

birdcalls

Volume 3, Issue 3 • Fall 2010

The latest news from the National Aviary

National Aviary **COMPLETES** **\$18.5 Million Expansion**

The heavy equipment has left, construction crews have completed the finishing touches, and the curtain on the National Aviary's \$18.5 million expansion and renovation is ready to rise.



While the Aviary's birds and their trainers prepare for the October 9 debut of Wings! in the Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater, chefs are preparing menus for the fresh lunches and snacks that will be served in the Aviary's new café. A bright new classroom awaits the school groups that will descend in the coming months, and concierge staff are ready to greet the visitors who will enter through the Aviary's expansive new entrance along Arch Street.

"With the completion of this project, we are able to offer our visitors a vibrant new setting for experiencing the Aviary's birds in an entirely new way," says National Aviary Executive Director Patrick Mangus. "Pittsburgh is now home to the first and only indoor theater constructed exclusively for the presentation of live, free-flight bird shows. Nowhere else can you see birds in this way – flying freely, in an environment of video, sound, lighting and narration. In this one-of-a-kind space, guests of all ages will

be inspired by what they see and learn about birds and our natural world."

A project of Springboard Design, the expansion and renovation comprised the construction of the theater, café, entrance and new facade, together with extensive improvements to the existing facility, including new restrooms, heating and cooling systems, wi-fi, sound systems, and updates to exhibitry.

In creating the architectural vision for the expansion, Paul Rosenblatt, principal, SPRINGBOARD Design, and Aviary leadership were faced with the challenge of creating a new addition that would seamlessly integrate with the Aviary's 50+ year-old hodgepodge of existing structures.

"Conceptually, the project is all about birds," says Rosenblatt. "When you view the entrance and façade from the outside, you can see that it references the anatomy of a bird, with the bird's wing span taking the form of the existing building, and the body and tail feathers taking the form of the addition. The entry is marked by a wing like canopy that flies out of the building to welcome visitors."

The new façade fronting the building along Arch Street lends an airy and unified presence that melds the old with the new.

"A series of perforated metal scrims have been added along that front," explains Rosenblatt. "The scrims are backlit with colored LED lights that constantly flow and change, illuminating the National Aviary in the evening hours and adding plumage to the building's new public face."

Bird Friendly Construction

The Aviary's new glass-fronted entry pavilion is also notable because of the extensive use of fritted glazing on the glass panels. The tiny dot pattern in the glass makes it appear solid to flying birds, eliminating the risk of birds striking the building from the outside. This design feature makes the National Aviary expansion the first explicitly bird friendly building in the region.

"Millions of birds die each year from collisions with glass windows, lobbies and entry spaces," says Steve Sarro, National Aviary director of animal programs. "A bird sees a span of glass as small as 12 inches as an open void. From the outset we were committed to creating a building that was not only safe for our birds, but also for wild populations that live in or migrate through the Pittsburgh area."

(continued on page 2)

The National Aviary's new theater has been named in honor of **HELEN M. SCHMIDT**, through the request of her friend, Cordelia Scaife May. Ms. May, a longtime supporter of the National Aviary, credited Helen with teaching her everything she knew about birds, and for inspiring in her a commitment to protect the feathered creatures with whom we share our world. **MORE ABOUT THE NEW THEATER ON PAGE 6.**



National Aviary **COMPLETES \$18.5 Million Expansion** (continued from page 1)

Two different dot patterns are glazed on the entry pavilion's glass panels, creating subtly different shades of white. The dot pattern filters but does not obstruct the flow of light, demonstrating that it is possible to create light-filled spaces that are also bird friendly.

Enhanced Visitor Experience

The large new entry pavilion provides easy access for visitors and groups, and is equipped with lockers and cubbies for stashing belongings. A welcome desk at the entry point provides concierge service, ensuring that each visitor makes the most of their time at the Aviary.

Visitors and staff can for the first time enjoy the convenience of on-site food service with the opening of Bistro to Go at the National Aviary. Locally owned, Bistro to Go has two popular establishments on the North Side, and is known for its fresh and varied menu.

