



# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SANTA BARBARA ZOO OPENS NEW \$7.5 MILLION "DISCOVERY PAVILION" EDUCATION CENTER

- 30 Years in the Making, Supported Entirely by Public Donations
- 2,300 Square Foot Classroom Serves Award-winning Education Programs, Including Zoo Camp, and New Adult Programs
- Animal Kitchen and New Art Gallery Now on View to the Public
- Family Fun Opening Day Celebration Held Saturday, March 22

Santa Barbara, CA, March 7, 2014 – The Zoo raised \$7.5 million from the Santa Barbara community to design and build its Discovery Pavilion, a new education center which opens to the public on March 22, 2014.

“When I started here as Education Curator in 1982, we discussed the pressing need for indoor space for our programs,” recalls Zoo Director Nancy McToldridge. “We have never really had a good indoor classroom to support our award-winning educational programs. The possibilities here are inspiring, and come at a great time in the Zoo’s history.”



Last year, the Zoo celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, set an attendance record (at nearly 500,000), and provided more public programs than ever before. More than 250,000 children, teens, adults participate in formal and informal educational offerings, and more children visit the Zoo than any other single institution in Santa Barbara.

“The funding for Discovery Pavilion came entirely from the community, businesses, foundations and Zoo members,” notes McToldridge. “We are so grateful to the donors who made this thirty-year dream a reality.” The Santa Barbara Zoo is a private nonprofit corporation, and depends on community support, not tax dollars, for operations and improvements.

## Opening Day Celebration on March 22

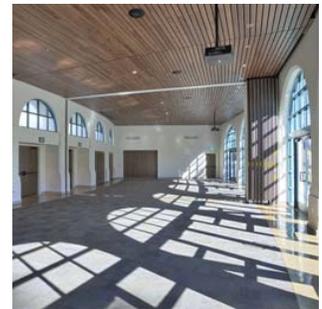


The Zoo celebrates the Discovery Pavilion’s opening on Saturday, March 22 with special family fun “Discover the Zoo” activities from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Guests of all ages can embark on a “fun hunt” to complete of up to a dozen activities in the Discovery Pavilion and throughout the Zoo, including comparing their “wingspan” to that of a California condor, making Inca tern “moustache masks,” learning fun-facts about Amur leopards, and much more. Prizes include animal encounters, train rides and giraffe feedings. The Animal Kitchen will be open for public observation and a new 25-Foot California Condor Climbing Wall debuts. There are rides on electric “Animals on the Move;” Creepy Crawly Encounters; and appearances by Duncan the T. Rex, Louie the Lemur and Gene the Giraffe. Many activities are free with admission. For more information, visit [www.sbzoo.org](http://www.sbzoo.org).

## About Discovery Pavilion

Discovery Pavilion stands on the site of the former capybara exhibit (which moved to a new space near the Zoo Train Station) and a staff lounge, which was gutted and integrated into the new building. Construction began in August 2012, and included improvements to the adjacent walkway leading to the popular Eewww reptile, amphibian and insect exhibit and the short-clawed otter exhibits to bring it into American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. Other accessibility upgrades span the Zoo’s entrance through the parking lot to the bus stop on Ninos Drive.

At the heart of Discovery Pavilion is 2,300 square feet of open space, which can be configured into two classrooms (the Frank Jordano Classroom, and the Sharon and David Bradford Classroom) or left as one large area. The inspiration for the space’s curved wall of windows and doors came from Santa Barbara’s historic railroad roundhouse, once located nearby on Cabrillo Avenue.



The versatile classrooms serve as the hub of the Zoo’s many education programs, including the award-winning Zoo Camp, and also overnight Zoo Snoozes, school field trips, keeper talks, and new offerings including a pilot program for local homeschoolers, and after-hours and overnight Safaris for kids. New programming for adults includes evening “At the Watering Hole” talks by experts in conservation and the natural world, debuting Friday March 21 (full schedule and ticket information at [www.sbzoo.org](http://www.sbzoo.org)).

Projectors and video screens are installed on both sides, and window shades can be lowered from the ceiling for presentations. A hearing loop system was installed, which allows people wearing hearing aids to tune in to the room's audio.

Nearby, guests can observe the preparation of food for the animals at a large window overlooking the new Ridley-Tree Animal Kitchen. An AV system allows guests to hear staff talk about how they create healthy and balanced meals for the Zoo's animals.

The Volentine Family Gallery, open to the public during regular Zoo hours, features changing exhibits that relate to the natural world and the Zoo's mission of conservation, education, research, and recreation. "Islands of Change" is the debut exhibition, and features photographs of the Channel Islands by Ralph Clevenger and the Galapagos Island by Mike Verbois (for more information, visit [www.sbzoo.org](http://www.sbzoo.org)).

Behind the scenes, the new Diane Pearson Volunteer Lounge and Library for the hundreds of Zoo volunteers to receive training, read, research, and socialize. The larger and more diverse Mimi and Dennis Muraoka Library includes digital and online resources as well as unique animal artifacts; it is open by appointment only. Offices for the Zoo's education, conservation and research, human resources, and other staff are also in Discovery Pavilion.

Discovery Pavilion gardens and outdoor spaces are open to the public during Zoo hours, and Zoo Campers have the new outdoor activity area, sponsored by Deckers Outdoor Corporation. The Crawford Family Terrace and lawn area near the classrooms offer views of the newly-landscaped, ADA-compliant walkway.

The building's design fits into the Zoo's existing architectural style and was carefully considered to avoid dominating the courtyard, which has retail, food service, and administrative buildings. More than 30 solar light tubes provide natural light into the building, and a solar array is positioned on the classroom's roof and generates electricity for the Zoo.

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*Known as one of the world's most beautiful zoos, the **Santa Barbara Zoo** is located on 30 acres of botanic gardens and is home to nearly 500 individual animals in open, naturalistic habitats. It is accredited by the [Association of Zoos & Aquariums](http://www.aaz.org) (AZA), representing the highest level of animal care, and participates in AZA endangered species programs for Asian elephant, California condor, Channel Island fox, and Western lowland gorilla, among others. A private 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, the Santa Barbara Zoo depends on community support, not tax dollars, for operations and improvements.*

*The Zoo is open daily from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; general admission is \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors aged 65+, \$10 for children 2-12, and children under 2 are free. Parking is \$6.*

*Visit [www.sbzoo.org](http://www.sbzoo.org).*