Experience *National Parks Adventure 3D* and the science of cinema raised to the level of magic with the all new IMAX® with Laser.

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Corey Cobb was threading the many spindles and rollers of the giant IMAX® film projector for one of the last times in mid-December. “There’s approximately seven miles of film in this reel of The Polar Express 3D,” said Cobb. “There’s another seven miles in the second reel for the right eye.”

For nearly 10 years, Cobb has worked in the projection booth earning the title of chief projectionist in 2008. He’s spent long hours assembling the huge rolls of film, moving them by forklift and tending to the massive, noisy and somewhat cantankerous film projector.

But now that the new IMAX with Laser projection system is here, Cobb’s workspace is much quieter and more exciting. His new job title is IMAX senior operator, making him one of only a handful of people in the world trained to use this cutting-edge technology. “The first time I saw a film in laser, I was blown away,” said Cobb. “I’m really excited for people to come to our theater to experience all of our new upgrades.”

Cobb and other Aquarium staffers traveled to several cities over the past four years to evaluate various digital projection systems, but none really matched the image quality that the 70mm film format delivered on a giant screen — until now. “Many of the digital projection systems threw a lot of light on the screen, but the colors looked washed out and the images weren’t sharp,” said Don Walker, the Aquarium’s director of guest services. “The IMAX with Laser system showed us something we hadn’t seen before. This system fills the screen with amazingly crisp, bright and colorful images.”

The Tennessee Aquarium IMAX 3D Theater has unique architecture including a screen that’s 66 feet tall and 89 feet wide with an aspect ratio of 4 to 3. It’s designed to provide an immersive experience.

“Most screens in conventional cinemas have an aspect ratio of 1.9 to 1, just like the digital television screens at home,” said Gordon Stalans, the Aquarium’s director of finance, who also chairs the board of the Giant Screen Cinema Association. But unlike at home, a Humpback Whale appears life-sized and more life-like with two 4K laser projectors painting the massive screen. “Not only is the contrast, color and brightness better, the image is more stable. Film projection with a Xenon lamp produces some flicker that used to be annoying for some viewers. Using laser light provides guests with a premium movie experience that’s easier on the eyes.”

The $1.2-million theater upgrade includes the new IMAX with Laser projection system, new six-story screen and new 12-channel audio system with speakers in the ceiling for the first time. “I love looking down from the booth and watching kids trying to touch snowflakes while watching The Polar Express 3D. It happens every time,” said Cobb. “One of the IMAX with Laser demonstrations I recently saw featured a jet flying overhead. It was incredible to hear that audio rolling over your head in the theater. You couldn’t help looking up. I’m looking forward to seeing everyone at our theater reacting to the new audio as well the visuals.”

One of the first films to take advantage of the new 12 channel audio is National Parks Adventure 3D, a new IMAX film premiering around the world on February 12th. This film will be a real test for the new laser projectors because it’s a virtual tour of many of the nation’s most iconic natural treasures. Glacier National Park, Arches, Yellowstone, and Yosemite are just a few of the majestic locations featured. The power of these protected lands is undeniable. “National Parks captures the stunning beauty of our wild places and reminds us these landscapes are an essential part of the human spirit,” said Academy Award winner and conservationist Robert Redford who also narrates this film.

Mixed with the grandeur are
thrilling scenes of wildlife like the salmon-fishing brown bears of Alaska’s Katmai National Park.

History, nostalgia and thrilling outdoor sports are interwoven in this story celebrating the National Park System’s creation 100 years ago. Audiences will travel back in time to go camping with Teddy Roosevelt and John Muir. Their three-day expedition laid the foundation for a network of preserves that today includes more than 400 units.

Viewers also join a team of modern off-trail adventurers, soaring over red rock canyons and hurtling up craggy mountain peaks and into other-worldly realms found within America’s most legendary outdoor playgrounds.

Artist Rachel Pohl, climber Conrad Ankar and photographer Max Lowe share their passion for these untamed lands. Together, they show everyone what our national parks bring to different people — from unabashed thrills to solace, healing and the source of their livelihoods, leaving many people inspired to explore the tapestry of natural wonders for themselves.

