

Preface

Friends of Maggie is a group of Anchorage citizens concerned with the present and future welfare, of Maggie, the single African elephant at the Alaska Zoo. The group's executive committee is composed of Penelope Wells, Paul Joslin, Sloan Seiden, and Jenna White. Lisa Kane, a practicing attorney and member of AZA who resides in Madison, Wisconsin, is collaborating with the committee. None of us has a financial relationship with any of the institutions or individuals named in this report. Friends of Maggie initially proposed PAWS Ark 2000 sanctuary, North Carolina Zoo and Oakland Zoo as viable options for Maggie's relocation in 2003 after considerable research. The Elephant Sanctuary was added when it opened its doors to Africans. Friends of Maggie and Lisa Kane recently contacted these institutions and invited them to consider Maggie's placement in their respective elephant programs. We also contacted elephant experts on behalf of Friends of Maggie, inviting them to address key issues relevant to Maggie's life at the Alaska Zoo and inviting them to offer their professional judgment regarding Maggie's present and future well being.

This report discusses Maggie's future. It explores the issues and consequences to the Zoo of the decision to keep Maggie or the decision to let her go. Our report lays out the costs, risks and benefits associated with either option. It also explores these decisions in light of their impact on Maggie's well being. The purpose of this report is to provide quality information to Zoo officials in order to promote a well-informed debate of the merits of competing visions of Maggie's future. We believe that the Board is committed to providing the best possible future for Maggie. We also believe that Maggie's remaining 40 years of life should be spent in a spacious natural environment in a mild climate in the company of other African elephants. We are committed to promoting this vision for Maggie's future in a way that benefits the Zoo and strengthens its relationship with the community.

This report's descriptions of wild elephant behavior rest principally on *Elephant Memories* by Cynthia Moss and *Behavioral Guide to African Mammals* by Richard Despard Estes. Our main sources for statements about captive elephant needs and management are *Elephants in Captivity* by Roz Clubb and Georgia Mason, AZA's Elephant Management Standards and the Smithsonian's *Second Nature: Environmental Enrichment for Captive Animals*.

Maggie's Future at the Alaska Zoo

We believe that the Alaska Zoo's leadership is committed to provide Maggie an excellent quality of life. As zoological professionals unanimously agree, elephants are the most expensive and difficult animals to keep in captivity. The decision to retain Maggie, therefore, will require the Zoo's investment of significant capital and staff for the foreseeable future.

Background

In 1983, the Alaska Zoo acquired Maggie, an orphaned one-year-old calf wild caught during a cull in Zimbabwe, to provide its solitary Asian female elephant, Annabelle, company. The two were housed together until Annabelle's premature death from foot rot in 1997. Since then, Maggie has lived alone. She is 22 years old and should, barring accident, live another 40 years.

Elephants, tropical animals, are extremely gregarious, particularly African savanna species like Maggie. Females live with their mothers all their lives. These close-knit families routinely cover 10 miles a day, spending a majority of their time—some 20 hours a day on average--foraging or seeking food and water. Wild African elephants enjoy a life span of 60 to 70 years, in the absence of human predation or other calamity.

Maggie lives alone in a sub-Artic climate under free contact management. She has a history of aggression towards her keepers. Each of these key conditions of her confinement raises important questions.

Solitary confinement

Maggie's solitary state is wholly unnatural. No female African elephant lives alone in the wild. Solitary confinement of females, in the absence of extraordinary circumstance, has been sharply criticized for years. AZA's elephant management standards call for a minimum herd size of three.

One solution to the problem of Maggie's isolation is to import one or more additional companions for her. This option, however, is as impractical as it is obvious. Elephants are no longer readily available from the wild. Even if that challenge were overcome, the expense would be significant. The zoo's present senior elephant keeper has no experience with elephant introductions; Maggie's barn and outdoor exhibit area would have to be remodeled and enlarged to permit a successful introduction and promote future harmony. The zoo's commitment to an additional elephant must be matched by a commitment

to hiring and training additional staff. Most importantly, upon Maggie's death or the death of her companion, the zoo would be in the same position it finds itself in today—housing a solitary elephant thousands of miles away from its nearest kin.

