Animal Tales

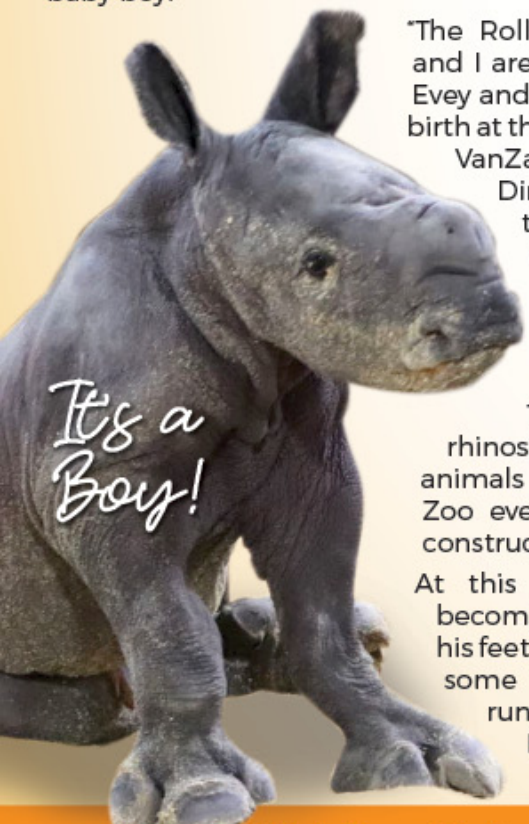
The inside scoop from your favorite Zoo! WINTER 2022

Rolling Hills Zoo Welcomes First Rhino Calf

Rolling Hills Zoo is excited to welcome the birth of the Zoo's first southern white rhino calf to the Zoo. Born on December 9, 2021, this special arrival has long been anticipated by the Zoo's staff as they watched Evey's baby bump grow ever since her arrival to the Zoo in 2020.

On the morning of December 9th, the staff began to see signs of labor. With an impending birth coming soon, the animal care staff made final preparations in the area, keeping Evey calm and comfortable while they waited nearby in anticipation. At 11:40 a.m. the calf was born, and by 11:50 a.m. it made its first attempts to stand and was up and walking around at 12:34 p.m.

The calf was attempting to nurse by 1:50 p.m. that afternoon, and was latched on to the teat by 2:24 p.m. Since that time the animal care team has been maintaining some distance to allow the mother and calf to bond, and for the calf to adjust to its new surroundings. The calf's sex has been confirmed, and he is a bouncing baby boy!



"The Rolling Hills Zoo staff and I are over the moon for Evey and the first baby rhino birth at the Zoo," shared Ryan VanZant, RHZ Executive Director. "This is a truly wonderful gift for our Rolling Hills Zoo family." RHZ has been home to southern white rhinos since April 1995. Those early rhinos were the first animals to move into the Zoo even as it was being constructed.

At this time the calf is becoming more steady on his feet and staff are seeing some "zoomies" as he runs around the stall. He has also been

rubbing on Evey's horn and nibbling on her (mouthing) in play. Soon we will need to purchase toys for the calf, such as weeble wobbles and boomer balls that are made especially for rhino calves. The calf won't be venturing outside until he is one month old and the temperatures are in the 60s.

Dr. Danelle Okeson, RHZ Veterinarian, has been able to do a visual vet check of the calf and cow (female rhino), and both are doing well. Being able to do a hands-on exam in the future will be determined by Evey's comfort level. White rhino calves typically gain up to 3 lbs. a day from birth onwards. Since we don't have a chute/scale system, the weight of the calf has not been determined, so monitoring nursing and urine intervals tells the animal care team that the calf is getting enough milk from mom.

Some of the other milestones the animal care team have been and will be watching for are:

- First and regular urination – which shows that the calf is getting enough to eat.
- The first defecation – which can take place at two to ten days of age.
- At less than one week to one month of age calves typically sample solid food.
- Between 12 to 15 months, calf weaning typically occurs, although calves will stay with their dam and even occasionally nurse for 2 to 3 years.

At this time Evey is cautious and protective of her calf, especially since she is still fairly new to RHZ and her surroundings, and this is the first time she has given birth here. "We want her to feel safe and comfortable," commented Brenda Gunder, RHZ Curator. "One sign of her comfort level will be when she starts accepting rubs from her keepers again, as Evey loves being rubbed and scratched."

