

To: Board of Management

From: Shanna Young  
Executive Director  
Marketing & Communications

Subject: **2010 SPECIAL FEATURE AND EVENTS PLAN**

Date: 2010-03-19

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**Summary:**

This report outlines the key exhibit features and special events planned for 2010.

**Recommendation:**

**It is recommended that this report be received for information.**

**Financial impact:**

Funds are provided in the approved 2010 Operating Budget.

**Background:**

The Zoo conducts regular research of its consumer base to understand many important attributes including what motivates them to visit and how often they visit. The Toronto Zoo, like most zoos, has a highly loyal visitor base who visits frequently. The implication of this is that the Zoo must find ways of keeping the experience fresh and provide relevant, fun and compelling reasons to return. Therefore, an extensive and year round events plan is key in generating attendance to the Zoo during the peak summer months and during the shoulder and winter seasons when families are most able to attend.

As in previous years, the objectives for the 2010 Special Feature and Events Plan are:

1. Generate incremental attendance and revenue throughout the year.
2. Generate awareness of the Zoo's conservation and education mandates.
3. Generate attendance to the Zoo within cultural communities in the GTA.
4. Keep the Zoo top of mind when people are planning family outings.
5. Provide visitors with added value experiences.
6. Generate awareness of the Zoo's unique positioning and new special features/events.

### **Comments/Discussion:**

The Zoo has a rich and varied special events program prepared for 2010. Key features are:

**1. Sharks at Stingray Bay Exhibit-Saturday, May 22 to Monday, October 11, 2010**

Back by popular demand, the interactive Sharks at Stingray Bay exhibit returns from May 22-October 11, 2010. This one of a kind exhibit pool will feature up to 30 cownose and southern stingrays, bamboo and nurse sharks and, new for 2010, horseshoe crabs. Sharks at Stingray Bay is a \$3 per person admission fee per visit and Children 3 and under are FREE. Fee is applicable to Zoo Members. Sharks at Stingray Bay is situated within Zellers Discovery Zone at the Group Events Tent.

**2. Award-winning Tundra Trek-Permanent Exhibit**

The new 10-acre Tundra Trek features a new home for our three young polar bears, Arctic wolves, Arctic fox, snowy owls and reindeer. Visitors can go eye-to-eye with the majestic Polar bears through their maternity den and enjoy a spectacular underwater viewing from the ice cave. Tundra Trek is free with Zoo admission.

**3. Drum Café-Saturday, June 26 to Monday, September 6, 2010**

Visitors will have the opportunity to participate in the only mass drumming session in Ontario with the dynamic Drum Café! This interactive and liberating experience will teach visitors, of all ages, simple drumming rhythms and the importance of working as a team. At the end of the show, visitors will be left feeling energized and exhilarated and ready to explore the Zoo and its' over 5,000 animals. Shows are free with Zoo admission and run daily at 3:30pm and 4:30pm in the Waterside Theatre.

**4. Seafood For Thought™ -Tuesday, June 22, 2010 6pm to 8:30pm**

The Toronto Zoo will host over 500 guests at the second annual Seafood For Thought™ Fundraiser Event. This exclusive and ticketed event, in support of sustainable seafood, offers delectable tasting prepared by chefs from some of Toronto's top restaurants including Amuse-Bouche (Executive Chef Jason Inniss), C5 Restaurant Lounge (Executive Chef Ted Corrado), Trios Bistro (Executive Chef Morgan Wilson) and Cheese Boutique as well as pairings from local wineries and micro-brewers. This event is a result of the Zoo's partnership with Seafood Watch and Ocean Wise. Both programs empower consumers, seafood purveyors, and the media to make healthy sustainable seafood choices to ensure a future with abundant ocean wildlife.

**5. African Cultural Program-July to September TBD**

Traditional and contemporary visual artists and performers will transform the Toronto Zoo's African Savanna into an interactive Market Place for visitors to experience, learn and engage in the African experience.

**6. 2010 Year of Biodiversity**

The Toronto Zoo will support this year-long program through interpretive signage and educational programs.

## **7. Zellers Discovery Zone May to October 2010**

The Kids Zoo, Splash Island and Waterside Theatre offer visitors hours of interactive fun and education, free with admission.

### **Highlighted Event Activities by Quarter:**

#### **Q1**

Winterfest in Ward 43

Groundhog Day media event

Love Bugs at the Zoo for Family Day weekend - sponsored by 98.1 CHFI

Screening of "Free Willy – Escape to Pirate's Cove" with Bindi Irwin

March Break Goes Wild-Special Event for March Break

Group Events Showcase Event

Earth Hour

#### **Q2**

Easter "Egg"Stravaganza

Earth Day's Party for the Planet celebration

Spring Toad Festival event

International Migratory Bird Day event

Sharks at Stingray Bay opens

Mother's Day with boom 97.3

Zellers Discovery Zone fully opens for the season

Great Strides Walk for Cystic Fibrosis

Robert Bateman Get to Know Program Winner's Reception

Freestyle Soccer Show in Waterside Theatre

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Seafood For Thought<sup>TM</sup>

Father's Day BBQ, presented by Mark's Work Wearhouse

Wild Toy Animal Hospital Event

African Cultural Program begins-TBD

Drum Café

#### **Q3**

Drum Cafe

98.1 CHFI Day

Make a Wish's MacGregor Sock Scavenger Hunt

YTV Weird on Wheels

KidSummer Day

Launch Events for Opening of Tundra Trek

Orangutan Awareness Weekend

Hbc Rewards Day

Senior's Day

## **Q4**

World Animal Day Celebration with National Geographics Kids

Boo at the Zoo

Halloween Howl Event

Oasis Zoo Run

Remembrance Day Ceremonies

35th Annual Christmas Treats Walk

8th Annual New Year's Family Countdown

### **Media Sponsorship:**

To support many of these events, media sponsorships have been negotiated and secured. Leading Toronto media, CTV, boom 97.3 and 98.1 CHFI, have come on board as our annual sponsors and to support shoulder season events in addition to providing incremental promotional media weight to our paid advertising plan. This provides the Zoo with upwards of \$1.2 million in added value, extending our advertising voice throughout the year.

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Shanna E. Young

Executive Director

Marketing & Communications