

NEWS FROM..



FOR: IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE: PALM BEACH ZOO ANNOUNCES TRAINING COURSE FOR VOLUNTEER TEACHING GUIDES

MEDIA CONTACT: GAIL EATON – CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER (561) 533-0887 X 219

DATE: JANUARY 17, 2008

Thursday, January 17, 2008, West Palm Beach, Florida --- The Palm Beach Zoo in partnership with Forest Hill Community High School's Adult Education Program announces the Volunteer Teaching Guide (aka Docent) Training Course set to begin on February 7, 2008. This seven week course focuses on zoology, wildlife conservation, the history of zoos, customer service, public speaking, and presentations. The course will take place weekly on Thursday evenings from 6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m. at the Palm Beach Zoo.

Upon completion of the training course, class participants are strongly encouraged to continue participation in the volunteer programs offered at the Palm Beach Zoo. There are many responsibilities and opportunities for volunteer teaching guides to assist the Zoo in many capacities, including, but not limited to the following:

- Conducting tours of Zoo grounds and exhibits for groups, visitors and VIPs.
- Stationary encounters at exhibits using bio-facts to highlight the Zoo's conservation messages.
- Assist the Education Department staff with on-grounds educational programs, outreaches and special events.
- Share information with visitors through Roving Animal Encounters.
- Assist education staff in the care and maintenance of Education Department animal collection and educational interpretation in the Zoo.
- Act as liaison between the Zoo and public by assisting visitors when the need occurs.
- Assist Zoo staff with security and safety issues while on Zoo grounds.
- Assist in other areas of Zoo operation such as commissary, contact yard, etc., when needed.
- Upon completion of additional training, duties may also include animal handling and presentations.

Qualifications:

Applicants must be at least eighteen (18) years of age. All volunteers regardless of assignment must present proof of negative TB test administered within the past year. Additionally, new docents must shadow a veteran docent for ten (10) hours in order to successfully meet all training requirements.

Register for classes by January 25, 2008 by contacting Forest Hill Community High School at (561) 540-2417, Monday through Thursday from 2 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. and on Friday from 8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. You may also contact Karrie Hamilton, the Palm Beach Zoo Volunteer Programs Manager at (561) 533-0887 ext. 239 for more information. \$50 fee applies that will be due at registration, which includes a \$10 non-refundable fee. Classes fill quickly. Register now!

The Palm Beach Zoo is a non profit zoological organization located at Dreher Park in West Palm Beach. Its mission is to provide an open-air classroom of living creatures to foster awareness, appreciation and respect for the natural world. The zoo is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Support for the zoo is also provided by the Palm Beach County Tourist Development Council, the Board of County Commissioners and the Palm Beach County Cultural Council.

Palm Beach Zoo is located at 1301 Summit Boulevard, just east of I-95 between Southern and Forest Hill Boulevard. Admission: Regular \$12.95, Seniors 60+ \$9.95, Children 3-12 \$8.95, under 3 years and Zoo Members are free. The zoo is open every day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.) For more information visit www.palmbeachzoo.org.

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**Palm Beach Zoo • 1301 Summit Boulevard, West Palm Beach FL, 33405-3098
(561) 547-WILD • www.palmbeachzoo.org**