



Courtesy photo

Maria, Aleeza and Jarrek Hurdle of Sacramento, Calif. ride Tiki, an African elephant from the Wildlife Safari who is in Springfield this weekend for the New Zoo's annual event.

New Zoo brings world wildlife to community for yearly event

By Beth Mischke
Emerald Contributor

An alligator, an African elephant, reptiles, birds and a giant tortoise are just a few of the animals that will be on display this weekend during the New Zoo's annual event.

Tiki, a South African elephant, will be the feature of the New Zoo, said zoo co-director Nancy Bell, who also coordinates the yearly event. The New Zoo will be located at Island Park in Springfield.

"This animal (the elephant) belongs to the world, not just Africa," said Bob Beisser, co-director of the New Zoo.

Beisser began the New Zoo six years ago to increase the public's awareness of the extinction crisis that wildlife faces all over the world.

The South African elephant is featured because it is being slaughtered for its ivory tusks and faces extinction within 10 years, Beisser said. Tiki is visiting Eugene from the state's Wildlife Safari, south of Roseburg in Winston.

In contrast to previous years, the New Zoo will not be in a Eugene location during the weekend. Beisser said this change will save time, effort and cost of moving the animals from Eugene to Springfield.

Most of the animals come from farms, breeders and rehabilitation organizations that find wild animals who have been injured or are sick.

The rehabilitation organizations keep the animals if they can't return to the wild, Beisser said.

The New Zoo acts as a network for animal handlers and helps promote the rehabilitation programs, Bell said.

Eugene has its own rehabilitation program participating in the New Zoo — the Willamette Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation. The organization is staffed

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Field burning phase-out sent to House for vote

The Oregon Senate on Wednesday passed a bill that would drastically reduce open burning of grass-seed fields and virtually eliminate the practice within four years.

Senate Bill 425, sponsored by Sen. Grattan Kerans, was approved on a near-party line vote, 19-11, and is now headed for the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

The bill passed was an amended version of Kerans' original proposal. He had first called for an immediate ban on

Legislative Update

open-field burning, but revised the bill to require a gradual phase-out under pressure from fellow legislators and Gov. Neil Goldschmidt.

Goldschmidt had originally opposed a field-burning ban of any kind, but changed his mind during a Senate Agriculture Committee public hearing on SB425.

The new plan would drop the current annual level of 250,000 acres burned to 150,000 acres immediately upon final passage of the bill.

The cap would then be lowered each year until 1993 when a permanent level of 50,000 acres would be reached.

Willamette Valley grass-seed growers burn their fields to remove waste chaff and to control disease and pests.

Another part of the bill would increase the fee for field burning to \$20 per acre by 1992, and force growers to pay for propane burning.

The money gathered from the higher burning fees — estimated at \$7.5 million over the next two years — would be used mostly to fund research programs to find alternatives to field burning.

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By GARY LARSON



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