Meet National Geographic photographer/writer Max Lowe on March 22nd at IMAX

Lowe will introduce a special screening of the film and deliver a presentation about his journeys that have taken him to some of the most difficult points on the planet to reach. From the mountains of Montana to Antarctica, Nepal and Mongolia, Lowe has been witness to extraordinary moments, wildlife, people and places. This event is sure to have some cliff-hanging moments, so register online: tnaqua.org/events-programs

A Bully Good time with Teddy Roosevelt on April 14th at IMAX

Teddy Roosevelt was arguably one of America’s most beloved and admired presidents. He was a soldier, statesman, explorer, scientist, historian and author. No one portrays this role better than Roosevelt re-enactor Joe Wiegand. His spirited performances have delighted audiences in all 50 states including playing to a special crowd at the White House. You’ll laugh while learning about presidential history and our wild America during this special presentation and screening of National Parks Adventure 3D. Register online: tnaqua.org/events-programs
First stop on this animal adventure, guests get the chance to look the part. A special craft area will be set up on the lower level of the River Journey building with materials kids can use to transform into the animal of their choice.

Then, head into the River Journey Auditorium for Brain Games, a program about animal enrichment—an important part of keeping the Aquarium’s animals healthy and happy.

“Animals in their native habitats spend their day figuring out how and where to get food along with how to stay safe. While under our care, these are things they don’t have to worry about,” said Susie Grant, the Aquarium’s guest engagement manager.

“However, it is important for all creatures to stay mentally alert and active. We accomplish this by enriching their environments and activities, often involving games to allow the critters to participate in natural behaviors such as climbing, foraging, or investigating new items.”

Shortly after that, the Aquarist team will give spring breakers a “taste” of how Aquarium experts serve up a super-sized buffet of nutritionally complete diets for all of the creatures great and small. Did you know that each year our turtles and fish eat over 5,000 heads of lettuce? Another 5,000 pounds of squid is fed to the sharks and other fish, while 2,000 pounds of shrimp go to the cuttlefish!

In the afternoon, kids will get a peek into an animal training session with members of our animal expert team. Just like people, animals have specific needs to achieve overall wellness. While training is serious business for our experts, it often looks like playtime for our critters. For example, otters are regularly taught to present their bellies or show their teeth so that veterinary staff can get the best look at them during exams. Show your teeth on cue, get a tasty treat.

Similarly, some larger fish are rewarded during training sessions for swimming through special tunnels that could be used if the fish
Herons, Osprey, Bald Eagles & more!

You never know what you’ll see when cruising aboard the River Gorge Explorer in spring. An Aquarium naturalist delivers a fun mix of nature notes and historical facts during each two-hour excursion. Enjoy the scenery while discovering the many reasons our watershed is a very special place. Learn more about a special Williams Island Kid’s Adventure Cruise on page 8.

CRITTER FOR A DAY — SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brain Games</td>
<td>12:20PM</td>
<td>River Journey Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fin-tastic Feeding</td>
<td>1:15PM</td>
<td>River Journey Lobby</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training Program</td>
<td>3:30PM</td>
<td>River Journey Delta Swamp</td>
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</tbody>
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Early Bird Safari

March 17-18, 24-25, 31 and April 1, 7-8 • 9–11 AM

$28/Member • $33/Non-Member

Your family can get a sneak peek at the morning routines of our animals and experts during this two-hour guided adventure. Explore several behind-the-scenes locations, observe a morning feeding and then meet a touchable creature. At the end of the tour, we’ll make an enrichment toy for the otters to enhance their spring break fun. Children must be at least 6 years old and accompanied by an adult. Minimum 10 people with a maximum of 30. Register online at tnaqua.org/events-programs or call 423-267-FISH (3474).
Tennessee Aquarium Summer Camp

Motivating curiosity and confidence through challenge and play

The world is full of natural wonders and there’s no better place to go exploring. Your child will want to return year after year!

Tennessee Aquarium Summer Camp is consistently rated as excellent on parent surveys.
• One parent stated, “I love the way you offer so many different excursions and how you change them from year to year so each year the kids experience something different.”
• 96% of summer camp parents rated 2015 camp counselors as good or excellent in their professionalism and rapport with children.

Find out more about your child’s age group at:

TNAQUA.ORG/SUMMER-CAMP

CLAW! JULY 17-23

Dig in your claws during an intensive, week-long overnight summer camp with scientists from the Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute (TNACI). The Baylor School serves as CLAW base camp. We’ll stay in the dorms and use the classroom when we’re not in the field. Explore, paddle, hike and snorkel to discover our connections to aquatic ecosystems during CLAW. Then, become a water conservation hero at home. Cost is $750. Full and partial scholarships are available. Spots are limited and competitive. Complete the online application with a recommendation from a teacher, scout leader, supervisor or minister. Applications and recommendations are due by April 1st. Those accepted will be notified by April 15th. Camp is open to rising 10th-12th graders.

