

TOUCAN TALK



MAY—JUNE / VOL. 9, NO. 3

A BREED APART.

Babies, whether human or animal, are always scene stealers. No wonder we always find visitors to the zoo oohing and aahing over cuddly-looking bear cubs, wide-eyed chimpanzees, wobbly little elephants or frisky tiger cubs.

For the public, the display of these animals is what a zoo is all about. For zoologists, the fact that these animals are born there in the first place is far more important. In the race against extinction, zoos offer new hope for the world's vanishing wildlife.

Animals born in zoos may not be "born free", but they are, nonetheless, an invaluable addition to the depleted numbers of endangered species. Often, these births could not have taken place in the wild because of the destruction of the animals' habitat by the encroachment of 'civilization'. That's why zoos have been called the last repositories of wildlife.

Metrozoo is a place for entertainment and education. It is also deeply committed to conservation and has ambitious plans for captive breeding. While ambitious, these plans are not unrealistic. Metrozoo has a lot going for it—a warm climate, sprawling grounds, open-air displays, and replication of the natural environments of the animals. A qualified staff of professionals increases the chances for success, as does the stock of the animals used for breeding, according to Bill Zeigler, Metrozoo's General Curator.

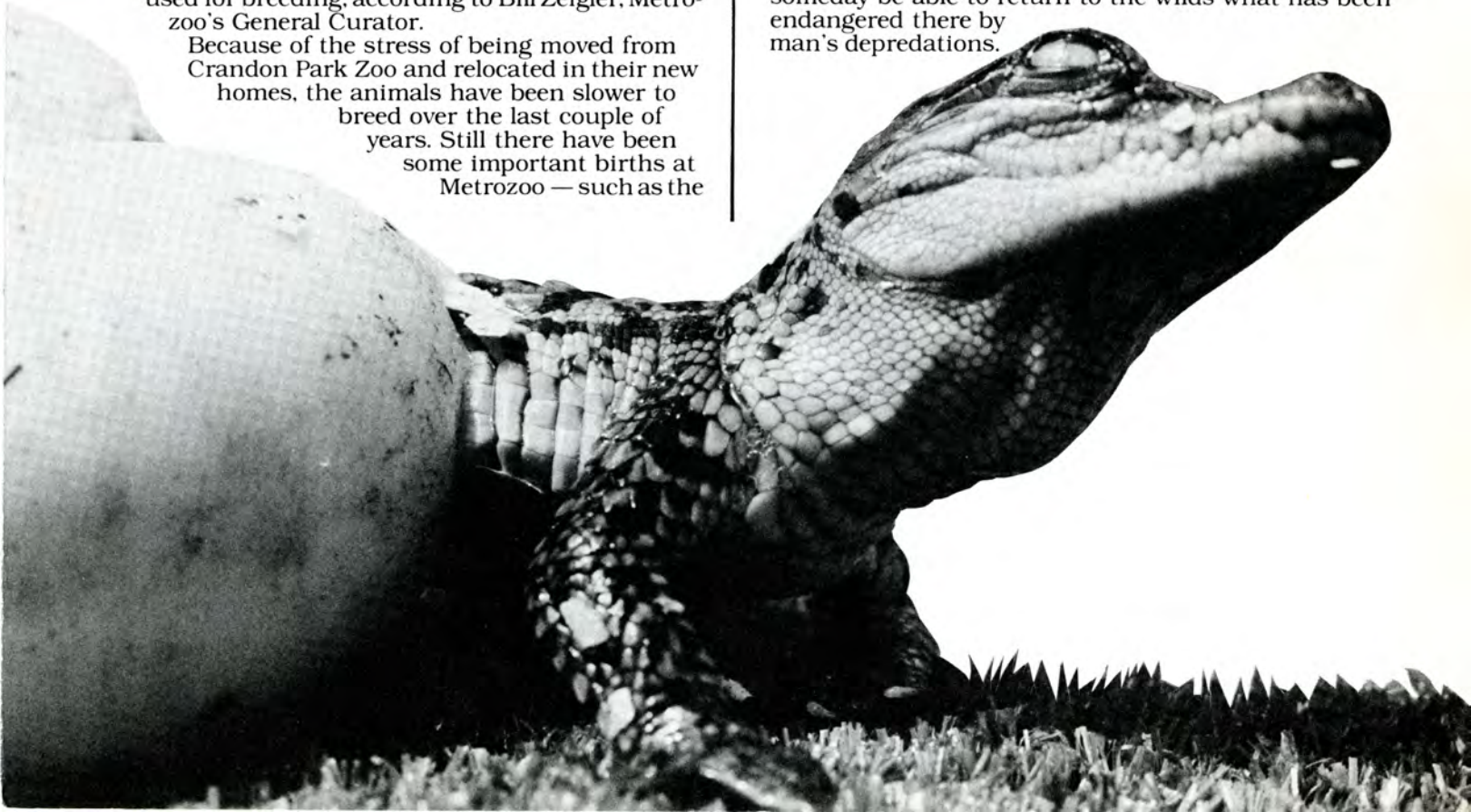
Because of the stress of being moved from Crandon Park Zoo and relocated in their new homes, the animals have been slower to breed over the last couple of years. Still there have been some important births at Metrozoo — such as the

