



# BEHIND THE SCENES

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Written for and about the people who support Denver Zoo

## DENVER ZOO REMEMBERS ZOO LEADER CLAYTON F. FREIHEIT (1938 - 2007)



Denver Zoo suffered the loss of its beloved leader, Clayton F. Freiheit on October 28, 2007 after a battle with cancer. The Denver Zoo family, friends and the world-wide zoological community are mourning the passing of Clayton, who served as zoo President and Chief Executive Officer for over 37 years.

Clayton was a true visionary, leader and passionate animal lover, dedicating his entire life to the welfare and preservation of animals. He also worked tirelessly to ensure that all members of the Denver metro community, regardless of means, had the opportunity to visit the zoo and see the animals that he loved so much.

Clayton's love of animals was evident when he was a very small child. By age 6, Clayton was already designing animal habitats and imagining the zoo that he would one day operate. By age 22, Clayton was appointed the youngest zoo director in the nation when he became the Curator of the Buffalo Zoological Gardens in May 1960. In order to secure this position, Clayton gained the support of Marlin Perkins, who was the director of the Lincoln Park Zoo at the time. In a brash move, Clayton drove to Chicago for a personal meeting with Perkins to demonstrate that despite his young age, he was prepared to take the helm of the Buffalo Zoo. Despite initial reservations about Clayton's age, Perkins could not deny that Clayton was the best person for the job and wrote a letter of recommendation. Under Clayton's leadership, the collection and exhibits at the Buffalo Zoo nearly doubled and the zoo achieved national stature.

*"There was a time when a zoo was only a place to exhibit curiosities, but as the wild areas of our planet diminish, the role of a zoological park comes into focus. They become urban reservoirs of nature, one of the few places where city dwellers can have contact with wildlife. A good zoo can and should attempt to influence as well as nurture people's concern for wildlife." - Clayton Freiheit, 1975*

On October 1, 1970, Clayton was appointed Executive Director of the Denver Zoological Gardens. In his 37 years leading Denver Zoo, Clayton made a tremendous impact on the zoo. He was the driving force behind the modernization and improvements made at the zoo over the last four decades including the opening of Bird World; Northern Shores; Tropical Discovery; Primate Panorama; Predator Ridge; and Lorikeet Adventure. Under Clayton's guidance, the zoo created its first conservation department, significantly expanded its education programs and brought together one of the most comprehensive collections of animals in the world.

Clayton's impact not only was felt at Denver Zoo, but within the world-wide zoo community. Clayton was selected by his peers to serve an unprecedented three terms on the Association of Zoos and Aquariums board of directors and served as its youngest President from 1967-1968. In 2004, the organization presented him with its esteemed Marlin Perkins Award. Clayton also was a member of the prestigious World Association of Zoos and Aquariums and served on the Board of Directors of the National Elephant Center and the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund.

To honor Clayton's legacy at Denver Zoo, the zoo had decided to name the 20,000 square foot indoor elephant building to be constructed in Asian Tropics the Clayton F. Freiheit Elephant House. Clayton's vision for the preservation of elephants is defined through this incredible undertaking at his beloved Denver Zoo and we feel that this is a fitting tribute to a man who was larger than life.

Clayton is survived by his sister, Anne, of Buffalo, NY and her children; 233 Denver Zoo staff members; 62 Denver Zoo board members; 600+ Denver Zoo volunteers and nearly 3,700 animals that reside at Denver Zoo.

Clayton's family has asked that in lieu of flowers and other gifts that donations be made to Denver Zoo to support Asian Tropics and the Clayton F. Freiheit Elephant House. All gifts in memory of Clayton will be matched by Zoo Improvement Bond Funds. Please contact Janet McFarland at [jmcfarland@denverzoo.org](mailto:jmcfarland@denverzoo.org) or (303) 376-6707 for more information.

## DONOR CORNER

Working at Denver Zoo, we're fortunate every day to watch the excitement on kids' faces as they run to see their favorite animals. The reasons are varied and sometimes humorous as to why they've made a special connection to a particular animal. Recently, two young boys each decided they wanted to do something to help their favorites and became some of the zoo's youngest philanthropists.



At just four years old, Zach Shoffner is passionate about bald eagles. So what better way to celebrate his fourth birthday than with a flying eagle cake and a poster filled with bald eagle pictures? Zach decided that in lieu of presents, he would ask for money to give to Denver Zoo to help bald eagles. According to his mom, Amy, "It was great not to have the chaos of gift opening and we have so many toys as it is...Zach got a card from his Aunt in the mail and when he opened it up to find \$10, waved the money around and said 'look, more money for the eagles!'" Zach raised just shy of \$150!

While Zach was enjoying his party, eight year old Charlie Nims was planning one of his own. Charlie has been fascinated with cassowaries for years; parents Mike and Michele say he likes to start every zoo visit with a trip to the cassowary



exhibit. Charlie held a party for all his friends including t-shirts that said "Cassowaries Rock!" His fundraiser made enough money to feed the zoo's cassowary for five months – over \$600! Dad, Mike, says "We have always tried to impress upon Charlie that helping others helps you become a better person and grow."

We wish to thank Zach and Charlie and all our young philanthropists for their passion to make a difference for wildlife.

## GIVING TRENDS

Are you one of the millions of Americans that likes to give to charities at the end of each year? If so, you're not alone! With some smart planning, you can make charitable gifts that also benefit your financial portfolio.

### Stock Gifts

If you are considering a year end gift, you might want to think about donating appreciated stock or mutual funds. Why give a gift of stock instead of cash? With an outright gift of stock you receive a tax deduction for its full value (if you itemize) and avoid capital gains tax that would likely be due if you decided to sell the stock.

Giving a gift of stock to Denver Zoo is easy to accomplish. Following is the information you and your broker would need to make the transfer: *Broker:* A.G. Edwards and Sons; *Contact:* Paulette Davis at 303-850-7900 or e-mail [paulette.davis@agedwards.com](mailto:paulette.davis@agedwards.com); *DTC/Wire Transfer Information:* DTC 201, Account #230-2414-4394.

### IRA Rollover Gifts

If you are 70½ or older, a law passed in 2006 permits you to make current cash gifts of up to \$100,000 from your traditional or Roth IRA to charity, while avoiding the income taxes that ordinarily would occur. This is especially good news for those who do not itemize on their taxes or who are giving at or above 50% of their AGI. IRA rollover gifts to charity are not included in your taxable income for Federal Income Tax purposes, therefore reducing your overall taxable income. Since this legislation is in effect only through the end of 2007, you must act by December 31 in order to take full advantage. These gifts also qualify toward your required minimum distributions.

And, remember, all gifts to Asian Tropics, no matter the type or size, are matched by Zoo Improvement Bonds, thereby doubling the impact!