$675/Members • $750/Non-Members

tnaqua.org/protect-freshwater/claw-camp
BULLFROGS AGES 9-10
SESSIONS 9AM - 4PM • Monday - Friday
With a Wednesday overnight
Leap into fun as we discover the amazing world around us. Explore the Aquarium, visit with animals and their caretakers, hike, raft, sleep overnight alongside “River Giants” and go caving.
$245/Member; $327/Non-member

ECO-EXPLORERS AGES 11-12
SESSIONS 9AM - 4PM • Monday - Friday
With a Thursday overnight
Campers become Eco-Explorers inside the Aquarium and outdoors. Adventures include rock climbing, stand-up paddle boarding and a trip to the water park at Horn’s Creek NOC Resort.
$245/Member; $327/Non-member

QUEST AGES 13-14
SESSIONS 9AM - 4PM • Monday - Friday
With a Tuesday overnight
Campers get an introduction to what nature has to offer through hiking, paddling, snorkeling, zip-lining and caving. Tuesday night will be spent in an Ocoee cabin and we’ll cook s’mores over a fire! Quest Camp blends science with adventure in the outdoor “classroom.”
$345/Member; $460/Non-member

TIPS ON REGISTERING YOUR CAMPER:
• Have your current membership & credit card numbers ready when registering.
• Renew your membership now to be ready for early registration! Call 423-267-FISH (3474).
• Camp activities are developed for specific age groups. Children must be the correct age for the camp they register for during the camp session.
• Spaces are limited! Only register for one week of camp per child.
• A $25 fee will be applied for transfers or cancellations.

AQUATOTS AGES 4-5 (Pre-K)
SESSIONS 9AM - 12:30PM • Monday - Friday
Aquatots will go on an Aquarium safari and discover animals up close! Campers participate in hands-on activities, crafts, stories and outdoor fun.
$95/Member; $127/Non-member

AQUATOTS: AGES 5 (Pre-K) PRESCHOOL CHAMPIONS
SESSION 9AM - 4PM • Monday - Friday
New in 2016—a full day session of Aquatots! Campers will participate in all the activities of the half day Aquatot camp, plus we’ll take expeditions to Creative Discovery Museum and the IMAX® Theater.
$180/Member; $240/Non-member

TADPOLES AGES 5-6
Children must have attended kindergarten.
SESSIONS 9AM - 4PM • Monday - Friday
Come join the Tadpoles as we explore amazing animal adaptations, create fun crafts, play games and splash in the Aquarium stream. Your exploration will also take you to Reflection Riding and High Point Climbing.
$180/Member; $240/Non-member

POLLIWOGS AGES 7-8
SESSIONS 9AM - 4PM • Monday - Friday
Join the Polliwogs as we dive into different ecosystems at the Aquarium and roll around in nature. One day we’ll hop like frogs across the Walnut Street Bridge to Coolidge Park and another we’ll pretend to be Mudskippers at Reflection Riding in their mud hole.
$180/Member; $240/Non-member

TREFOGS AGES 7-8
Partner Camp with Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center.
SESSIONS 9AM - 4PM • Monday - Friday
Reflection Riding and Tennessee Aquarium join forces to bring campers nose to nose with animals indoors and out. Campers learn to canoe, hike and get down and dirty on Mud Day. Drop-off and pick up at Tennessee Aquarium!
$180/Member; $240/Non-member

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SPRING EVENTS

Register online & discover newly-added events at:
TNAQUA.ORG/EVENTS-PROGRAMS
OR CALL 423-267-FISH (3474)

All events are held on Eastern Time. Full event details, including Non-Member pricing, are available at tnaqua.org/events-programs. There’s plenty of fun every day at the Tennessee Aquarium. Before your next visit, check the list of FREE PROGRAMS (with your membership or paid admission) to make the most of your day of aquatic adventure: tnaqua.org/animals-exhibits/extraordinary-experiences.