African slender snout crocodile, the first such birth in the U.S. • Stanley cranes • West African crown cranes • condors • Siamese crocodiles • Asian elephant • Bengal tigers • Grevy and Grants zebras • and many more. And, says Bill Zeigler triumphantly, "We think all our giraffes are pregnant."

Spring and summer are, literally, the most productive seasons in the animal world. Zeigler hopes to put many breeding programs into effect this year. "Given time", he says, "Metrozoo could become one of the world's top zoos in conservation."

The breeding program would benefit greatly by a nursery/clinic building, for which the Zoological Society is raising funds. Zoo veterinarian Dr. Gerry Esra explains that this would provide valuable medical support for orphaned animals, or those whose mothers could not take care of them. Prompt removal and medical care would lessen the stress on the animal and increase its chances for survival.

Survival is the name of the game. And, in another round of that game, scientists are trying to reintroduce animals born in zoos into the wild. Metrozoo contributed two Andean condors to a program to set these birds free in Peru. Much research and work still needs to be done in this field. But it is an inspiring thought that we may someday be able to return to the wilds what has been endangered there by man's depredations.



President's Message.



With so many things going on at the Zoological Society these days, this newsletter is crammed with a preview of coming attractions, some exciting, some informative, some exotic. But through it all, we have never forgotten that our chief commitment is to raise money for Metrozoo, and to fund vital projects like the animal nursery/clinic, the aviary, and the primate island, among other things.

All the action is not necessarily center-stage; some of the most dramatic events take place behind the scenes. So it is with the Society's corporate campaign. Vice-President Lester Goldstein has kicked off a corporate membership campaign, and is urging some major corporations in our area to make a living investment in the zoo. He points out that corporate membership is mutually beneficial because companies get benefits they can pass on to their employees, and we get the corporate dollars that we can pass on to Metrozoo. The campaign has met with an enthusiastic response so far, and I'll have details for you in the next issue of *Toucan Talk*.

Friendraising is as important for us as fundraising. If you are persuasive and outgoing, you could be a real asset to our membership recruitment drive. Virtue is often its own reward, but in this case, the Membership Committee is happy to offer some special prizes as well. The first prize is a trip for two to the Bahamas, says Dick Mahmarian, and it will go to the person who recruits the most new members between now and the end of June. Call the Society Office for details about other prizes, and for application forms.

As long as we have a growing membership, made up of people who are active and involved, the Zoological Society will continue to be a dynamic organization. We all care about the zoo. Individually, we may not be able to do much for it, but working through the Zoological Society, we can help to make Metrozoo the finest zoo in the world.

Ron Esserman, President

Docent Doings.

By Freda Houser

“Good morning. Welcome to Metrozoo. My name is _____, I'm a docent, a volunteer of the Zoological Society of Florida.”

This is the cheerful greeting docents use as they bustle around, engaged in some of the many helpful services they provide at Metrozoo. It's easy to spot a docent, in uniform with a pith helmet and a yellow sash, and perhaps a voice projector in hand. Like the Pied Piper, a docent is followed by a group of people.

