



## Henry Vilas Park Zoological Society

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## ***\$2.4 Million Donated to Zoo Century Renovation Campaign***

(Madison, WI)— Contrary to a report suggesting that Wisconsinites are not as generous as the rest of the country, the Henry Vilas Park Zoological Society has recently received several significant donations to its **Zoo Century** capital campaign, supporting major renovations to the Henry Vilas Zoo. In the last three months alone, the Zoological Society reports that it has received an additional \$2.4 million dollars from two generous donors, as well as several gifts ranging between \$25,000 and \$100,000.

On December 13, the Zoological Society accepted a \$1.4 million donation to the **Zoo Century** campaign. This gift was made to support the completion of the new North American Prairie exhibit (new exhibit for bison, badgers, and prairie dogs) and the Arctic Passage (new exhibit for polar bears, harbor seals, snowy owls, and reindeer). The donor, a long-time supporter of the Zoological Society, wishes to remain anonymous until the North American Prairie opens in 2006. Zoological Society Executive Director Mark Schemmel stated, "We are only able to help make the **Zoo Century** vision into reality with the support of our entire community. The exceptional generosity of this donor is inspiring to us all, and has helped us take a monumental step in ensuring a wonderful future for the Henry Vilas Zoo."

The Oscar Rennebohm Foundation recently announced an additional commitment of a \$1 million to the new Children's Zoo project. This is in addition to \$2 million the Foundation committed to the project in March. The Rennebohm Foundation's gift of \$3 million totals 50% of the Children's Zoo project costs. "Increasing their support by \$1 million is an amazing endorsement of this renovation project, and we are proud to have the Oscar Rennebohm Foundation as a partner in the effort to revitalize the Children's Zoo," said Schemmel.

Only nine months into the private fund raising portion of the **Zoo Century** capital campaign, the Zoological Society has already secured almost \$8 million in gifts and commitments. In addition, Dane County and the City of Madison have committed \$5 million to the first phase of the major redevelopments. **Zoo Century** is a \$27 million redevelopment of the Zoo over the next 10 years. The Henry Vilas Zoo will be 100 years old in 2011, and the renovations resulting from the **Zoo Century** campaign will ensure that the Zoo is able to provide the best possible animal exhibits and animal care as it moves into its second century.

Since 1911, the Henry Vilas Zoo has been a marvelous and unique community resource, and now receives over 500,000 visitors annually. It is one of only a few free zoos in the world that is accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association. Being free ensures that the unique experiences the Zoo offers are available to all members of our community. For more information about the **Zoo Century** campaign, visit [vilaszoo.org](http://vilaszoo.org) or call (608) 258-9490.

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