MARCH

3

The FEED Co. Table & Tavern Dinner
Thursday • 6-8PM
Join us at The FEED Co. Table & Tavern in the thriving Southside area for a tasteful spring awakening! This dinner features sustainable seafood in support of our Serve & Protect initiative. Executive chef Charlie Loomis offers a seasonal menu of inventive fresh cuisine cooked simply and deliciously in a warm and inviting atmosphere. Includes gratuity, recipes and one glass of wine with main course.
Adults • $60/Member

12

Rain Barrel Workshop
Saturday • 10AM-Noon
Rainfall runoff from our lawns, driveways, roads and parking lots into the nearest storm drain or stream is the number one cause of pollution in our streams. Rain barrels help reduce storm water runoff. This workshop will allow you to convert an empty Coca-Cola syrup drum into a working rain barrel with experts from Ace Hardware.
Adults • $25/Member

19

Williams Island: Kid’s Adventure Cruise
Saturday • 12:30-2PM
Enjoy this child-friendly 90-minute cruise around the uniquely scenic and historic Williams Island. We’ll bring scavenger hunts, a special animal guest, and educational materials for kids and adults alike. Cash bar with soft drinks and snacks available during the cruise. Presented by First Tennessee Bank.
All ages • $20/Member (ages 3 and up)

24

Nature Nuts: March Madness
Thursday • 5-7PM
It’s March Madness in the forest! For this session of Nature Nuts, we’ll go to the lovely environs of Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center and search for signs of spring, especially wildflowers, butterflies and birds.
Ages 5-12 • $12/Member child

Full event details & Non-Member pricing at: tnaqua.org/events-programs
**APRIL**

3 **Spring Wildflower Walk**  
**Sunday • 2-5PM**  
Join Christine Bock, Aquarium horticulturist, for a wildflower walk to see the colorful beauty of spring ephemeral flowers in bloom. You’ll enjoy the fresh air at Cloudland Canyon State Park and a private farm in Rising Fawn, Georgia, with plenty of Virginia Bluebells. This is sure to be a scrapbook memory of family fun!  
*Ages 12+ • $4/Members*

9 **Adventures with Arapaima**  
**Saturday • 2-3PM**  
Come follow the adventures of two aquarists who wrangled arapaima in Guyana, South America. Enjoy this fun-filled giant arapaima talk in the River Journey Auditorium before getting an up-close and personal experience with the arapaima here at the Tennessee Aquarium.  
*All ages • FREE/Members*

16 **Secrets of the Riverbank Cruise**  
**Saturday • Noon-2PM**  
Join UTC Professor Dr. Nicholas Honerkamp on a thrilling exploration of local archaeological sites along the banks of the Tennessee River. From the Bluff Furnace to Maclellan Island to Moccasin Bend, discover the deeper human and industrial history of the Chattanooga area from the perspective of the river. Cash bar with wine, beer, soft drinks and snacks available during the cruise. *Presented by Tennessee American Water.*  
*All Ages  Members: $24/Adult; $18/Child (age 0-12)*

**MAY**

**23 DIY Workshop:** Containers for Spring  
**Saturday • 10-11:30AM**  
Tired of those “boring” flower displays? Don’t miss your chance to learn the secret to eye-catching containers at The Barn Nursery—just in time for spring! Talented designers will provide examples and free coaching on potted plants and hanging baskets. Find inspiration to create your own thrilling, filling, and spilling containers for both sun and shade. Then, discover a wide variety of beautiful items and plant materials in the Garden Gift Shop (available for purchase).  
*All Ages • FREE Seminar*

**28 Nature Nuts:**  
**Bird Migration**  
**Thursday • 5-7PM**  
Spring bird migration is in full swing! For this session of Nature Nuts, we’ll have a front row seat at Chester Frost Park. All those male birds are decked out in their brightest plumage to attract a mate, and did we mention that they’re singing their heads off?  
*Ages 5-12 • $12/Members*

**5 Aquarium Adventures:**  
**Animal Shapes and Sizes**  
**Thursday • 9:30-10:30AM**  
Life is full of adventures, and many of them can be found right here in the Aquarium! This program will take preschool tykes on a quest throughout Ocean Journey before opening hours. Discover the many different animal shapes and sizes, learn about aquatic life and even meet a critter on your quest!  
*Ages 2-4 • Register child only • FREE/Members*

**8 Happy Mother’s Day Cruise**  
**Sunday • 1-3PM**  
Honor your mother or grandmother on this special Mother’s Day cruise! Join us onboard the River Gorge Explorer and take in nature on a cruise down the river. Enjoy a special animal encounter and explore some of the more interesting maternal practices of wildlife. Cash bar with wine, beer, soft drinks and snacks available during the cruise. *Coupons and other discounts are not valid for this cruise.*  
*All Ages  Members: $24/Adult; $18/Child (age 0-12)*