What is a docent? The word comes from the Latin "Docere", meaning "to teach". The dictionary defines docent as "teacher, one who imparts knowledge, a guide, often unpaid."

The Docent Council of the Zoological Society of Florida is a group of very special teachers: men and women, retirees and career people. Some have time on their hands; others, hardly a moment to spare. They are a diverse group with a

common bond — a love for animals, and a sincere wish to support the zoo.

Docents believe that education is the key to the preservation of endangered species. They spend a lot of time studying the subject, and share their knowledge with zoo visitors, through free guided walking tours; a tram tour narration; and lectures to schoolchildren.

The list of what docents do goes on and on. Although they are not paid, they find that the job has its own rewards. It gives them a chance to serve the community and promote the zoo; to enjoy fresh air and exercise; to form new friendships with interesting people; and most of all, to derive a real sense of satisfaction.

If you want to be a doer, be a docent. Call 255-2214.



By Aileen Lotz,
Executive Director

Toucan travel...almost as cheaply as one. Besides, it's so much fun to travel to far-off places with people who share the same interest in wild-life. Last year, members indicated that their top priorities were Africa, Australia, New Zealand, South America, Alaska, Mexico, the Galapagos and China.

This year, we're trying to get a head start on our 1984 travel program. If you have any ideas for future excursions, give me a call. Better yet, join our meetings on the first Monday of each month. We plan to discuss potential trips, exchange travel tips, hear speakers and see some slideshows. Call the office for details.

But one doesn't have to go abroad in search of adventure. Metrozoo offers a chance for exciting exploration right here at home. There are now four ways to tour the zoo, and each way has its own charms. You can take the monorail and get an overview of the zoo, as well as a peek behind the scenes. Thanks to Universal Mobility, members are entitled to a 20% discount on monorail tickets with their cards. The tram tour gives you a more down-to-earth eyeful, along with an informative earful. Or you can take the guided group tour, with a docent to walk and talk you through the zoo. Call 251-1128 for information on group tours. Finally, of course, you can wander through the zoo at your own pace. Whichever route you take, you'll love the zoo.

As a member, you can come to the zoo as often as you like, without paying the admission. You have the same privilege at 70 other zoos around the country. You also get a chance to volunteer and be involved in the day-to-day life of the zoo. You can take advantage of our varied programs, which include classes for children and adults, a photography club, a travel program, and much, much more.

Given all this, it's hardly surprising that we are attracting new members at the rate of nearly 600 a month. What is both surprising and saddening is that we are losing some of our valued "old" members, because they "forget" to renew their memberships. Have you been putting off your renewal? Well, be like the tapir — just whistle, and we'll sign you on. We'd love to have you with us for a long, long time. After all, it's people like you who make the Zoological Society the wonderful organization that it is.

Education Outlook

By Ileen Seidler
Education Coordinator

Summertime, and the livin's easy, as the song goes. So is signing up for our summer programs at the zoo. Our lineup of events is, like Metrozoo, bigger and better than ever. We have more than twice the number of activities we offered last year. What's more, this time there's something for everyone in the family, whatever your age and interests. Our summer programs are very popular, so register early. Don't miss out on the fun. Additional brochures are available from the office. Just call the Education Department at 255-5551.



Program Lineup May 13th-August 13th.

Metrozoo Inn

(\$17.50-Members. \$20-Nonmembers)
A 'slumber party' at the zoo. Discover the creatures of the dark and spend the night under the stars. Includes a dinner Friday evening by the lake, then off to sleep to the lullabye of the jungle. An unforgettable experience.
Friday / May 13 / 5 P.M.-9 A.M. / Grades 4-6.

Shutter Bugs

(\$20-Members. \$25-Nonmembers)
A class which focuses on animal photography for beginners. Just bring a 35mm SLR camera and learn from a professional photographer how to shoot animals in the kindest way possible.
4 sessions / June 16-July 7 / 3 P.M.-5 P.M. Grades 7-12.

Toucan Team

(\$40-Members. \$50-Nonmembers)
A challenging opportunity to delve deeper into the study of animals and zoos. In an all NEW program participants will use all the resources available in our Education Department to make what they've studied in books come alive for them. Comparative anatomy and microscopy are only some of the offerings in this program. T-shirts and all required materials are provided.
Six consecutive Saturdays / June 18-July 23 9 A.M.-Noon / Grades 9-12.

