

Cherry Brook Zoo Going on Safari

By Jane Barry, The Greater Saint John Community Foundation

It might surprise you to learn that there is a natural setting within Rockwood Park where "over 40,000 sets of feet" pass by every year. Young and old, they are visiting Cherry Brook Zoo (CBZ). The only day it isn't possible is December 25. Otherwise from 10-4pm any day, the wide variety of creatures, great and small, will be waiting to greet you. Winter can be a photographer's dream and "the snow leopard is in her glory" says Lynn Smith, the Board Chair. Llamas, tigers, foxes and of course, reindeer, love the cold. CBZ's Mission is to inspire a genuine concern for all animal species through a commitment to: conservation, research, education and recreation and to achieve financial stability for the CBZ while maintaining accreditation standards of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums.



Wayne Smith of W. Smith and Co. is donating a trinity diamond ring to the Cherry Brook Zoo's auction. Lynda Collrin, left, and Lynn Smith from the zoo hold some more items up for auction. Photo: Káté Braydon/Telegraph-Journal

Smith says most zoos in Canada can raise about 2/3 of their annual budget and rely on government funding or a significant corporate sponsor for most of the balance. They are pleased to have been beneficiaries of several estates in recent years as well as occasional grants from funders like the Greater Saint John Community Foundation. The board is pleased to have some support with their annual budget of roughly \$500,000 from Saint John, Rothesay and Quispamsis, but are promoting the concept of being considered a regional facility, which would come under the Commission charged with oversight of several such facilities in Greater Saint John. This approach could give them the stability they need to continue. Next year is important because their 35 acre zoo must meet national accreditation and anticipated capital costs to meet those standards.

Fundraising is another needed component to keep the CBZ operating. Maggie Zed, an enthusiastic new board member, is heading up a special event committee for their Safari and Auction noting their "incredible volunteer base. I am learning more about how the zoo functions" she states. "Growing up in Winnipeg, I have a soft spot for them" she adds. She feels zoos are a part of kids' lives and need more partnering with other community institutions. She cites CBZ's successful breeding of primates and species at risk program. Sam Shaw, Vice Chair, Dr. John S. Mackay, Past Chair, Alice O'Neill, Dr. Stephen Justason, Brian Munroe, Mac Trueman, Theresa Mullin and J. (Rory) Grant also serve on the board.

Saturday, February 19, the fundraiser for the Zoo, a Casino-style evening, packed with entertainment, food, amazing prizes and auction items takes place at Lily Lake Pavilion. For the price of a \$50 ticket, a portion of which is tax-receiptable, guests will receive \$20,000 in casino money, delectable hors d'ouvres and desserts, chances on half hourly draws, and an opportunity to go home with a \$2,000 trinity diamond ring. W. Smith Fine Jewellers is generously donating the ring, which will be drawn for at evening's end. Since only 175 tickets will be sold, the odds for success are high.

As many as thirty original works of art will be featured in various auctions throughout the evening. Prospective purchasers have the option to bid on some items through silent auction or purchase outright for a set price called "Bid or Buy Now". Beatrice Northrup, formerly of Rothesay, and David Strickland of Quispamsis have generously donated the art, both oils and watercolours. Some depict familiar Saint John streetscapes and others nature and wildlife. In addition, accommodation, dining out and a wide selection of goods and services have been donated. "When you buy a ticket you also show appreciation and recognition to the many people and businesses who donate and support us" says Lynda Collrin, Director, Zoo Development.

Greater Saint John's municipalities are encouraging you to get out and enjoy the activities and beauty of winter Feb. 18-20. Lily Lake Pavilion is a partner in Safari Casino and one of the sites of Winterfest 2011. As long-time zookeepers Len and Lynda Collrin, say "The animals of your Zoo are counting on your support." Tickets can be obtained at Lily's Café, Day Tripping, online by visiting www.cherrybrookzoo.com or the Zoo (506) 634-1440.



Community Profile is a weekly column highlighting community causes and work done by non-profit organizations in the Greater Saint John area. It is contributed by Jane Barry, executive director of The Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Contact the foundation at 506-672-8880, sjfoundation@nb.aibn.com To view other Community Profiles go to www.saint-john-foundation.nb.ca