



**NALZS**  
NORTH ALABAMA  
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# Annual Report 2022 - 2023

# Who We Are

## The NALZS Mission

- Connect the communities and visitors of North Alabama with the world's wild places and wildlife;
- Be a standard of conservation, research, action, and education;
- And inspire a better tomorrow;

while establishing a world-class zoo and aquarium.

## NALZS Is...



### **A Registered State of Alabama Nonprofit Corporation With IRS 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Status**

No one owns any share of the corporation, nor can anyone receive any share of its profits. We are governed by an unpaid Board of Directors and run by a volunteer corporate staff.

### **A Zoological Society**

A zoological society is an organization interested in promoting fields of study, preservation, and conservation related to the animal kingdom. While a zoo and aquarium is a major focus of ours, we're not waiting until we have one. We're actively engaged in conservation and education activities in the community today.

### **"A Zoo For You, North Alabama"**

This is our campaign umbrella for fundraising and creating public awareness for the forthcoming zoo and aquarium.

# Board Members

## General Board of Directors

**Board Chair** Tish Henderson; Tish Hardric & Associates, LLC  
**Vice Chair** Elizabeth Hardiman, DVM; Midtown Veterinary Practice  
**Treasurer** Nicole Reynolds; Apparel Lab  
**Secretary** Desirea Stewart; Arrowhead Conferences & Events  
William "Willie" Nelson; US Dept of Defense  
Christie Woodruff; Madison County School District

## Founding Board of Directors

**Chair** Cliff May; Torch Technologies  
Ethan A Woodruff; Integrated Solutions for Systems  
William "Willie" Nelson; US Dept of Defense  
**Ex-Officio** Andy Crocker; Dynetics

## Executive Board of Advisors

Rep. Parker Moore; State of Alabama Legislature  
Jenny Askins; Destination Huntsville  
David Holt; Loftin Holt LLP  
Joel Hamilton; Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo

## Advisory Board

Morgyn Morris; Franklin Covey  
Rodney Robertson; Auburn University Huntsville Research Center  
Lisa Smith; The Offices at Spenryn and Tradebank of Huntsville  
Tim Holcombe; Community Member  
Kendall East; SAHP  
Jennifer Graham, DVM; Graham  
Veterinary Consulting  
Krystal Valich; Yulista Holding

# The Year's Highlights

NALZS included in Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville list of local charities

**November  
2022**

**April  
2023**

Hosted KidsFest with 4,500 attendees

**June  
2023**

- Be a Little Wild Nature camp at Camp Helen hosted 15 campers, including 3 full scholarships
- Two sessions of Be a Little Wild Nature camp at Hays Nature Preserve hosted 30 campers, including 4 full scholarships
- Hosted first quarterly patron meeting to meet staff and engage with the mission

**August  
2023**

- Recruited 15 volunteers to serve our first adopt-a-spot clean-up event at Indian Creek Greenway
- Hosted first gala and silent auction

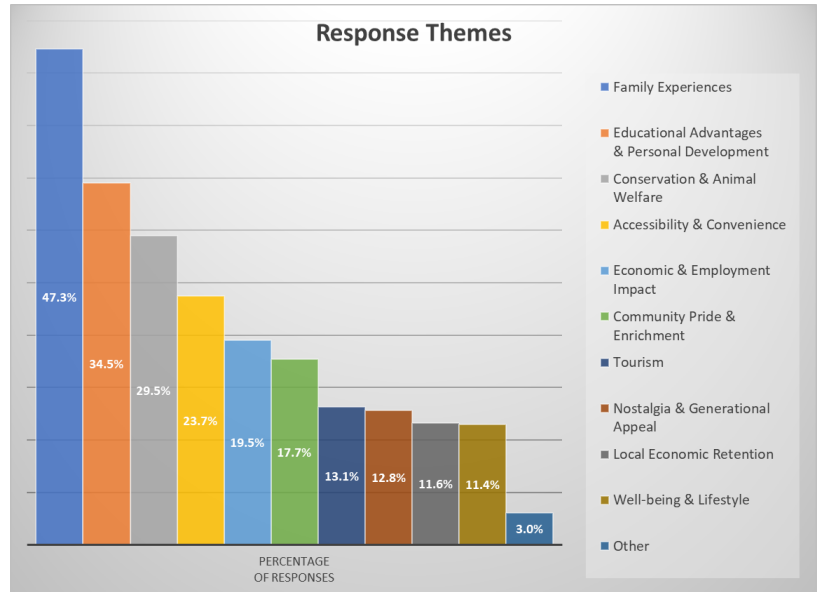
# Executive Director Report

At NALZS, we believe things can always change for the better. Maybe we're just optimistic by nature. When we started the process of building a zoo in North Alabama, we wanted to make sure it wasn't just us. We asked residents of our area if they also wanted a zoo, and why.