**14 Spring Fling with TNACI Cruise**  
**Saturday • 10AM-12:30PM**  
Join Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute (TNACI) staff onboard the River Gorge Explorer for an expert talk as you cruise down the river. Learn more about the “fishy” events associated with the annual arrival of spring and plans for the new Conservation Institute. Cash bar with wine, beer, soft drinks and snacks available during the cruise. *Coupons and other discounts are not valid for this cruise.*  
*All Ages  Members: $24/Adult; $18/Child (age 0-12)*

**14 Nature Nuts:**  
**Nocturnal Insects**  
**Saturday • 8-10PM**  
These bugs can’t resist our lights! For this session of Nature Nuts, the mysteries of nocturnal insects will be revealed when we go black-lighting in the Tennessee River Gorge. Bat sightings and frog songs are a bonus, so don’t miss the fun! (Note date change to a Saturday so that we can go late enough to take advantage of the dark)!  
*Ages 5-12 • $12/Members*

**20 Sleep in the Deep:**  
**Family Sleepover**  
**Friday-Saturday • 5:30PM-8:30AM**  
Grab your sleeping bag for an overnight camping trip to sleep under the peaks alongside sharks, stingrays and more! Aquarium experts will take you behind-the-scenes to learn how we care for more than 10,000 animals. Includes after-hours experiences in both buildings, IMAX® 3D film, pizza dinner and light breakfast.  
*Families with children AGE 6 & OLDER accompanied by an adult • $65/Members*
The Southeast is home to more salamanders than any other spot in the U.S., but many are at risk of extinction. Join us in protecting our natural heritage: community.tnaqua.org/conservation.

My son, Noah, and I were watering our herb garden on our deck, a common daily routine for us. We moved the large flowerpot containing our basil plants into a better location and underneath the pot was a salamander I had never seen in my life—a Green Salamander!

Since I was lucky enough to conduct research in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, home to over 30 species of salamander, as an undergraduate, I have seen my fair share of cool salamanders. But I would have never thought to find a green salamander in my backyard because they are arboreal and prefer moist rocky outcrops.

This story highlights a simple fact that makes me proud: we live in a biodiversity hotspot for salamanders, and they literally live in our backyards! The southeastern United States is the salamander capital of the world, and new species are frequently discovered. These animals are secretive—found under rocks and logs—and often nocturnal; therefore, their abundance in our region is often overlooked by the general public.

The Southeast is also home to a special group of salamanders, the Plethodontids, or the lungless salamanders. Like their name implies, this group lacks lungs or gills and breathe through “cutaneous respiration,” which means they absorb all the oxygen they need through their thin skin. This limits these species, including the Green Salamander, to aquatic and moist terrestrial habitats.

Many salamander species are found in or near headwater streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Within these headwater streams, salamanders play a vital role in the health of the ecosystem, where they serve as both predators and prey. They also bridge the gap between the terrestrial and aquatic communities because of their two-part life cycle. This is where the name amphibian comes from—most amphibian larvae are aquatic, while most adults are semi-aquatic or terrestrial, spending time in both land and water. Amazingly, salamander populations within headwater streams can reach extraordinary densities that are unparalleled by any other vertebrate, including fish.

Headwater streams are vital to the Appalachian region, comprising 70 percent of the total available stream length. However, we have a poor understanding of basic salamander ecology in these habitats, which is surprising since these streams are so important not just to salamanders, but to maintaining high water quality far downstream.

We are creating research programs at TNACI, in collaboration with Dr. Jon Davenport at Southeast Missouri State University, and Dr. Kristen Cecala at Sewanee: University of the South, in order to to shed light on stream ecology in these headwater stream systems to help us understand what forces shape salamander communities in headwater streams and how salamander shape the aquatic community.

One potential force is competition, which can separate species in headwater streams over space and time. Using artificial streams, we have investigated competitive interactions between salamanders and fish in attempt to understand how fish impact salamander distributions in the region. In our first experiment, we found that certain fish species (Creek Chub) out-compete Black-bellied Salamanders while other fish species (Coosa Darter) do not.