Born at The Wilds Safari Park and Conservation Center, Evey was named for her birth date - December 31st.

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ROLLING HILLS ZOO

WE'RE HIRING

JOIN OUR RHZ TEAM

Looking to Stretch Yourself This Summer? Rolling Hills Zoo has just the ticket!

Rolling Hills Zoo Job Fair
Saturday, January 22, 2022 • 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Wildlife Museum Conference Center

We're Hiring for our Seasonal Staff:

- Gift Shops
- Admissions
- Animal Feed Stations
- Tram Drivers
- Restaurant
- Landscape

Job Perks:

- Flexible schedule
- Employee discounts
- Free Zoo admission

We'll also be hiring for an animal keeper!

Have experience caring for animals, especially exotics? Get on our radar for future opportunities! Please bring a current résumé, including work history.

For more info: rollinghillszoo.org/employment

WHO'S NEW AT THE ZOO

Brenna Fuller, *Zoo Keeper*

Growing up in Plattsburgh, NY, Brenna attended Paul Smith's College, Paul Smith, NY. She earned a degree in fisheries & wildlife science. Upon graduation she moved to Salina, KS where she accepted a position as Great Ape Keeper at RHZ. Along with taking care of the chimps and orangutan, she also cares for the Zoo's colobus monkeys and maned wolves. Her favorite species are vultures and condors.

Anna Klaas, *Cat Keeper*

Anna grew up in Marshalltown, Iowa and attended Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, MO, graduating with a biology degree with an emphasis in zoology, minoring in communications. Prior to RHZ she cared for South American species at El Paso Zoo, TX. As an RHZ Cat Keeper, Anna cares for tigers, lions, cougars, snow leopard, bears, flamingos, and is also cross-training with great apes. Her favorite species is river otters.

Anna Aylor, *Zoo Keeper*

Anna Aylor is RHZ's new small primate keeper. Prior to RHZ, Anna was at the Oglebay Good Zoo in West Virginia where she started her zoo career in 2018. Anna grew up in Columbus, Ohio and attended Wittenberg University, Springfield, OH. Her favorite species is African painted dogs.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Rolling Hills Zoo recently celebrated two milestone anniversaries this fall.

Starting at the Zoo in October 2011, Jessica Rodriguez, RHZ's Graphic Designer, celebrated her 10th anniversary at Rolling Hills Zoo. Her role has evolved over the years, including having more creative freedom and challenging projects to tackle. Jessica's incredible design talent can be seen in RHZ's Animal Tales newsletter, billboards, zoo & special event signage, social media posts, print & electronic advertising, posters and so much more!

One of her memorable projects included the *Penguin Landing* exhibit in 2013, when she designed all of the graphics for the exhibit, including the walls of the Earl Bane Gallery. By the time it came time to design RHZ's *20th Anniversary Gallery Show* in 2019, something that would be so impactful and important to the Zoo, she was prepared for the challenge. Another of Jessica's favorite creative challenges is fusing together the colors, themes and ideas to create each year's ZooLaLa invitations.

When asked about her favorite animal at the zoo, it is of course the baby rhino!

Zack Marks, RHZ's Kid's Country Keeper, recently celebrated his 20th anniversary at Rolling Hills Zoo. Prior to working at the Zoo, Zack had been shearing the llamas and sheep as a volunteer and happened to mention that he would be interested in working at the Zoo. Not long after, he became part of the animal care team, joining in November 2001.

At first Zack cared for the sloth bear, black bear, kangaroos, education animals, all of the quarantined animals in the Main Barn, along with the animals in Kid's Country. He's also cared for the macaws, lemurs, tamarins, longhorn cows, water buffalo, watussi cattle, takin, muntjac deer and grey wolves through the years.

Today, Zack cares for the camels, capybaras and the Kid's Country animals, as well as the animals housed at the Main Barn. His favorite animal has been the jandaya conure parakeet, (Baby) Darling, who would ride on Zack's shoulder as he worked in the Main Barn.

Zack's favorite memory is running the length of the outdoor chimp habitat as Tohlo kept up. Tohlo always won.