Sub-Arctic climate

The Alaska Zoo's commitment to provide Maggie a more than minimal quality of life in a sub-Arctic climate will be expensive. Ideal improvements might include the following:

Expanding and extensively remodeling the existing barn to provide:

New, heated flooring with rubberized surface

Adequate space for significant exercise

A quiet pool sufficient to permit Maggie to submerge

A restraint chute

Design features that permit novel locations for placement of scent, minerals, or other stimulating objects

Mud and dust wallow

Sprinkler system

Outside exhibit is remodeled to provide:

More space

A pool sufficient to permit Maggie to submerge

A mud wallow and dust wallow

A variety of exhibit furniture to provide physical and mental stimulation

Even if only some of these features are added, the capital and operational costs will be significant.

Whether inside or out, Maggie needs sufficient browse, grass and other feed to permit her approximately 12 hours of foraging each day. (In the wild, elephants forage for approximately 20 hours a day.) Maggie also has enrichment needs—especially when she is confined for months on end during the winter. An elephant confined indoors for the winter must be provided stimulating options and behavioral alternatives to promote exercise and mental acuity. Reasonably adequate enrichment under these trying circumstances results only from careful planning. Through systematic planning, the Zoo can address Maggie's needs mental stimulation, enrichment, exercise, bathing and foraging.

Keeper safety—free contact or protected contact?

Maggie apparently has a proven track record of causing injury to keepers, including her present keeper. It was reported in the Anchorage Daily News on February 27, 2004, that Maggie has already caused “serious bodily harm” to 26 trainers and handlers. Like all zoo elephants, Maggie is very likely the most dangerous animal managed by the Zoo.

Despite this record, Maggie continues to be managed in free contact, a management system marked by ongoing keeper injury and death industry wide. An alternative system, protected contact, was introduced at San Diego Wild Animal Park in 1991. Since then, over 60% of AZA zoos holding elephants, particularly zoos holding bulls and aggressive females, have converted to protected contact. Protected contact programs have reported 0 injuries and 0 deaths since 1990. Over the same period, despite declining numbers of elephants managed in free contact programs, those programs have reported 22 serious injuries to keepers, 5 resulting in the keepers’ deaths. Keepers, both experienced and inexperienced, have been killed. Some deaths appeared to be intentional and others accidental.

If the Zoo elects to maintain Maggie in free contact, it will presumably expand Maggie’s winter quarters to provide a physical facility that meets Maggie’s needs and reserve sufficient funds to cover the potential financial liability associated with free contact. Conversion to protected contact is not inexpensive. Both options carry a steep price tag:

Conversion to protected contact would require extensive remodeling of elephant barn and yard. Hard cost figures could be acquired from Santa Barbara Zoo, for example, as it just underwent such a conversion within the past 12 months or so. The Zoo’s potential liability for maintaining free contact management is real. Because there is a proven, safe alternative, the Zoo would not protect itself by arguing it was merely doing what many other Zoos, including AZA zoos, do. Liability for permitting a negligent standard is not mitigated by the fact others also follow it: “The fact that a majority of people act in a certain manner does not make that conduct reasonable, especially when the conduct involves unnecessary risk.” *Hutchins v. Schwartz*, 724 P2d. 1194 (Alaska 1986). Were Maggie to injure or kill a keeper in the future, the possibility of expensive liability claims against the Zoo is real.

The Zoo’s reputation in the community might suffer if the public became aware the Zoo had rejected a reasonable and effective alternative to free contact. If a keeper is hurt or killed in the future, the Zoo’s decision might be viewed as

lacking sensitivity to keeper safety issues.

In any event, the Zoo's present practice of allowing a single keeper to go in with Maggie is ripe for review. AZA's Elephant Management Standards require that a minimum of two experienced, responsible keepers must be present during any free contact with an elephant. The Zoo's present practice appears to fall below zoo industry standards.