We received 594 responses, which provided so much insight into our neighbors and what a zoo would mean for them. It also told us that we aren't the only optimistic ones who believe change is possible.

The individuals who responded said they wanted a zoo for these reasons:

But numbers are only so inspiring. Some of the stories were so touching, and offered a personal perspective. Here's one in particular:



*I absolutely love zoos and now that I am a mom, I love taking my boys. My family is blessed to have the means to travel to visit zoos in nearby cities, but we would love to have a local zoo to visit frequently. There are many families who do not have the opportunity to travel to a zoo outside of the community. I previously worked in an inner city school in Memphis. One Saturday, I got to take one of my kindergarten students to visit the zoo. On the ride over I remember asking what animal she wanted to see at the zoo and listing off some examples. The little girl quickly responded that she wanted to see a giraffe. A few minutes later, she asked, "Do they really have a giraffe movie there?" Just before arriving, I realized that my precious student had never visited a zoo, and did not, in fact, know what a zoo was. I will never forget the look on her face when we walked through those gates. It became one of many zoo visits for us, and the next time we went I included her older brothers. Bringing a zoo to North Alabama would provide some children with their only opportunity to visit a zoo. Visiting a zoo can open a world of possibilities!*

*Very Respectfully,*

*Emily*

*Athens, AL*

Thank you to everyone who has offered their inspiring stories, supported the mission financially, and helped to fuel our optimism over the last five years. We wouldn't be where we are today if not for your belief that change is possible.

*Ethan Woodruff*



# ConZOOvation

NALZS believes so strongly in the benefits of the outdoors, sometimes we get out there and maintain it ourselves!

NALZS adopted Indian Creek Greenway in 2023 as part of Huntsville's Alabama's Adopt-a-Spot program.

Volunteers meet every other month to pick up trash in the area to make the space more enjoyable for humans and more habitable for wildlife.

During 2023, 37 volunteers collected trash to put the NALZS mission into motion.



# EdZOOcation

By investing in the curiosity of children, NALZS is preparing the next generation of engineers, rocket designers, astrophysicists, and cybersecurity experts. No matter their specialized expertise as adults, they all began their lives as curious children exploring their environments by observing the stars, catching insects, or building forts.

NALZS develops the natural curiosity of children by hosting events across North Alabama for children of all ages, including summer camps and high school science competitions.

Nature programs offer children a chance to learn about the ecology and biodiversity of North Alabama by catching native snakes, examining feathers, scales, and fur under microscope, exploring creeks, and getting dirty!

This year, NALZS offered programs for ages 3 to 18:

Be a Little Wild  
Little Tykes Day Camp

ages 3-5

43 participants

NALZS  
Reads

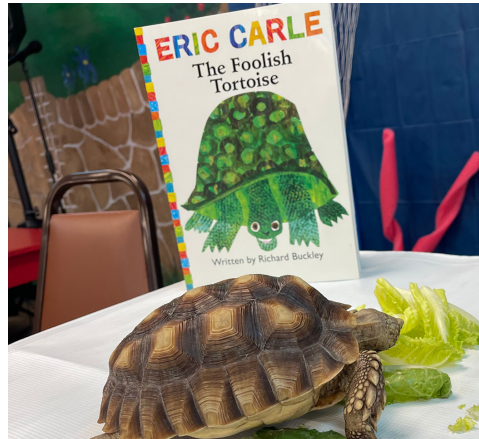
grades Pre-K through 5

124 participants

NALZS  
BE A  
LITTLE  
WILD

grades 2 through 6

45 participants



# EdZOOcation

All of our efforts resulted in these faces:



Mary (camper) and Taytum (youth camp counselor) have just finished dissecting owl pellets and are using the LCD microscopes to look at the jawbone of a rodent.



NALZS ambassador animal Twickenham visits camp on the sunniest days and loves to learn with the campers.



Campers learn how to identify and handle native, non-venomous snakes from Herpetologist Mr. Chase.

## Our education programs were only possible through collaborations with these local organizations:



NALZS hosts Little Tykes Day Camp at Burritt on the Mountain, where preschoolers ages 3 to 5 explore nature and encounter animals.



Located in Harvest, AL, Camp Helen hosts summer camp sessions in partnership with NALZS. Campers explore 32 acres of nature, with trails, a fish pond, and sport facilities. Almost all outdoors, there's not a screen in sight!