"We are delighted to have Bistro to Go on board to run the new café," says Mangus. "Visitors will enjoy a varied menu of homemade lunch and light fare options, as well as coffee and beverages. The new café makes it easier to extend your stay to experience the many activities taking place at the Aviary throughout the day."

Guests can also enjoy free Wi-Fi in the café.

Going for the Silver

The Aviary's expansion and renovation has been developed with the goal of achieving a Silver LEED (Leadership in Energy Efficiency and Design) Certification for green building standards.

The building's green design elements include light colored roofing material that reflect rather than absorb heat; installation of highly efficient mechanical HVAC systems; extensive use of recycled and recyclable materials; lighting controls and use of motion detection to reduce energy usage in the theater, classroom, and other locations; use of low and/or no VOC paints, water-based adhesives, and carpets that do not outgas; and the designation of parking spaces reserved for energy-efficient vehicles. Construction of a green roof above the theater will reduce rainwater runoff while enhancing the space that will be used for bird of prey lure-flying demonstrations beginning spring 2011.

"The completion of this expansion is the culmination of many years of planning, collaboration and hard work by Aviary staff, board and

designers, as well as the many members of the North Side community who shared their time and perspective throughout the process," says Mangus. "We also could not have accomplished this opening without the many funders and individual supporters who stood with us as we honed our vision. We invite everyone out to experience the new National Aviary, and the many exciting new programs we will be developing in the coming months."

WINGS!, the first show in the new Helen M. Schmidt Theater, opens October 9.



Then & Now

A historic look at the National Aviary

In the late nineteenth century, Pittsburgh's first plant conservatory was established on the Aviary site, in a location previously occupied by the Western Penitentiary from 1826 to 1880. The conservatory was destroyed by a natural gas explosion in the late 1920s, and in 1952 was rebuilt by the City of Pittsburgh with the addition of birds to the indoor gardens. The Aviary was one of the first zoos to present its collection in free-flight rooms and natural exhibits with over 25,000 square feet of space.



1952

This original 1952 building is now called our "Tropical Forest"

1994

The Aviary added on again, although not as grandly. A parking lot, gift shop, off-exhibit bird breeding and office space was added. The center of the Aviary was opened up with the addition of the large glass dome.

1964

The National Aviary underwent a significant expansion, adding on the Wetland exhibit, six smaller wire-front exhibits, and an outdoor courtyard. A kitchen, bird holding areas and office space were also added at this time.



Animal Rescue Day



Guests can adopt more than just exotic birds during Animal Rescue Day at the National Aviary — they can adopt their future pets. For the second year in a row, the Aviary hosted an animal rescue day, where animal shelters and rehab centers from around the county bring a variety of pets to meet Aviary guests and potential owners.

Barbara Carlson, the operator of Hide-E-Hole Ferret Rescue, attended Animal Rescue Day for the first time this year.

“It’s a nice event, there has been a steady stream of people to talk to, it’s been fun,” she said while her ferret friends played in a cage behind her.

Carlson thinks it is essential to educate people about ferrets before they make a commitment to adopt. According to Carlson, people do not realize how mischievous ferrets are and cannot handle the responsibility of properly caring for them. With events, such as Animal Rescue Day, Carlson has the chance to educate the public about ferrets.

Denise Figas, a volunteer for the Great Pyrenees Club of Western Pennsylvania, notes having some of the same concerns with Great Pyrenees dogs.

“People don’t put a lot of research into the breed and all of a sudden a cute puppy becomes a 100 plus pound dog that’s too much to handle,” Figas said.

At Animal Rescue Day, Figas brought her own two Pyrenees dogs to share with guests while educating them on the proper care of the

massive, all-white dogs. Along with Great Pyrenees, other dog rescue shelters, including Hello Bully, Going Home Greyhound and Distinguished Dobermans brought in Pit bulls, Greyhounds and Dobermans, respectively.