Zack has sheared over 100 sheep at RHZ, plus llamas, rocky mountain goats and the takin. Zack has also delivered many goats and lambs through the years. Several would not have survived without his help and expertise.

Gift From Jack Wilson Charitable Trust

With gratitude, Rolling Hills Zoo's Executive Director, Ryan VanZant, recently announced that the Zoo received a $100,000 gift from the Jack Wilson Charitable Trust for the construction of the Zoo's new African lion *Pride of the Prairie* experience.

"This transformational gift is providing the funding necessary to make this new experience at the Zoo an exceptional one for our guests, staff and of course, lions," shared VanZant. "We couldn't be more grateful to have the support from the Jack Wilson Charitable Trust and his family in bringing this unique experience to Salina while creating an amazing African lion encounter for the families who visit the Zoo."

Born in Salina, Kansas in 1924, Jack Wilson lived his entire life in Salina, where he was the eldest of three brothers. While Jack did not graduate from high school, Darrell, his younger brother, shared that Jack had the mind of an inventor.

Jack began his career in the flour milling industry where he worked for John J. Vanier. He advanced to become an electrician for the mill, and ultimately worked on designing new, more efficient equipment and processes. He was instrumental in designing the electrical system necessary to add air to flour to make the flour flow like water. This meant that the flour no longer had to be individually bagged and loaded onto trucks and trains. Instead, the flour could be blown through hoses and directly into trucks for hauling.

After he retired from the mill, Jack started a successful business called Special Purpose Controls. Special Purpose Controls built and sold electrical controls for irrigation equipment. These controls were sold both domestically and internationally. He continued to be an inventor and entrepreneur until his death in 2018.

Jack lived a conservative life which afforded him the ability to leave an impactful charitable legacy at his death through the Jack Wilson Charitable Trust. It is through his generous legacy that Jack Wilson is helping the *Pride of the Prairie* experience become a reality while touching hearts and igniting a passion to save wildlife for future generations.

Your Pride of the Prairie Construction Update

Following the ground breaking ceremony for Rolling Hills Zoo's new Pride of the Prairie experience on November 12, 2021, the African lions, Zalika and Kamali, made the move to their temporary "studio apartment" in the former Amur leopard habitat. With the lions no longer on site, it didn't take long for Hutton to put construction barriers up to keep guests safe as they began the "deconstruction" of the lion habitat.

First came the removal of the wooden viewing platform and the concrete sidewalk leading up to the lion enclosure. Since then the south of end of the outdoor habitat has been removed and the topography of the yard has been altered with additional dirt being brought in.

Work on the Pride of the Prairie African lion habitat is continuing to move along quickly as the footings for the new cave viewing area and the indoor den are poured. Soon forms for the concrete walls will be going up and the Pride of the Prairie will start to take shape.

If the winter weather cooperates, visitors can expect to see the rough shape of this new experience coming into view in the coming months. Completion of the Pride of the Prairie is expected in the late spring or early summer of 2022.

Animal Updates: What's New at the Zoo?

Tiger Cubs

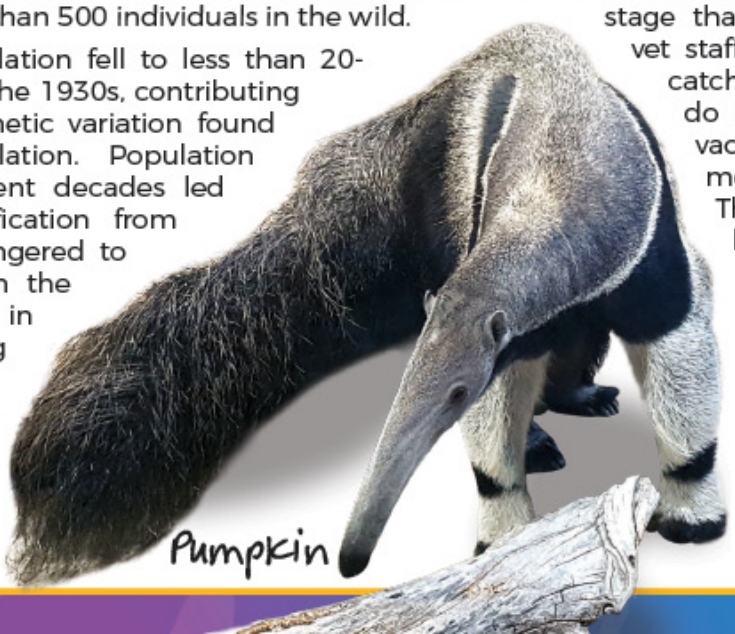
As the first tiger cubs born at Rolling Hills Zoo, Sasha and Nadya, now two years old, have separated from their family unit and moved on to new zoos, something that would naturally occur in the wild at their age. Nadya transferred to the Dakota Zoo in Bismark, North Dakota, while Sasha moved to Hogle Zoo in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Once they reach sexual maturity at 4 years old, Sasha and Nadya will be recommended for future breeding by the Species Survival Plan (SSP) – which is part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, of which RHZ is an accredited member. As of 2020, there were 107 Amur tigers (42 males and 65 females) at 47 institutions in the U.S. and Canada, with this pair being the only successful birth of Amur cubs 2019. For that reason, their breeding is vitally important for the SSP population.

