

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

ZooTeens Program Turns 20

This summer marks the 20th anniversary of the Oregon Zoo's youth volunteer corps, in which local teens learn to give on-grounds education presentations and run the zoo's Family Farm Exhibit.

The ZooTeens recently celebrated their program's birthday with cake and candles.

"We're so proud of the ZooTeens program," said Amanda Greenvoss, Oregon Zoo youth volunteer coordinator. "It's become a really powerful educational resource. Teens not only help zoo visitors and campers learn about wildlife, but they also develop job skills and a better understanding of conservation while they're at it."

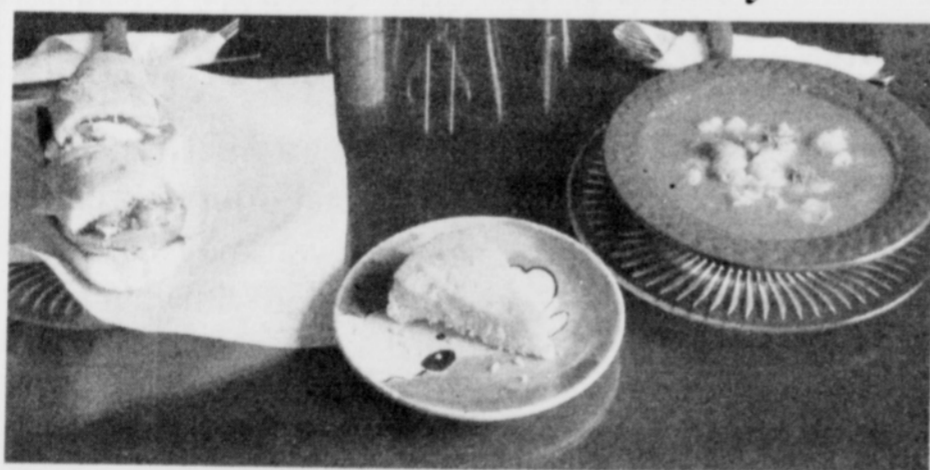
In ZooTeens' inaugural summer, 150 students joined the youth corps. It has since doubled its numbers, with more than 300 teens participating each summer.

Teens that join the program as rising freshmen now have the opportunity to participate in ZooTeens for up to five summers, sometimes accruing more than 2,000 hours of service. Teens with a few summers under their belts can also participate in the Zoo Leadership Corps, a winter program that includes keeper job-shadows, internships and work with some of the zoo's more exotic animals.



Fifteen ZooTeens and three of the youth in the Zoo Animal Presenters internship program traveled to Peru in June to see rainforest conservation in action.

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