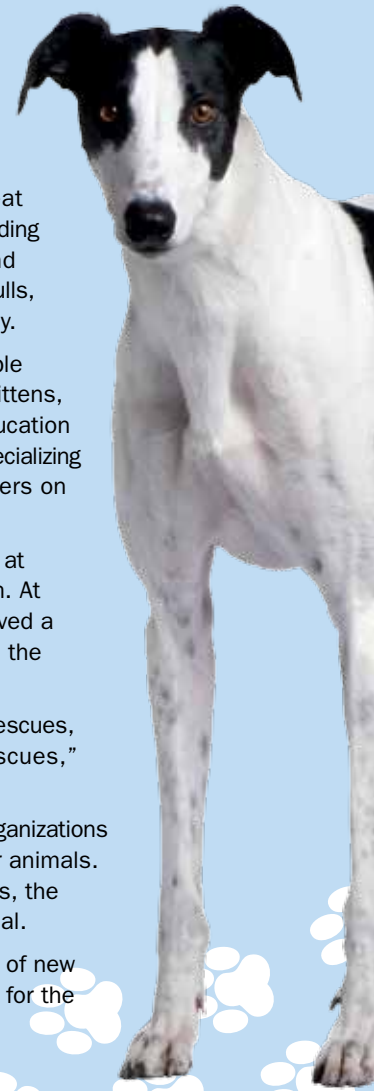
Even with four breeds of dogs and multiple ferrets, the Aviary still had a space for kittens, bunnies and, of course, birds. Parrot Education and Adoption Center is a local nonprofit specializing in educating bird and potential bird owners on how to properly care for birds.

Carol and Chris Wrostek are volunteers at PEAC and own multiple birds of their own. At Animal Rescue Day, the Wrostecks received a lot of exposure for their organization and the eclectic parrot they brought with them.

“Everyone knows there are cat and dog rescues, but might not know there are parrot rescues,” Chris said.

And exposure is important for all of the organizations involved to get new homes for all of their animals. For volunteers and owners of the shelters, the opportunity to find homes is the main goal.

“The best part is seeing the satisfaction of new owners,” Figas said, “and finding homes for the rescues.”



2010

Grasslands opened in an area that had been a hallway with wire-front exhibits.

2009

The Aviary opened Penguin Point in the area that had been the courtyard.

What's Happening This Fall

October

1

NEW Sunday Hours!

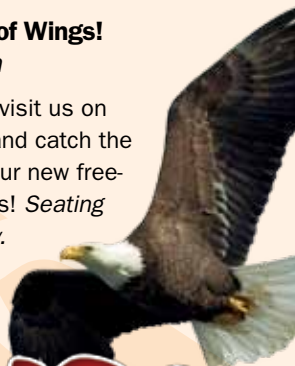
We will now open 10 am to 5 pm on Sundays

6-8

Member's Preview of Wings!

11 am and 1:30 pm

If you are a member, visit us on October 6, 7 and 8, and catch the dress rehearsals of our new free-flight bird show, Wings! Seating is limited, arrive early.



WINGS!
AN INDOOR FREE-FLIGHT
AVIAN ADVENTURE

9

Grand Opening of Wings!

Visit us on October 9th to catch the action at the NEW Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone Theater. Wings! will show at 11 am and 1:30 pm. Seating is first-come, first-served, **or buy a reserved VIP seat for \$3 each.**

9

NEW Programs begin

Visit the National Aviary to see all of the new programs happening in the Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone Theater. From Veterinarian Talks to Penguin Chats, there are lots of new encounters to experience.

10

RADical Day!