"It's been a lot of fun watching these girls grow, and learning their personalities," commented Brenda Gunder, RHZ Curator. "While it is sad to see them leave we are proud of our contribution to the SSP population and look forward to watching them mature at their new homes."

Conservation Status: The Amur tiger is found primarily in the Russian Far East. Just in the past one hundred years, four of the nine subspecies (Bali, Caspian, Javan, and South China tigers) have all disappeared in the wild. Amur, Sumatran, and Malayan tigers are all thought to number fewer than 500 individuals in the wild.

The wild population fell to less than 20-30 animals in the 1930s, contributing to the low genetic variation found in this population. Population growth in recent decades led to its reclassification from Critically Endangered to Endangered on the IUCN Red List in 2007. Poaching of tigers and their prey are the primary threat to this population, with habitat loss, tiger-human conflicts, and infectious diseases posing as threats as well.



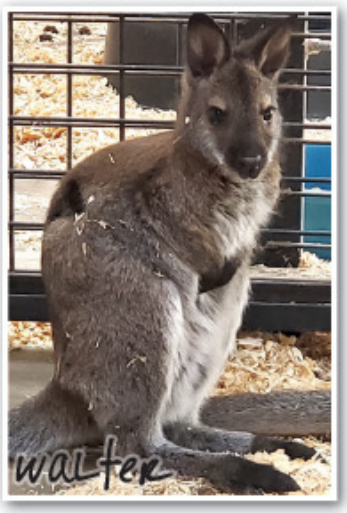
Pumpkin-Eater

Pumpkin, our new Giant Anteater, transferred to Rolling Hills Zoo in April and is doing very well as he gets used to his new schedule of waking up in the morning and sleeping at night. Now 2 years old, Pumpkin was born on November 26, 2019 on Thanksgiving (hence his name Pumpkin) at the Santa Ana Zoo in California. He likes to play in water and loves running around the yard, and boy can he run. Pumpkin is on the shy side and takes a little bit of time to warm up to new people. He enjoys playing with all kinds of enrichment, especially his cone – which is really a sight to see! When given whole produce, he enjoys shredding it to pieces.

The giant anteater is the largest of the four anteater species, reaching lengths of 6-8 feet. They are native to Central and South America, where they feed on termites and ants using their 2-foot-long, sticky tongue.

Conservation Status: According to the IUCN's (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List, the giant anteater is currently "Vulnerable" and declining. In addition to habitat loss to clear space for housing and commercial development, agricultural fires to burn sugar cane plantations before harvesting cause the deaths of giant anteaters from burn injuries. Sadly they are also hunted for food or killed as pests.

Our Joey Has A Name!



Born hairless, pink, and about the size of a lima bean, our little wallaby joey climbed into momma Gerdy's pouch and stayed there for roughly 280 days before being (what is known as) "young at foot," meaning the joey has fully vacated the pouch but is still nursing. It is at this stage that keepers and vet staff were able to catch the joey to do an exam, give vaccinations, and most importantly, determine the joey's sex. This wallaby joey is a male, and the keepers have named him Walter!