Zoo Camp

(\$50-Members. \$60-Nonmembers)
Explore the exciting world of animals in one of the nation's finest zoos, learn about animals behavior, and live a day in the life of a zookeeper. Special attention will be paid to the study of primates. This was one of our most popular programs last year, so sign up soon, or you may miss out on all the fun. A mid-morning snack and special zoo camp T-shirts are provided.
Mon.-Fri./June 20-24; July 11-15; July 25-29 8 A.M.-Noon / Grades 3-6.

Art Camp I

(\$45-Members. \$55-Nonmembers)
Learn about animals through art. Observe characteristics of various animals and discover how you can tell them apart. Art materials provided.
Mon.-Fri. / June 27-July 1 & August 8-12 / 10 A.M.-Noon / Grades 1-3.

Jungle Juniors

(\$50-Members. \$60-Nonmembers)
A zoo camp for adventurous juniors. An exciting way to learn more about wildlife and zoos. This is a unique opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at some of our outstanding exhibits. Mid-morning snack and T-shirts provided.
July 5-8 & August 1-5 / 8 A.M.-Noon Grades 1-3.

Snap Judgements

(\$40-Members. \$45-Nonmembers)
If you're already a photography buff, develop your lens flair. Refine your skills and acquire new techniques at the zoo and on field trips. Comments and critique of work provided by noted photographer, Dan Wilson.
6 Sessions / July 7-August 11 / 7 P.M.-9 P.M. High School-Adult.

Art Camp II

(\$45-Members. \$55-Nonmembers)
A creative way for children to learn about animals. Develops imagination and observation. Art materials provided.
Mon.-Fri. / July 18-22 / 10 A.M.-Noon Pre-school-Kindergarten.

Two At The Zoo

(\$15-Members. \$17.50-Nonmembers)
How long has it been since you did something really special with your kid? Just the two of you together. Well, here's the perfect opportunity to go out on a jaunt together. Find out how special a parent/child relationship is in the animal world. As for the human world, you already know that. That's why we've arranged a special day for you. Lunch provided.
Saturday / July 30 / 10 A.M.-1 P.M. Parent & Child (Ages 4 & 5).

Great Apes

(\$6-Members. \$8-Nonmembers)
A study of some gentle and not-so-gentle giants. What makes apes great and how to distinguish the different kinds of great apes.
Saturday / August 6 / 10 A.M.-Noon Grades 6-8.

Croc Stars

(\$6-Members. \$8-Nonmembers)
A look at the croc-and-crawl band known as reptiles. How to identify all types of reptiles and observe characteristics of these cold-blooded creatures.
Saturday / August 6 / 1 P.M.-3 P.M. Grades 6-8.

A Grand Idea

(\$15-Members. \$17.50-Nonmembers)
Bring your grandchild to the zoo for a laughter-filled learning experience. See how family units work in the world of animals. A chance for you and your grandchild to spend the day together, and spoil each other to your hearts' content.
Saturday / August 13 / 9 A.M.-1 P.M. Grandparent & Child (Ages 7-10).

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Design: Janice McDougall
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Name (Print) _____
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City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

For Students 18 And Under:

Parent's Name _____ Member
Student's Age _____ Grade _____ Nonmember

Enroll Me In The Following Program.
Programs _____
Session Date _____
Program Fee \$ _____
Membership \$ _____
(If Desired)
Total \$ _____

Membership entitles you to free admission to Metrozoo and 70 other zoos, special events and the Society's publications. Family \$35 / Dual \$25 / Individual \$15 Annual memberships are tax deductible.

All registrations must be paid in advance. Refunds will be made up to 1 week prior to class starting date.

Mail To: **Education Dept., ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF FLORIDA** 12400 S.W. 152 Street, Miami, FL 33177

Clip Along The Animal Path & Save.

Clip Along The Animal Path & Save.

Toucan Chatter.

Carte Blanche.

