

Bergen County Zoological Park Monthly Newsletter

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VAN SAUN COUNTY PARK

James J. Tedesco, III
County Executive

**Board of Chosen
Freeholders**

James Koth,
Director of Parks

Marianne Vella
Zoo Director

Van Saun County Park is a favorite location for families. Not only is it the home of the Bergen County Zoological Park it also has the Harmony Spray Park and multiple playgrounds.

With over 138 acres of land, Van Saun County Park offers a wide-range of activities for visitors of all ages. Winding through the park is a multi-use walking path for walking or biking.



There is plenty to do at the Van Saun Park, you can take a

nice tranquil stroll around Walden Pond & Washington Spring Gardens, or plan a family picnic utilizing picnic tables or a pavilion (permits



are required—contact 201-336-7261).

Additionally, Van Saun County Park offers tennis courts, three athletic fields (softball, baseball and soccer) and a dog park.

The park is also the home to Zoo-Flix After Dark. This is a

summer movie in the park series which starts in July and ends in August, so keep an eye out for that information coming soon.

Lastly, Winter Wonderland will be returning this year. This interactive winter festival typical runs from the end of November to the middle of January and includes a range of activities for children and adults alike.

Come and visit the Van Saun County Park and make it a day of fun for you and your family!



F R I E N D S O F T H E B E R G E N C O U N T Y Z O O

The Friends of the Bergen County Zoo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is dedicated to providing financial support to the Bergen County Zoological Park for the welfare of its animals, educational programs and family-friendly facilities. It is the generous support of our sponsors, donors, members and zoo visitors that allow us to meet this mission. The Friends offer a variety of memberships for individuals and families. Please visit www.communitypass.net, choose "Friends of the Bergen County Zoo, NJ" (for Community or Organization) and continue through to either Create an Account or Existing Users can Log in. Visit us at www.friendsofbergencountyzoo.org or like us on Facebook! The Friends look forward to seeing you at the Zoo!

SPOTLIGHT ANIMAL: AMERICAN ALLIGATOR

The American Alligator has a broad range from southern Virginia to along the gulf coast of Mexico and as far west as the Rio Grande in Texas. Their habitat typically consists of fresh water swamps, marshes, rivers and lakes.

In the wild, these carnivores have a diet of fish, turtles, snakes and small mammals. Alligators hunt primarily at night. Small prey is usually swallowed whole while large prey is dragged underwater

and drowned to be devoured in pieces. The alligators in the zoo are fed three times a week, they receive a combination of chickens, rats or fish.

The Bergen County Zoo has three American Alligators; two males and one female. Females grow to be approximately 3 meters (9.8ft) in length while the males can grow up to 4-4.5meters (13-14.7ft). An alligators body is armored with bony plates. Their olive

brown to black coloring enables them to blend into their environment. This camouflage enables them to sneak up on prey. They have a muscular flat tail which they use to propel themselves in the water.

Alligators do not hibernate however, they do undergo periods of dormancy when the weather is colder.

From Memorial Day–Labor Day you can observe Alligator feedings with a keeper chat at the alligator exhibit on Sundays & Tuesdays at 3pm.



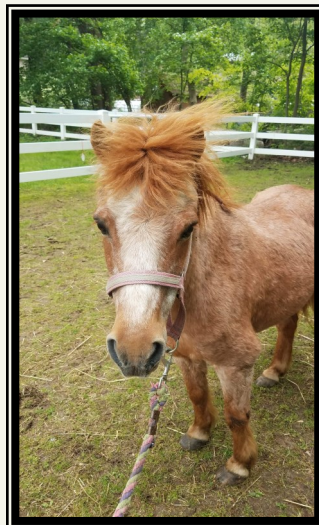
American Alligators on Exhibit
Photo by Carmen Baca

PONY RIDES & BIRTHDAY PARTIES

The Bergen County Zoo will be facilitating pony rides at the pony barn this season. Operating hours will be from May 16th–November 1st with hours of operation being from 10:00 AM–4:30 PM Sunday–Saturday (weather permitting). Once ride around the track is \$3 and two rides around the track are \$5.

