

NALZS NEWS

Spring 2023

North Alabama Zoological Society
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NALZS.org

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NALZS Happenings

Above: A NALZS booth set up for the 2023 Kids Fest; Below: Twickenham the tortoise at Kids Fest

We were thrilled to see so many of you at the 2nd Annual NALZS Kids Festival, held on April 15 at Monte Sano State Park in Huntsville. Attendees were treated to beautiful weather and a variety of family-friendly booths and activities.

Animals were front and center during this year's expanded event. Visitors could see baby chicks and hatching eggs, native snakes, and our tortoise mascot Twickenham, plus the Boyd Family Farm brought alpacas and goats as part of their petting zoo.



Kids Fest featured many other fun experiences, too. Among them were face painting, games, and food trucks offering a variety of things to eat and drink. The event also had performances and prize giveaways, including one for a free session of ["Be a Little Wild" Nature Camp](#).

We're grateful to our 2023 festival sponsor, Redstone Federal Credit Union, and to our partners and support vendors. And we thank all of the vendors, exhibitors, and volunteers for helping make this year's event happen. It was a day filled with fun, learning, and enjoyment of the outdoors.

A Note From the Executive Director



Dear NALZS Members and Supporters,

I get the wonderful chance to provide a message to you each quarter. This causes me to reflect on the things that have happened in the past months as we work diligently to bring a zoo and aquarium to life in North Alabama. Sometimes we are working so hard to move forward that you need these opportunities to take in what has been done.

As all grand projects do, this one comes with its ups and downs. In this newsletter, our staff has done a remarkable job putting together some of the “ups” that we are proud to share with you. I would like to take a moment to share a “down” I received recently from one of you wonderful supporters. I have removed identifying information so there isn’t any embarrassment.

Ethan,

Just thought I would pass on that someone I work with told me that public official types are putting out there that the zoo is no longer happening. She attends a leadership class, and two people brought it up yesterday. She seems to think it was a [city redacted] Councilman and someone from [city/county redacted] Chambers of Commerce. She could not recall specific names.

Thanks,

Supporter

I can imagine that as you read that, your reaction was probably similar to mine. Wow. First, let me assure you that even more public officials are supporters of NALZS and its objective to bring a zoo and aquarium to our area. While I don’t think the Councilman should have said what they said, we will give them some leeway. So much growth is happening in our area that it is hard to keep up on the status of every project and effort.

I find it harder to give leeway to the Chamber Leader, however. The North Alabama Zoological Society is a proud member and supporter of the four major chambers of commerce in Limestone, Madison, and Morgan counties. I believe it is irresponsible that an association we are a part of would publicly discount our purpose. We are addressing this more directly with both public bodies.

This leads to what I truly would like to share with you. We often get asked if the zoo and aquarium is really going to happen. Here is the answer to that:

As long as there is a North Alabama Zoological Society, you can be assured it will happen. And NALZS isn’t going away. So we can stick a pin in that question. The more difficult answer to provide is when it will happen. There are very large challenges to overcome, for sure, but we have overcome several already. With your continued help and support, we will overcome the rest of the ones in front of us, as well. This makes for a simple answer to “when.” The more help and support we get from you, the faster the zoo and aquarium will get here.

Thank you for going on this journey with us. Your trust in us is very important, and we promise to do everything we can to uphold it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ethan Woodruff". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ethan Woodruff
Executive Director

3 Ways You Can Help NALZS Now

Your support for NALZS and our efforts to bring a zoo and aquarium to North Alabama means so much to us. Have you been looking for ways to help? Here are the top three ways you can lend a hand:

- **Advocate getting a zoo and aquarium to your friends, neighbors, and community.** Evangelize our efforts. And when we say “our efforts,” we include you in that. Share and comment on NALZS’ social media posts. Bring it up in conversation every once in a while. There is a theory that it takes hearing something seven times to actually hear it, another seven times of hearing it to start thinking about it, then another seven times of hearing it before doing something about it. So one mention is not enough.
- **Consider volunteering for some of our education, conservation, and outreach programs.** You may think donating money or other resources is the best way to make an impact, but volunteers can make a significant impact, too! We love our volunteers. Learn more at NALZS.org/volunteer.
- **Contribute or raise funds to move our cause forward.** We need marketing materials to put our mission out into the community, and public officials are always asking for more studies and research. Think about becoming a monthly Society Member – more info is available at NALZS.org/membership. Also, if you are social media savvy, then please think about holding your own quarterly fundraisers. Many platforms – e.g., Facebook – have fundraising options that tie directly to NALZS.



Can You Please Lend a Paw?

Learn about all the ways you can help us out at NALZS.org/support

Upcoming Events

Visit NALZS.org and our social media pages to see the latest event info

- [NALZS Reads](#): June-July at area libraries
- [Virtual Volunteer Orientation](#): June 7 from 7:30-8:30 pm
- [“Be a Little Wild” Nature Camps](#): June 13-16 and June 20-23 from 8 am-3 pm at J.D. & Annie S. Hays Nature Preserve in Owens Cross Roads
- [Collaborate Nonprofit Organization Gala](#): August 11 at 7 pm at the Von Braun Center in Huntsville

Purchase your tickets today for

COLLABORATE

A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION GALA

Presented By



Tish Hardric & Associates, LLC

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11th AT 7:00PM

THE SOUTH HALL BALLROOM
700 MONROE STREET SW
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

Hosted By
Mistress of Ceremony
Payton Walker

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EdZOOcation News

Spring is always a busy time for the NALZS Education Department. This March we held our spring session of Be a Little Wild: Little Tykes, hosted by the Madison Public Library. Our 3-to-5-year-old campers and their favorite adults learned about animal habitats, played animal bingo, explored sensory boxes with a super-worm, and created amazing animal cookies.