10 am - 5 pm

Enjoy a day of free admission at the National Aviary as part of the Allegheny Regional Asset District RADical Days. *All encounters, feedings and shows are canceled for this date.*

29



Haunted Aviary
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29 7-10 PM

Built on the site of the former Western Penitentiary, folklore suggests that the ghosts of Civil War prisoners still roam the halls of the National Aviary. **Are you daring enough to explore one of Pittsburgh's notable haunts by the light of the moon during Haunted Aviary?**

Meet forbidding winged creatures including raptors and crows or stare deep into the lingering gaze of an eerie owl. Peer into the shadows of the dimly lit exhibits to catch a glimpse of the feathered or perhaps supernatural residents. Hear spine-tingling tales of historic origin to present day stories – you decide the whether these ghoulish accounts are fact or fiction. Too frightened to have the wits scared out of you? Then, wear your cleverest costume and dance to the music of those favorite Halloween sounds. Be careful, not every one at the party may be of this world!

Friday, October 29

7-10pm

Cash bar with beer and wine provided by Rock Bottom Brewery
Must be 21+

Contact 412-258-9437 or visit our web site to order tickets.

November

25

Happy Thanksgiving!

The National Aviary will be closed on Thanksgiving Day.



December

3

Light-Up Night at the Aviary

5 pm doors open (6:30 pm tree lighting;
5:30 pm and 7:30 pm holiday
bird show presentations)

Tickets:

\$17 children, \$20 adults

Join the National Aviary for the first annual lighting of its outdoor Christmas tree, followed by light refreshments, a visit with Santa himself, and a presentation of the Aviary's free-flight bird show in the new Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone Theater. While there guests can tour the Aviary's exhibits, say hello to the penguins, do some shopping in the Gift Shop, or enjoy dinner at the Aviary's new café, Bistro to Go at the National Aviary. Show seating is limited. Call 412.258.9439 for tickets and information.



4

11

18

Breakfast with Santa

8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Enjoy a special Saturday morning with Santa and your favorite feathered friends! Book your spot now for this private event, during which guests will enjoy a continental breakfast, hot chocolate, crafts and a visit with Santa himself. Santa's penguin helpers will pose for pictures and help hand out a special take-away treat for each child.

Afterward, explore the National Aviary exhibits, take in our holiday free flight bird show, and browse the Aviary's gift shop for nature-themed toys, books, giftware and more.

Admission is \$20 per person. Seating is limited. Call 412.258.9439 for tickets and information.



Is *that* a TURKEY?

"Is that a turkey?" is a common question for National Aviary guests to ask while leaning over the Tropical Forest bridge for a closer look.

It is a turkey. The **Australian brush turkey** is one of the newest members to the Aviary's bird family, although it is not related to the

American turkeys commonly spotted around Pennsylvania.

"[Australian brush turkeys] are not actual turkeys, they are in a different family," says Andy Kemerer, one of the National Aviary's trainers. "But they are a turkey, in the sense we call them turkeys."

The brush turkey is part of a family called **megapodiidae**, which lay eggs in huge mounds made of mulch, leaves, grass and twigs. The

male brush turkey kicks material he collects into a mound that can reach up to 13 feet in diameter and three feet in height. The female turkey lays her eggs inside the mound and lets the decomposing mulch incubate the eggs. Adult brush turkeys do not care for their chicks once they hatch, but luckily the chicks already know how to find food and can even fly within a few hours of hatching.

The National Aviary is one of only a few zoos to have brush turkeys on exhibit. The Aviary's male has already completed construction of a nesting mound, but is always "on a permanent mission to find more mulch" according to Kemerer.

Throughout the incubation period (approximately 50 days) the male digs holes in the mound to make sure it is the right temperature for incubation and adds or removes mulch when needed. As of this writing, Kemerer was not sure whether the female had laid any eggs in the huge mound that occupies a corner of the Tropical Forest exhibit.

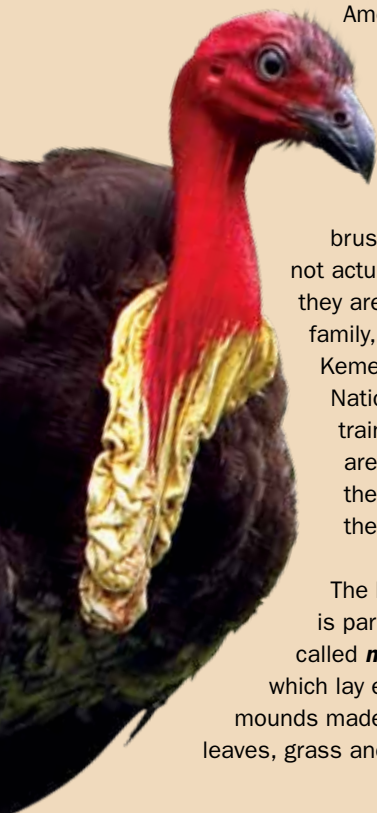
Aviary trainers have had to adjust to the mess of mulch the male turkey leaves over night.