African Lions Move To "Suite Apartment"

With construction underway for the new Pride of the Prairie experience, our African lions, Zalika and Kamali, have found a new home in the former Amur leopard habitat, affectionately referred to as their "studio apartment". Here the lions are experiencing all types of

new enrichment, including the scents of the big cats: Darius, the former Amur leopard, the Amur tigers - Andrea and Dhenuka, the cougars - Charlie Bear and Bex, and Sherman the snow leopard; plus the colobus monkeys, chimpanzees, orangutans and flamingos. Visually there are more things to watch too, including the flamingos coming and going from their home, and now with the leaves off the trees they can sit on the hill in the back of the yard and keep an eye on those tigers.

Neelix Moves Off-Exhibit

Neelix, our scimitar-horned oryx calf, has been moved to the zoo's off-exhibit pasture, mimicking him leaving the herd as he would in the wild.

Born on February 24, 2021, Neelix is now 11 months old, and the time has come to separate him from his mother, Seska, and our other female, Lucy. In the wild, scimitar-horned oryx live in herds led by one male. This lead bull will begin to push the young male calves out of the herd at 6 months of age and ahead of their first birthday, and before they become too interested in his females.

Small Primates Move To Winter Homes

Looking for the small primates now that winter has set in? You can find the ring-tailed lemurs, black and white ruff lemurs, and cotton-topped tamarins in their winter housing in the rhino barn where they are appreciating the warmth of the barn on cold nights!

Journey Joins RHZ

Journey is our new Aldabra tortoise who came to RHZ from the Greensboro Science Center in Greensboro, North Carolina. He is approximately 20 years old. Journey is shy but very friendly and enjoys exploring his new yard, neck rubs and shell scratches.

Did you know that Aldabra giant tortoises could easily live well over 100 years? Helen, our female Aldabra tortoise, is only 51 years young!

Cover article continued...

Evey will turn fifteen at the end of the month.

While her parents have moved to other zoos as part of the Species Survival Plan (SSP), Evey remained at The Wilds Safari Park as part of their white rhino herd, which is managed as one large social group. The only rhinos that were not born there are two adult breeding males.

Evey made the move to Rolling Hills Zoo in October 2020 on a breeding recommendation by the SSP of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), of which Rolling Hills Zoo is an accredited member.

Evey had been part of a 15 member white rhino herd (or "crash") at The Wilds Safari Park and Conservation Center at Cumberland, Ohio prior to her arrival at RHZ.

Since she had been with their male rhino, Kengele, who was part of the herd, RHZ staff were hopeful that she was pregnant when she arrived and have been monitoring her pregnancy ever since. White rhino gestation can last 16 to 18 months.

An experienced mother, Evey has successfully given birth to three offspring: Jaycambo, a male born in 2011; Agnes, a female born in 2014; and Gordon, a male born in 2017, and has been a great mother to all three. While Jaycambo is no longer at The Wilds Safari Park, Agnes and Gordon have remained as part of the herd.

The white rhino, the second largest land mammal after the elephant, is a major conservation success story after having been brought back from the very brink of extinction. But the current surge in poaching for their horns, particularly in South Africa, has seen record numbers killed in recent years. Urgent efforts are now underway to stop the poaching and end the illegal trade. In Africa today, more than 20,000 southern white rhinos now thrive in protected sanctuaries and are classified as near threatened.

Wild at Heart

Surprise your sweetheart(s) with a special Wild At Heart package!

Wild at Heart Packages can be delivered for FREE *within* Salina on Valentine's Day!

You also have the option to ship a WAH package(s) to your out-of-town sweetheart *(S&H charges apply)*.

Deadlines: In-town delivery is February 10th. Out-of-town shipped packages is February 3rd.

$35 Wild at Heart Package

Includes a Gift Bag Filled With:

- Stuffed Plush of Adopted Animal
- Valentine Chocolate
- Framed Certificate of Adoption
- Glossy Photo of Animal
- Animal Fact Sheet

You Pick the Adopted Animal:

Lion

Baby Rhino

Giraffe

Bear

Ordering Online is Easy!

Go to rollinghillszoo.org, click on **Info & Events**, and then click on **Wild at Heart** to find our online form.

Questions? Call 785.827.9488 ext. 122.

Ordering Not Available Until January 1, 2022

SAVE THE DATE FOR

greater salina community foundation

2022 MATCH MADNE$$

Plans are underway for the 11th anniversary of this year's Greater Salina Community Foundation's Match Madness, and with your support Rolling Hills Zoo could be a major player this year, as together we build the Zoo's endowment.