Our current experiment focuses on competitive interactions between two salamander species, one species of conservation concern (Cumberland Dusky Salamander) and one common species (Spotted Dusky Salamander). We hope to answer questions about the strength of the interaction between the two species and if the interaction differs under normal and elevated water temperatures.

This experiment is being conducted as an undergraduate research project.
by Lindsey Liles, a senior in the Department of Biology at Sewanee, under the supervision of Dr. Cecala. “Working at the Tennessee Aquarium is an incredible opportunity, especially as an undergraduate,” said Liles. “I’m able to gain valuable research experience while working with a great team of people. The Aquarium’s research facilities allow me to carry out a project that I would not otherwise be able to perform. I hope to use my work there as a basis for further study on the effects that climate change may have on amphibian populations. I hope that the Aquarium will continue to provide these types of opportunities for young researchers, and I can’t thank them enough for all their help.”

Unfortunately, salamanders and other amphibians are more threatened with extinction than many other vertebrate groups, including birds and mammals. Salamanders face a plethora of threats, including climate change, diseases, UV-B radiation, invasive species, and habitat loss. The thin skin that lungless salamanders rely on for breathing makes them more susceptible to all of these problems.

Because salamanders, in general, inhabit moist and humid environments, temperature and precipitation pattern changes brought on by climate change will undoubtedly impact their survival. For example, scientists have linked shrinking salamander body size in the Appalachian region to actual changes in moisture and temperature of the region. These small amphibians, currently so common in our backyards, are extremely important indicators of the health of our natural world.

On your next trip to the Aquarium, you can look for the secretive salamanders that live in the Tennessee River Gallery of the River Journey building. You can also become a backyard salamander biologist by flipping rocks around your home or in the woods to see if you can find a salamander on your own. Just remember to carefully return the rocks to their original position so the salamanders you find will still have a safe home. 

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Green Salamander, *Aneides aeneus*

Blue Ridge Two-Lined Salamander, *Eurycea wilderae*

Black-bellied Salamander, *Desmognathus quadramaculatus*

Spotted Dusky Salamander, *Desmognathus conanti*
OTTERLY AWESOME PHOTOGRAPHER

Todd Stailey recently became the first two-time winner of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Photo Contest. His entry, an adorable shot of Benny, one of the Aquarium’s North American River Otters, was chosen as the cover photo for the December issue of AZA’s CONNECT magazine: aza.org/connectdecember2015.

He had to go fishing for this perfect picture. “Our otter experts use an enrichment toy that looks like a cat toy,” said Stailey. “That’s where the idea for the fishing rod and feather came from.” Stailey used an elaborate setup and “lured” the otters into the frame. He worked for nearly 2½ months to get the shot he was looking for.

NEW TEEN CONSERVATION COORDINATOR

Valerie Bogie is the Aquarium’s new Teen Conservation Coordinator. She is looking forward to increasing conservation education programming for high school students both on and off-site. Before joining the Aquarium team, Valerie worked with penguins, Beluga Whales, sea lions, walruses and otters at Sea World San Antonio. She also has previous experience as a marine mammal trainer and supervised the marine mammal volunteers at the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago.

Valerie is looking for more high school youth volunteers. A new recruitment drive is underway with the next training sessions beginning in May. A limited number of spaces are available for this unique opportunity to serve and learn at the Aquarium this summer. Go to tnaqua.org/volunteer-opportunities to download the application packet.

A SAFETY FIRST IN TENNESSEE

Thoughtfulness and careful planning go into every aspect of each experience you have at the Aquarium. Chief among those is the safety and security of visitors like you, as well as the variety of animals in our care. The Accident Fund Insurance Company of America (AFICA) recently recognized the Aquarium’s outstanding safety protocols with an award that designates ours as the first AFICA insured facility in Tennessee to achieve three years of continuous improvement.

Under the direction of Rodney Fuller, the Aquarium’s facility & safety manager, Aquarium staffers have been using online safety training tools and improving work site conditions. The Aquarium’s safety committee, made up of representatives from all departments, meets monthly and performs safety inspections of all public and staff spaces.

These efforts have led to an impressive, industry-leading safety record. “As a result of improved workplace safety, the Aquarium’s insurance premiums were reduced by 33 percent,” said Fuller. “Our staff is thinking about safety on a daily basis which benefits everyone who works or visits here.”