"We just have to clean up all his [mulch] every morning and give him lots to play with or he makes a bigger mess," Kemerer said.

Australians who live with brush turkeys in their backyard have the same problem during nesting season. Turkeys tear up landscaping and gardens in a quest for enough nesting material. Australia's wildlife websites have tips for living with the turkeys and for deterring males from using gardens as a nursery.

Where possible, Australians are encouraged to share mulch with the brush turkeys and give them enough room for their nests. Although not threatened at this time, increasing human populations and growing cities are eliminating nesting sites for the turkeys, and their numbers are on the decline.

Guests visiting the Aviary can see the brush turkey's mulch mountain nest in the Tropical Forest exhibit.



WINGS!

AN INDOOR FREE-FLIGHT
AVIAN ADVENTURE



Beginning this October, wild encounters at the National Aviary take on a thrilling new approach.

WINGS!, the first bird show in the new Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone Theater, will feature birds flying freely above and landing close to audiences seated in the theater's intimate space. Music, lighting, video and narration will add drama and context, creating a complete theatrical experience that takes viewers to distant lands and habitats.

WINGS! opens Saturday, October 9 and will be presented daily at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Traveling from the rainforests of South America, to the plains of Africa, the continent of Europe and the wild spaces of North America, audiences will learn about the behaviors of rare macaws, hooded vultures, owls, hawks and eagles, and the threats these birds face in the wild as habitats disappear and resources dwindle.

In addition to drawing on the skills of the Aviary's trainers who have been working the birds to acclimate them to their new space, the creation and design of the show required the talents and experience of a number of Pittsburgh theater professionals.

WINGS! is directed by Dan Fallon, who also developed the show's script, music and video. Currently serving on the faculty of Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College where he specializes in the field of Arts Management, Fallon's extensive career in theater management includes the National Endowment for the Arts, Paramount Theatre and State Theater in Austin Texas, the Ford Center for the Performing Arts on Broadway, and Pittsburgh Public Theater.

Planning the details of a show in which the cast is avian, not human, presented some unique challenges.

"In developing the format for the program, we needed to be sensitive to the fact that many of the birds are reluctant to fly in darkness," says Fallon. "We needed to be sure that enough light is present on stage for the birds to feel comfortable. We also had to create safe roosting areas for the birds to land as they fly around the theatre. We took care to ensure that the lighting instruments used would not get too hot and be harmful to the birds if they chose to rest there. The materials used in the set construction had to look realistic, but also had to be tough enough to withstand a bird's claw gripping into them twice a day. Finally, we had to design a script that would hold up if a certain bird just chose not to perform that day. Flexibility is the key in the design to this production."

Lighting for WINGS! was designed by Andy Ostrowski, also of Pittsburgh. Ostrowski's work includes lighting design for Pittsburgh CLO, City Theater, Playhouse Repertory and Playhouse Conservatory Company, Spoleto USA, The Asolo, Virginia Stage, Dallas Summer Musicals, and Theaterworks Palo Alto.

Sets, which include naturalistic rock formations and trees, were designed by Michael Essad., currently technical director and resident scenic designer for The Pittsburgh Playhouse and Point Park University. Michael has designed for the Asolo Theater and served as technical director for Pittsburgh Public Theater, Coconut Grove Playhouse, Berkeley Repertory Theater, California Shakespeare Festival, Actors Playhouse, San Jose Repertory Company and the California Theater Center.