NALZS also hosts summer camps at Hays Nature Preserve, owned by the City of Huntsville. Campers explore 10 miles of trails and greenways that follow the Flint River and its associated oxbow lakes while identifying bird species and catching snakes.



Through the NALZS Reads program, volunteer staff visit public libraries in designated Title I school districts across Madison and Limestone Counties to read books and participate in animal-themed activities. This initiative is intended to bring nature to families who may live in areas without safe, walkable, or accessible outdoor spaces.



# Numbers at a Glance

28

Outreach &  
Education  
events

72

volunteers

79,500

children reached  
through events



\$75,180  
revenue

\$65,227  
expenses

500  
individual  
gifts

2,548  
volunteer  
hours



# Thanks to Our Volunteers, Donors, and Sponsors

## ZooCrew Volunteers

Felicia A.	Anna D.	Ashtin T.	David E.	Theresa D.
Jordan W.	Gracie P.	Allie P.	Chason I.	John W.
Madiha N.	Bostynn W.	Haley A.	Jo S.	Colton B.
Kathryn M.	Hannah H.	Erin L.	Sarah M.	Kathryn D.
Killiaen A.	Hayden H.	Sarah M.	Jen D.	Brittany B.
Jennie M.	Shawn S.	Amy E.	Amy G.	Tessa C.
Ellie M.	Jace T.	Elizabeth C.	Amy W.	Sharee L.
Austin K.	Gary H.	Giuliana B.	Shannon B.	Jayci C.
Kamryn I.	Elizabeth B.	Katie P.	Taylor P.	Alexis E.
Elliott B.	Addy W.	Tom L.	Mary C.	Maddie G.
Olivia C.	Nick S.	Barbara L.	Libby H.	Emily P.
Emma K.	Kady Y.	Buff G.	Felicia R.	Bri C.
Veera M.	Jean U.	Matthew P.	Gretchen V.	
Payton G.	Kacie R.	Summer S.	Brittany M.	
Taytum L.	Megan C.	Makayla S.	Kiley S.	

## Corporate Donors



## Individual Donors

### Explorer (\$2,500+)

Russ Alexander

### Advocate (\$1,000+)

Joseph Casson  
Andy Crocker  
Saralyn Dwyer  
Kendall East  
Elisabeth Hardiman

### Patron (\$500+)

Daniel Butler  
David Chasteen  
John Flippo  
Lacey Hodde  
Charlotte and Noah Houser  
Dan and Chris Jackson  
Kristen Nowell  
Kara Smeal  
Kendra Waldbusser

### Friend (\$250+)

Kiliaen Anderson  
Connie Jo Burgess  
Buff Gibbons  
Laura Hardy  
Beth Hudson  
Anson Koch  
Michelle Nelson  
Kiley Soule  
J Stipak  
Todd Switzer



# Individual Donors

## Supporters (Up to \$250)

Monica Alsup  
Amy Whitten  
Susan Anderson  
Richard Arnold  
Felicia Arnold  
Brad Bohan  
Lacy Boler  
Chris and Betty Bolte  
Michael Delen Boyd  
Megan Cain  
Timothy Callicutt  
Diane Chatfield  
Chet, Paula, & Dori DeCesaris  
Anna Ferry  
Debra Gerbers  
Megan Grasham  
Jena Gray  
Gary Henderson  
Amy Hill

Lisa Hill  
Naomi Howard  
Mark Hyatt  
Shana Hyde  
Kirsten Jaegersen  
Bill and Helen Jatko  
Billie Jatko  
Hailey Jordan  
Sue Kubley  
Monty Lewis  
Jill May  
Orry Moody  
Rachel Oliver  
Kerry Owen  
Tina Patton  
Bethany Payne  
Laura Pearsall-Lopez  
Matthew Pickard  
Julie Pitts

Mary Quince Norris  
Tayna Rains  
Mark Reed  
Jason and Katie Roberts  
Hannah Roberts  
Savannah and Kyle Ramage  
Michelle Salehi  
Gurden & Teresa Smith  
Lauren Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Swearingen  
Keeley Sykes  
Anna Walter  
Bob & Terry Wenslow  
Mitzi Werline  
Lee Wiggins  
Ethan & Christie Woodruff  
Monica Yother

## Sponsors

### NALZS Kids Festival Sponsors



### Special Thanks to Other Collaborators and Supporters



**"Be a Little Wild"**  
Nature Camps Sponsor:



**Collins  
Aerospace**

**NALZS**  
NORTH ALABAMA  
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

**Annual Report  
2022 - 2023**