The Society is now the proud possessor of a gleaming white electrical car, which will allow us to show special visitors around in a special way. The car is a thoughtful gift from Marta Weeks, who wants to see the Society going places. Thank you, Marta, from the bottom of our cart.

Que Pasa?

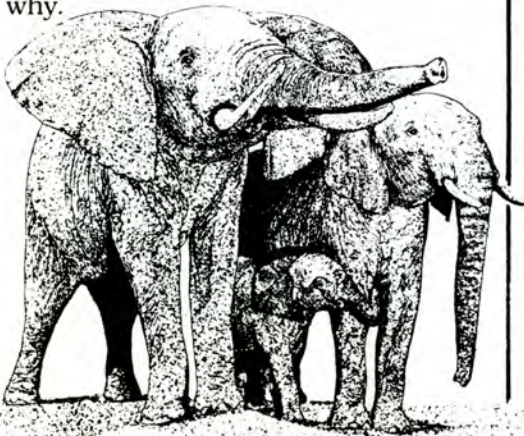
In the summer, new Spanish signs identifying zoo exhibits will once again sprout on the zoo grounds. You might remember that these signs were stopped by the "Anti-bilingual ordinance," which prohibits county government from spending public funds for communication in Spanish. However, thanks to a private donation, the Society can now provide funding for these signs. The generosity of Mr. & Mrs. Bart Greene and the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana makes it possible for us to reach the scores of Spanish-speaking visitors to the zoo through informative and educational signs.

A Pat On The Back.

We like to dip into our mailbag from time to time, and share some bouquets and brickbats with you. Here's a particularly fragrant bouquet to Freda Houser and her docents — and few people deserve it more. This from County Commissioner Ruth Shack: "*Without your willing volunteerism, our zoo could not function.*"

Volunteer Information.

From now on, in every issue of *Toucan Talk* we'll recognize a volunteer who goes beyond the call of duty, and contributes that extra-special something to the Society. Do you know just the person? Well, give Aileen Lotz a call, or drop her a line, saying whom you nominate and why.



Zoo Director's Report.

The Sumatran Rhino.

Elusive. Endangered! Extinct?



I'd like to tell you about something that has great significance for the zoological community in general, and for the Zoological Society of Florida and Metrozoo in particular. I am indebted to a report by Dr. Thomas J. Foose, Conservation Coordinator for the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (AAZPA) for some of the information.

The Asian two-horned rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*), commonly called the Sumatran, may be the most gravely endangered of the five surviving species of this family, which also includes the Black and the White from Africa, the Indian and the Javan. The rhino is still killed for the medicinal and magical properties attributed to various parts of the beast. Also, the rapid destruction of its habitat poses a threat to the rhino's survival.

It's estimated that the total population of the Sumatran rhino is 118-254 specimens, existing in small and fragmented populations, scattered over a wide range in Southeast Asia. These numbers are dangerously low, and the decline continues; the Sumatran rhino stands on the precipice of extinction. However, there is renewed hope for this species, based on recent occurrences.

Through contacts made by the New York Zoological Society in the autumn of 1981, it was determined that wildlife officials in Sabah (a state in the Federation of Malaysia on the island of Borneo), would strongly recommend and support the collection of animals for the establishment of a captive population. This position was reaffirmed at the International Rhino Symposium in London in August 1982, attended by Bill Zeigler, Metrozoo's General Curator. More importantly, it was confirmed that the Wildlife Department of Sabah would extend an official invitation to the AAZPA to take the lead in this project, and to determine its feasibility through an exploratory expedition. The AAZPA has accepted the invitation and the underlying challenge to secure funding, and to sustain the initiative and the scientific perspective to see this project to fruition as part of the Species Survival Plan (SSP).

Thanks to funding provided by the Zoological Society of Florida, Metrozoo will be materially involved in this project. On April 18, 1983, Bill Zeigler accompanied Tom Foose on a trip to Malaya and Indonesia. The objective of this SSP project is to establish a captive population of the Asian two-horned rhino in the United States, along with a program of propagation to reinforce the efforts to preserve this species in the wild. Animals collected for the program would be from population remnants with no hope of survival in the wild because the groups are too small and fragmented to be genetically viable; their habitat is destined for destruction; and, they seem to be inevitable victims of poachers.