The 2nd Annual NALZS Kids Festival was another great event that happened this spring. We loved seeing the native snakes; “Moose” the yellow-bellied slider turtle; hatching chicks; and of course, Twickenham, our ambassador sulcata tortoise. Did you spy him walking around the festival with the blue star balloon on his back? He loved exploring and meeting all the new friends.

At the end of April, our NALZS Junior Zoological Society chapters met together for the end-of-term JZS Convention. In addition to presenting their Conservation Conundrum project, each team also competed in a Recycles Art mini competition. Congratulations to all our JZS chapters and the wonderful projects they completed.

Speaking of the Junior Zoological Society, on May 1 we rebranded it as NALZS BioExploration Science Team, or BEST. We are excited to reach new milestones in our 2023-2024 year. BEST will help students learn to advo-



Above and right: Children take part in the NALZS Be a Little Wild: Little Tykes session in March at the Madison Public Library



cate for and implement conservation practices in our local area. Information and registration can be found at NALZS.org/best.

We’re also looking forward to the 2023 “Be a Little Wild” Nature Camps, which are being held in June. We are so excited to be partnering with the Huntsville Green Team, and Hays Nature Preserve will host two weeks of our camps. This year we will have camps available for ages 6-11. We have a great team of new and returning Youth Camp Counselors that went through training and orientations. If you want to know more about our camps, check out NALZS.org/nature-camps-2023. We look forward to “being a little wild” with you!

Also, don’t forget to check out your local library and see if NALZS is coming to read to you this summer. We have chosen the book “Together: Animal Partnerships in the Wild.” Come and learn with us!

Join the NALZS Zoo Crew!

We’re looking for volunteers to help out with fundraising, projects, events, and more.

Learn about our volunteer opportunities at NALZS.org/volunteer

ConZOOvation News

In April, the NALZS Conservation Team presented activities at the 2nd Annual NALZS Kids Festival, held at Monte Sano State Park. Visitors to the conservation booth decorated and took home mason bee houses and learned about the importance of pollinators.

Conservation team members joined the education and outreach teams in April to celebrate the Junior Zoological Society chapters and their students during their year-end convention. Students from various areas of North Alabama presented their conservation projects and brought their recycled art projects for all to see.

Be on the lookout for other upcoming conservation team events, such as a night hike and an environmental cleanup of local parks and greenways.

Did You Know?

You can support the North Alabama Zoological Society by shopping at Kroger and Walmart! Scan the code below to get started with Kroger Community Rewards, and click here to select NALZS as your charity for the Walmart Spark Good Round Up program. Best of all, it's free to sign up!



Something Fun



Add some fun to your breakfast by creating these animal faces on waffles! We suggest ingredients below, but feel free to get creative and use other favorite foods.

Bear

Ingredients

- Toaster waffle
- Peanut butter or hazelnut spread for the face (or mix them together!)
- Banana slices for the ears and nose
- Blueberries for the eyes and the center of the nose

Pig

Ingredients

- Toaster waffle
- Strawberry yogurt for the face
- Strawberry slices for the ears
- Blueberries for the eyes
- Banana slice for the nose
- Chocolate chips for the nostrils

Raccoon

Ingredients

- Toaster waffle
- Strawberry slices for the ears
- Hazelnut spread for the face and to cover the strawberry slices
- Marshmallow creme for the white above the eyes, around the nose, and outlining the strawberry slices
- Blueberries for the eyes and nose

Board Member Highlight

Elisabeth Hardiman, DVM, Member of the NALZS General Board of Directors



Why did you get involved with this organization?

I believe this is really the only thing that our community lacks, a way for everyone to connect with animals [and] learn about conservation of the species in our area and [around] the world. A zoo would help focus these efforts and inspire our young children to get involved.

How do you like to spend your time outside of NALZS?

I love traveling, scuba diving, being outdoors, hiking, biking, and enjoying good food/wine whenever I have the chance.

What is your favorite animal, and why?

Dolphins. They are truly a remarkable species that I have connected with since I was a young girl. And as a veterinarian, I have had the privilege to work on them during my career, and I continue to be amazed by their intelligence.



Share Your Opinion!

Help us out by taking a survey for our Quality of Life study. Just go to [this page](#) or scan the code below!



Let's ROAR and Have Our Voices Heard!

Contact your county legislative delegation office today, and tell them to say yes to local legislation that will help create and fund a zoo in North Alabama. Learn how to reach out the easy way at NALZS.org/help

Thank You to Our Donors

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Make sure your family or company are part of the permanent honor wall and donor display at the zoo!

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Donations are tax-deductible.



It's easy, just visit the site below.

nalzs.org/ClaimYourSpot

