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Zoo Launches Kids4Nature Project Zoo guests vote to fund conservation efforts

Kids4Nature, a new program at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, invites every zoo guest to make a difference for wildlife conservation. By voting at the **Kids4Nature** kiosk, zoo guests help direct the zoo's \$50,000 annual conservation commitment to projects locally and around the globe.

"The Fort Wayne Children's Zoo is a conservation leader," says Zoo Director Jim Anderson. "This program invites every single zoo guest to actively participate in our mission to protect endangered species."

How Kids4Nature Works

The zoo has set aside ten cents for each of its 500,000 annual visitors to create a \$50,000 **Kids4Nature** conservation fund.

On every visit, zoo guests receive a recycled metal washer that represents their symbolic 10 cent contribution. At the **Kids4Nature** kiosk near the Lion Drinking Fountain, guests read about three conservation projects featured for 2013. Guests cast their "vote" by dropping the washer in the corresponding spiral wishing well. Each vote helps determine the amount of funding received by each project.

Additional votes can be made with real quarters, nickels, and dimes, and 100% of any added contributions will go toward the chosen **Kids4Nature** project.

"Because the zoo's income is generated by visitor fees, the money sent to these conservation projects truly comes from our guests," says Anderson. "**Kids4Nature** directly connects zoo guests to the conservation work that we do."

2013 Kids4Nature Featured Projects

Three projects will share 50% of all **Kids4Nature** funds in 2013, with the allocation proportional to the number of votes received. The projects are:

Javan Gibbons – Indonesia

Kids4Nature supports the connection between these small endangered apes' rain forest habitat and coffee plantations in Java.

Sandhill Cranes – Indiana

Kids4Nature supports efforts encouraging Midwestern farmers and landowners to protect important sandhill crane habitat and food sources.

African Lions – Kenya

Kids4Nature supports researchers and Maasai warriors working to save wild lions, whose population has declined from 200,000 to just 30,000 in the last 50 years.

The remaining 50% of **Kids4Nature** funds will be shared by about 20 local and international conservation organizations.

“Conservation is a big part of what we do at the zoo,” says Anderson. “We’re excited to give our guests a chance to participate in our efforts.”

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About the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo: The Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo is northeast Indiana’s largest tourist attraction, hosting more than 500,000 guests annually. The zoo was voted Indiana’s #1 “Gotta-Do Summer Attraction” in 2012 and is consistently named one of the nation’s **Top Ten Zoos for Kids** by national media outlets.

The zoo is a conservation leader, contributing \$50,000 annually to local, regional, and international efforts to protect wild animals and habitats, and participating in cooperative management programs for 15 endangered species.

As a self-supporting facility, the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo receives no tax dollars for operations. The zoo’s operations are funded entirely by earned revenue and donations.

The zoo is open April 20-October 13, 2013. Admission is \$13.50 for adults; \$10.50 for seniors age 60+; and \$8.50 for children ages 2-14. Babies age 1 and under and Zoo Society Members are admitted free.