Because of political receptiveness, as well as the biological situation, the collecting project would most likely commence in and concentrate on Sabah. Depending on many things, the operation could be extended to peninsular Malaya, where even more rhino herd remnants might be available. If interest, opportunity and resources exist, the project might eventually include Sumatra or even Indonesian Borneo.

Depending on the number that could be collected, it is proposed the rhinos be placed in two to four zoos with rhino experience and expertise. San Diego, St. Catherine's Island, (operated by the New York Zoological Society), Miami Metrozoo, and the Los Angeles Zoo, are considered likely candidates.

There should be no misconception that the capture of Sumatran rhinos will be anything but formidable, perhaps the most ambitious project the AAZPA has ever attempted. **It will be costly!** Almost certainly a million dollars or more will be required to produce results. **It will be slow.** Field conservationists suggest that a collection team will have to be in the field for perhaps three years or more. **It will be difficult.** The rhinos are rare and

Continued On Page 6.

NEW LIVES. NEW HOPE.



1. STRIPES AND STARS...A nursing Grevy's zebra foal is one of our stellar attractions, looking for all the world like an op-art painting. **2. TRUNK CALL...**Asian elephants are very rarely born in captivity so we're proud that Spike was born here in the summer of '81. He has his trunk twined around with his mother's, as he tries out the baby elephant walk. **3. GIBBON IT A REST...**A gibbon baby hangs around with its mother on Gibbon Island at Metro-zoo. Gibbon Island has a surreal look about it, and is one of the most popular places at the Zoo. **4. THE CHIMP'S A CHAMP...**Binti clings on to her mother, Rosebud, aping her in whatever she does. (Photo by Ira Wax) **5. MAKING A FAST BUCK...**A De Fassa Waterbuck lovingly nuzzles a foal, standing up, although a little shakily, on its own feet. (Photo by Dan Wilson) **6. CUB AND GET IT...**Three Chinese Golden wolf cubs play with each other in their den. We don't know how musical they are, but they sure look like a wolf gang. (Photo by Dan Wilson)

Meet A New Board Member.

We are proud and happy to have Richard Shack on our Board of Directors. His eclectic interests have found a variety of outlets. For the last 30 years he has represented major performing artists, handled their bookings and promoted their careers. He has also produced industrial and convention shows across the country.

Along with his wife, County Commissioner Ruth Shack, he is committed to enriching the quality of life in our area. A noted art collector, he has donated art works to several institutions in Miami. He is a patron of the Greater Miami Opera Association; the Lowe Art Museum and, of course, the Zoological Society.

Continued From Page 4.

The Sumatran Rhino.

they are elusive. If they weren't, they would already be extinct. Given the rhino's tenacity, could we do less than mount an effort to assist in the survival of this species? I believe I know your answer to that question, for you have already demonstrated your involvement through your membership in the Zoological Society of Florida. It is your support that enables us to undertake projects of this magnitude. I sincerely thank you for your commitment and humbly request your continued support.

Bob Yokel, Zoo Director

Let's Go Ape At The Zoo!

We are not talking about any monkey business, you understand. We're talking about **MEMBER'S NIGHT AT THE ZOO**. It's your chance to mingle with other members and catch up on all the new developments at the zoo made possible by your support.

This special event is **exclusively for members**. All you need to bring is a smile and your membership card. That's on Saturday, June 4th, from 5 P.M. to 9 P.M. at Metrozoo. Food will be available. Although we're proud of saying Metrozoo has no bars or cages, on this night we'll make an exception and have a cash bar. Eat, drink and be merry to the sound of music by the Billy Rolle Jazz Quartet. So mark it on your calendar. You'll have a wild time. And all that jazz!



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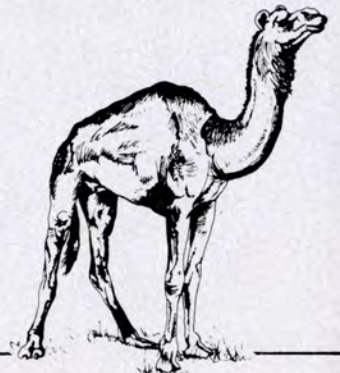
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