Slated for THURSDAY, MARCH 24th, this year's event will be a 24-hour extravaganza of online generosity from 12 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. During this special day you will be able to make a gift to Rolling Hills Zoo's endowment that will be matched up to 50% by the Greater Salina Community Foundation (up to $3,000 per person, per organization or $6,000 per household, per organization) from a matching pool of $250,000. Donations can be made by cash, credit, IRA rollover or stock.

To qualify for the matching funds, your donation must be made online at **matchmadnessgscf.org** on March 24th before 11:59 p.m., dropped off at the Salina Fieldhouse (140 N. 5th Street, Salina) from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on March 24th, or if mailed in – your envelope must be postmarked by March 24, 2022.

The return to the Salina Fieldhouse means the return of food trucks, free snacks, non-profit booths, and of course Rolling Hills Zoo will be there for all of the fun.

There's more! Rolling Hills Zoo will be vying for bonus dollars during the free throw and half-court shot contests held during Match Madness and sponsored by BE Wealth. Plus, three additional bonus prizes will be awarded. The first two additional bonus prizes go to the top two organizations with the most donors, and the third prize will go to the organization with the most improved number of donors from the previous year. (To qualify, donors must donate $10 or more.)

So mark your calendars now for our tip-off on March 24th where you will play a key role in the game day excitement.

SPRING BREAK: GO WILD

MARCH 12-20, 2022

EVERY DAY, ALL DAY:

- Keeper Encounters Throughout the Day
- Live Animal Encounters
- Tram Rides ($5)
- Kid's Country
- Cotton Candy, Popcorn & Sno Cones ($)
- Daily Restaurant Specials
- Gift Shop Specials ($)

All activities subject to change without notice.

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ZOORIFIC EGGSTRAVAGANZA!

SATURDAY, APRIL 9th

1/2-PRICE ADMISSION ALL DAY FOR CHILDREN 12 & UNDER

Activities from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

- **Egg Hunt at the Bunny Patch** - Children 12 & under will receive an egg carton to fill with eggs hidden in the patch. *(One visit to the Bunny Patch. 12 egg limit per child.)*
- **Photo Opportunities at the Bunny Patch**
- **Golden Egg Hunt with THREE Golden Eggs** hidden in the Zoo, each with a $100 RHZ Gift Shop gift certificate. *(Will be found within viewing & reaching distance of walking paths.)*
- **Keeper Encounters Throughout the Day**
- **Live Animal Encounters**
- **Photos with the Easter Bunny** from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. *(Bring your own camera.)*
- **Sno Cones, Cotton Candy & Popcorn ($)**
- **Overlook Restaurant Lunch Special ($)**

For more information on ANY of these, or other upcoming events:
Call (785) 827-9488, ext. 122 or visit our website: **www.rollinghillszoo.org**

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Return Service Requested

If you no longer wish to receive the Animal Tales newsletter, please contact Kathy Tolbert at kathy@rollinghillszoo.org or by calling 785-827-9488 ext. 116.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

JAN 4	Toddler Tuesday
JAN 22	Rolling Hills Zoo Job Fair
FEB 1	Toddler Tuesday
FEB 14	Wild at Heart Deliveries
MAR 1	Toddler Tuesday
MAR 12-20	Spring Break: GO WILD!
MAR 13	Peak-Season Hours Begin *We're Open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.*
MAR 24	Match Madness
APR 5	Toddler Tuesday
APR 9	ZOOrific EGGstravaganza

Annual Report Now Available

In effort to conserve our natural resources, **Rolling Hills Zoo's 2020 Annual Report is now available online at www.rollinghillszoo.org/about-us.**

A printed version can also be sent to you. Email kathy@rollinghillszoo.org with the subject line "Annual Report Request". Please include your name and mailing address with your email.

TODDLER TUESDAY

Toddler Tuesday is the 1st Tuesday of Each Month!

January 4th
February 1st
March 1st
April 5th

Toddlers will enjoy a special story, learn more about the animal featured in the story, create a fun craft, and enjoy playtime!

This event is included with paid admission. Members get in FREE!

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Great things going on

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Saving Wildlife

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