Brock & Mary Kretsinger
John & Claudia Kretsinger
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Brenda Lauer
Nick & Jan Laurent
Joseph Lawhorn
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Sandra Lyon & Melvin Beaushaw
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Mark & Amy McAnarney
Mary McGaw
Myoan McJunkin
Sue McKinney
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Marshall & Sharon Miller
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Mitch & Karen Moorman
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Kristin Oberle
Kevin & Tammy Ogle
Emmy Parks
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Parul & Charlotte Pinick
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Andrew & Megan
Wiederholt

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HUNTINGTON, WV
Andrew & Grace Gooding

St. Malo, MB
Alex Siemens

Zoo Brew Fun!!













Happy Holidaze

Nov 24th @ 5:00pm





Holiday Light Stroll

Dec 12th

Dec 15th

Dec 19th

Dec 22nd

Dec 26th

5:00pm-8:00pm