"WINGS! is unlike anything the National Aviary has ever presented, and is the first show of its kind, anywhere in the world," says Patrick Mangus, executive director of the National Aviary. "Audiences will be completely immersed in the experience. No matter where

you sit, you will be no more than a few feet away from some of our most remarkable birds. Imagine a flock of vultures landing at your feet to feed from a carcass, or seeing colorful Hyacinth macaws – some of the world's most endangered species – brushing by to land on stage, all against a video environment of the African plains or the Amazon rainforest. It will be an incredibly moving experience.

"We are grateful to the many funders and supporters who have stood by us through the planning and construction of the new theater," adds Mangus. "Our trainers have worked hard to prepare the birds for their first flights in their new show home. We believe that guests will be touched by what they see and leave inspired to make a difference by taking conservation in their own homes and community."



The New Aviary Cafe *open daily 10 am - 4 pm*

featuring fine selections from



SANDWICHES

Mr. Pepper Roasted Turkey breast, peppered bacon, provolone cheese, red onion, spring mix lettuce, roasted herb tomatoes, drizzled with balsamic vinaigrette on a three cheese roll.

The Ratatouille Julienne red and green peppers, zucchini, herb marinated portobella mushrooms and tomatoes, shaved Parmesan,. All drizzled with a balsamic vinaigrette on a cheese roll.

Cranberry Almond Chicken Salad Our own house made chicken salad with chunks of white meat chicken, dried cranberries, celery and toasted almonds in a special whipped dressing. Served on a croissant with tomato and leaf lettuce.

Apple, Ham & Cheddar Sugar maple ham, sharp Cheddar cheese, sliced apple, red onion and crispy bacon mounded high on a three cheese roll and spread with house made honey mustard.

The Bistro Classic Thin sliced roast turkey, creamy spinach and artichoke spread, herb roasted tomato bruschetta, spring lettuce mix, and crisp red onions. Served on a cheese roll with a side of balsamic vinaigrette.

CAN'T DECIDE?

PICK 2 Half sandwich - Side salad - Cup of soup

KIDZ LUNCH BOX

Choose your sandwich
Peanut butter & jelly - American cheese - Turkey & provolone
Chocolate chip cookie and a fruit cup



SALADS

Sugared Pecan Salad Crisp romaine and fresh spinach mixed with sugared pecans, vanilla almonds, sweet strawberries (winter dried cranberries) red onion an crumbled feta cheese. Served with a raspberry vinaigrette.

Cranberry Almond Chicken Salad Chunks of white meat chicken, sun dried cranberries and crunchy celery mixed in a whipped dressing. Served on a bed of greens garnished with seasonal grapes.

Crispy Sesame Ginger Chicken Salad Crispy chicken strips dipped in sweet sesame ginger vinaigrette, served over chopped romaine and shredded cabbage. Topped with crunchy noodles, scallions and sesame seeds. Served with extra sesame ginger vinaigrette.

Apple, Ham and Cheddar Salad Crispy granny smith apple, sugar maple ham, sharp aged cheddar and red onion rings over mixed greens. Served with a house made honey mustard dressing.

Caesar Salad Crisp chopped romaine, plum tomatoes, Parmesan cheese, red onion rings and fresh baked garlic Parmesan croutons tossed with classic Parmesan Caesar dressing and topped with tomato bruschetta. *Add grilled chicken \$1.00*

Fresh Market Salad An array of fresh vegetables and portobella mushrooms, marinated in roasted balsamic vinaigrette, served over chopped greens, garnished with olives, garlic Parmesan croutons and shredded mozzarella.



Become a New Member or Renew Your Membership and enjoy four VIP seats for Wings!, our indoor avian adventure at the new Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater.

New Member Renewal

Please select one

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- Family \$75
- Couple \$60
- Individual \$50
- Senior \$40
- Student \$40
- Aviary/Children's Museum Joint \$154
- Donor \$110
- Patron \$250
- Benefactor \$500
- Partner in Preservation . \$1000
- PLUS Nanny/Caregiver . . . \$15

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