ANDREWS ELECTED TO ETHICS BOARD

Jackson Andrews, the Aquarium’s director of husbandry and operations, has been elected to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Ethics Board. This nine-member panel is responsible for interpreting and enforcing the Association’s Code of Professional Ethics, which set high standards of conduct for the zoo and aquarium profession. “AZA-accredited institutions will benefit from Jackson’s thoughtful leadership and extensive experience,” said AZA President and CEO Jim Maddy. “The entire AZA community recognizes Jackson’s commitment to the highest ethical standards in the profession.”

Andrews joined the Aquarium’s leadership team in 1991, helping to staff, train and open the River Journey building in 1992. “Zoos and aquariums enhance our communities as cultural attractions, economic engines, educational facilities and leaders in conservation and research,” said Andrews. “Our success, in large part, rests on public trust. Transparency and commitment to our code of ethics and best zoological practices in all aspects of our business are critical to public perception and trust.”

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WHY DO PENGUINS CARRY FISH IN THEIR BEAKS?

Because they don’t have any pockets!

WHAT DO MANY SALAMANDERS USE TO BREATHE?

Find out by deciding where each puzzle piece below fits in the big picture to the right. Then match its position with the same position in the letter grid at left to find that piece’s letter. The first one is done for you.
In 1989, I was asked to serve as legal counsel for the Tennessee Aquarium. Since then, I have served as Secretary to the Board, a member of the Board, and Chairman of the Board. So, I’ve been able to watch the Aquarium’s development and its community contributions from the outside and within.

When Charlie Arant retired from IBM, he began doing volunteer work for the Aquarium. At some point (while the Aquarium was still under construction), our paths crossed, and we became fast friends. His business acumen was obvious, as was his practical approach to big and small issues. His great sense of humor was a bonus.

When Charlie became the third President and CEO in the Aquarium’s history in 1995, we began working together closely. Since then, I have had the good fortune of watching Charlie lead and operate up close and personal. Regardless of the issue or project or problem, Charlie’s practical wisdom has paved the way to a good solution. And solutions for all aspects of the Aquarium have been one of Charlie’s fortes. That’s true in large part, I think, because he has always regarded the Aquarium as a trust placed in his care.

He’s consistently appreciated what the Aquarium means to our community; how it has interested our children in science and the environment; how it has attracted all kinds of professionals from outside the community and within to work in an increasing array of important jobs at the Aquarium; how it has been a principal stimulus to our economy; how it has introduced people all over this country and world to our community; how it has been a source of pride for all of our citizens. For Charlie, the Aquarium has been something to be treasured, protected, and improved.

Charlie has routinely deflected credit for himself, preferring to acknowledge staff and volunteers. The Aquarium has a lot of great people, particularly at the senior level, as I’ve ever seen. A goodly number of staff members have been with the Aquarium for decades, some from the date on which the Aquarium opened. That speaks volumes about the institution and its 20-plus year leader. Staff members will quickly tell you that...
their work at the Aquarium has been fun and challenging. They know they are contributing to the community in a unique way. They will also tell you that Charlie has been a good leader and follower. He has asked for their advice, and he has taken it.

Charlie has been diligent in keeping the Board well-informed, soliciting its guidance, and increasing its diversity. Charlie’s management skills helped the senior staff and the Board stay on the same page, working toward common goals that would be in the community’s best interest: opening the IMAX®3D Theater, establishing the Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute, advancing education programs, strengthening the volunteer ranks, opening Ocean Journey, launching the River Gorge Explorer, and announcing a permanent facility for the Conservation Institute. And, he’s leaving the institution in fine shape. 2015 was the most successful year in the Aquarium’s history.

One of the things I admire most about Charlie’s leadership and stewardship is that he has maintained the Aquarium’s economic impact on our community, while simultaneously guiding the institution to become a nationally recognized conservation leader, particularly when it comes to freshwater conservation. Combining economic development and conservation insight and progress isn’t easy to accomplish — unless you have Charlie Arant at the helm.

Over the Thanksgiving holidays, about one week after Charlie announced his retirement, I took one of my young grandsons to the Aquarium for the first time. We saw otters, snakes, penguins, schools of fish, sharks, alligators, birds, and butterflies — all mixed with my grandson’s screams, wide eyes, laughter, and childhood wonder. As we were leaving, I thought of future generations of children who will laugh and learn in the Tennessee Aquarium. And I said a silent thank you to Charlie.
The Tennessee Aquarium is a non-profit organization with a mission to inspire wonder, appreciation and protection of water and all life that it sustains.

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