Additionally, the zoo will also be offering birthday parties at the pony barn. These parties will be booked for children three years to eight years old. Age range is based on weight limit for the ponies (ponies cannot handle more than 90 pounds). Parties will be offered from May 16th–November 1st. One pony per of 15 children (maximum of two ponies and 30 children per party).

For more information on pony parties, please reach out to Kelsey Langenfeld within the education department at 201-634-3124 or via email at klangenfeld@co.bergen.nj.us



SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE: KELSEY LANGENFELD



Kelsey Langenfeld during an outreach program
Photo by Emily Olsen

When people think of a zoo, they first and foremost envision the animals, their exhibits and the keepers that care for them. Zoo's provide so much more: conservation research, breeding programs and education. The Bergen County Zoo has an education department that has created and spearheaded fun and interactive programs that teach children and adults to respect animals and protect their environment. One such educator is Kelsey Langenfeld.

Kelsey Langenfeld joined the Zoo in May of 2017. Prior to coming to the facility, Kelsey studied at Delaware Valley University and obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Conservation and Wildlife Management. When asked why she chose this career path, Ms. Langenfeld stated, "I've always been very intrigued by the natural world around us and I love teaching people of all ages. I love all things animal, plant and nature and find it very rewarding to be able to make a more personal experience while at the BCZ".

Despite the fact that Kelsey has not been at the zoo for a long time, she has already

made a positive impact with the staff, the patrons and the animal collection alike. Kelsey has developed educational programs for both youths and adults. She travels to local schools, libraries and nursing homes. These programs, such as "Part of the Pact", have been very well received from the general public. "Part of the Pact" focuses on the wild life structures of dogs, particularly wolves. Kelsey created the materials for this program and incorporated it within the Bergen Schools Program. "Working at the zoo is hard work yet fun and rewarding. We strive and take a lot of pride in our animal care and customer service. It's gratifying to work in a facility with such high standards when it comes to the care and welfare of the animals".

As an educator, Kelsey knows the importance of following state regulations and makes sure that the school programs that are constructed within the Bergen County Zoo are under the NGSS and NJ Core Curriculum Standards. She applies the same standard to every program that she develops and presents to the public.

During her time at the zoo, Ms. Langenfeld has been instrumental in the success of the annual Zoo Camp Program. During this program, Kelsey works hand in hand with her education colleagues to provide the best experience to the children that participate in the camp. The activities, which range from special tours throughout the zoo to preparing diets for the animal collection, are monitored closely by Ms. Langenfeld and others.

Kelsey has worked at the Wild Baby Rescue Center where she helped provide rehabilitation and enrichment for injured

and orphaned animals. After some consideration, she was given the opportunity to volunteer with the animal keepers. On her days off, Kelsey volunteers at the zoo as an animal keeper.

So during her time at the zoo has Kelsey developed a particular fondness for a particular animal? In fact she has, "Loki, our Flemish Giant Rabbit. At times he's been known to display the 'tough gut' personality yet he's just the sweetest rabbit. I've been lucky enough a relationship with him as an educator and a trainer".

Ms. Langenfeld's overall dedication and devotion to the Bergen County Zoo is visible in all her duties and is why she was chosen as this month's spotlight employee!



To the Left: Conducting a tour with a school

Above: with our Flemish Giant Rabbit Loki

Photos by Carmen Baca

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE ZOO

There are numerous ways to support the Bergen County Zoo:

- Consider becoming a zoo member
- Sponsor an Animal
- Enroll in our docent/volunteer program
- Purchase Animal Art

Information on all of these programs is available at the Zoo, our website or by calling 201-634-3100 ext. 3110



Bergen County Zoological Park
216 Forest Avenue
Paramus, NJ 07652
201-634-3100

Bergen County Zoological Park



www.co.bergen.nj.us/bcparks

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ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS

The Bergen County Zoo is proud to be an AZA Accredited Zoo.

The Association of Zoos & Aquariums provides its members with the services, high standards, best practices, and program coordination to be leaders in animal welfare, public engagement, and the conservation of species.

Reminders:

Bergen County Residents must provide proof of residency to receive the discounted rate. Forms of proof are: Driver's License, Utility bill to the residence, Bergen County issued ID Card.

Zoo Members must show their membership card to enter the zoo for free.

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