Whether the Zoo converts to protected contact or not, whether the Zoo acquires another elephant or not, certain landmarks in the future are already visible. The injury statistics provided by the Zoo to the local press indicate that Maggie has already had 26 different handlers. Maggie's attachment to her present keeper is widely reported. As we know, family and professional issues come up in everyone's life requiring a move or change in careers. Given Maggie's aggressive history, it may be very difficult to find a suitable replacement. Elephants are unpredictable. Given Maggie's unique history of aggression, it is not unreasonable to conclude that her present and all future keepers are at risk for injury or worse.

Summary of fiscal impact

Implementing any of the changes outlined above will require a significant and ongoing investment of capital. The two most important short-range recommendations are re-designing and expanding the barn, including the installation of a new heated floor, and the hiring of at least two more full-time elephant keepers. We believe it is not unreasonable to predict that total capital cost of keeping Maggie and two additional elephants will easily run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars at a minimum. Maggie and her companion would represent a large and growing share of the zoo's operating budget. Staff salaries, benefits, training and insurance would be ongoing, as will mounting veterinary bills. If the Zoo elects to continue holding Maggie in free contact, then it also faces significant ongoing risk of legal liability.

Maggie will require additional care as she ages. Any aging elephant develops health problems that increase in magnitude, number and significance over time. Due to Maggie's limited opportunities for exercise, fresh air, meaningful social interaction, and purposeful activity, her physical, mental and social fitness has little environmental support. The Zoo's commitment to addressing each of these needs will undoubtedly place a steadily growing burden on Zoo resources.

Elephant Experts' Assessment and Recommendation

Elephant experts from a variety of fields have submitted reports and opinions in response to our request. These experts are Gail Laule, Director of Animal Behavior, Active Environments, Lompoc, California and Carol Buckley, Co-founder and Director of the Elephant Sanctuary, Hohenwald, Tennessee. We provided Laule and Buckley two DVDs of Maggie and a letter describing additional basic information about Maggie, Anchorage's climate and other relevant matters, as well as recent accounts of Maggie's situation and history published in the Anchorage Daily News. Copies of their reports and resumes are located in the appendix.

Gail Laule's assessment

Gail Laule, an internationally known and respected animal behaviorist, submitted a wide-ranging document of particular interest as it offers a detailed analysis of Maggie's physical environment, the impact of climate on her, Maggie's social needs, issues related to her future training and behavioral management and other variables affecting her physical and psychological well being. We have summarized only some of the highlights from it and strongly recommend close review of the original document.

Maggie's physical environment

Laule's report observes that Maggie's present physical environment meets minimum standards. Laule recommends certain important improvements:

Access to dirt piles or similar material to permit routine dust bathing
Access to soft bedding like straw or shavings to create a more comfortable surface for Maggie to rest on indoors
Heating the concrete flooring and rubberizing the surface

Climate and temperature conditions

Laule's assessment of the climatic conditions correctly notes that Anchorage's weather negatively impacts on Maggie's quality of life. The climate and Anchorage's proximity to the Arctic severely limit Maggie's access to the outdoors and natural light: "The net result is that Maggie, or any elephant housed at the zoo, is likely to be confined to one indoor space with

minimal natural sunlight for nearly half of the year.” Laule writes, “From an animal welfare perspective, it is extremely difficult to justify keeping an elephant under these conditions. In my opinion, they are so extreme as to be unacceptable.”

Laule offers no recommendations to ameliorate this circumstance, noting, “there are no *practical* methods possible to mitigate the negative consequences of such an inhospitable natural climate.” The report explains that building a “state of the art” facility would in all likelihood be “cost prohibitive” and would “still leave any elephant at the Alaska Zoo enduring long periods of indoor confinement and artificial light.” Long periods of confinement are important to consider because they limit “physical movement, access to varied substrates (important for foot care), access to water for bathing, and overall sensory stimulation.” Laule cautions that the absence of these important environmental factors may lead to boredom and stereotypic behavior, “both of which are detrimental to Maggie’s physical and psychological well being.”

Maggie’s social conditions

Laule begins her social assessment by pointing out that “one fact is undeniable – they are truly social beings who display complex, highly evolved social behavior.” Although social relationships are central to elephants’ lives, Maggie has no elephant companions. Acquiring additional elephants is “not an advisable solution” in Laule’s view as availability, cost, and potential incompatibility argue against acquiring additional elephants. More importantly, acquiring additional elephants would not alter the “fundamental issue of the extreme climatic conditions of Anchorage,” conditions Laule believes are detrimental to Maggie’s well being. “Bringing a second or third animal to the Zoo means exposing multiple elephants to the same undesirable environmental conditions and negative effects of many months of indoor confinement that Maggie faces alone today.”

Training Methodology

The Anchorage Daily News recently reported that Maggie was involved in 26 separate past incidents of aggression towards her keepers or other zoo staff. Laule indicates that “even if there is some exaggeration in this number (source was a newspaper article), even half that amount is unprecedented in my experience.” Given this history, Laule “strongly recommends” Maggie’s move to a protected contact program for two reasons: to protect staff from the risk of

injury and to protect Maggie from the infliction of corporal punishment to re-establish human social dominance, a tenant of free contact.

Other management conditions

Lacking sufficient information, Laule did not evaluate other conditions relevant to Maggie's welfare. Still, the report identifies these conditions because of their impact on captive elephant welfare: experience of handlers, daily husbandry practices, veterinary care, and enrichment planning and implementation. Laule notes that these issues are "important, and should be adequately addressed for every captive elephant, regardless of the physical, environmental, and social conditions."

Laule's recommendations

Laule believes that the best scenario for Maggie's future is to move her to a recognized sanctuary or zoo if the following criteria are clearly defined and met:

- Milder climatic conditions
- Facilities that exceed AZA minimum standards
- Social companionship with African elephants
- Sound husbandry practices
- Benign training techniques
- Appropriate veterinary care

Options Available to Maggie

Viable alternatives for relocating Maggie include sanctuaries and AZA-accredited zoos. Two premier elephant sanctuaries, The Elephant Sanctuary in Hohenwald, Tennessee and Ark 2000 operated by the Performing Animal Welfare Society near Sacramento, California, have expressed interest in Maggie. Two of AZA's best zoos, North Carolina Zoo, Asheboro, North Carolina and Oakland Zoo, Oakland, California, have also expressed interest. Each of these options is discussed in detail below.

The Elephant Sanctuary

Carol Buckley and Scott Blais founded The Elephant Sanctuary in 1995. Its mission is to provide life-long care for sick or needy former circus

and zoo elephants of both species in a hospitable southern climate. As of spring 2004, it operates on a 2700 acre double-fenced preserve, providing separate habitats of old growth forest, hills, meadows, streams, water features and mud wallows for both species. The Sanctuary's elephants, 8 Asians and 3 Africans, have access to hundreds of acres providing a variety of substrates, slopes and space to permit authentic opportunity for exploration, natural behaviors and pressure-free socialization.

The Sanctuary finished its 9000 sq. ft., 5-stall African elephant barn in January 2004. The barn has a heated floor and restraint chute. Within days of its completion the Sanctuary welcomed its first African elephant residents, Tanga and Zula, newly retired from Chehaw Wild Animal Park, an AZA-accredited zoo in Georgia. Glenn Dobrogosz, the zoo's director, described the Sanctuary as "the most suitable captive environment possible" for elephants. Flora, a retired circus elephant, became the Sanctuary's third African elephant resident on March 3, 2004.

If actions speak louder than words, then it is beyond dispute that the Sanctuary's physical facilities, land, staff, and veterinary care are widely respected. Four AZA-accredited zoos have retired elephants to The Sanctuary over the past five years. In November 2003, USDA, in an unprecedented enforcement action, confiscated a seriously ill Asian elephant from the circus industry and brought her to the Sanctuary.

The Elephant Sanctuary has its own specially designed and equipped trailer for transporting elephants to the Sanctuary, and staff is experienced in transporting elephants over long distances. Last summer, for example, The Sanctuary transported an Asian elephant from Vancouver, British Columbia, to Hohenwald.

Staff also has abundant experience in socializing elephants, including elephants that have been solitary for many years or have a history of aggression toward other elephants or humans. Staff skill and experience and facilities allow an individual elephant to be managed in protected or hands-on contact, as circumstances require.

Carol Buckley indicates that she is willing to take Maggie. However, she cautions that she only has room for one more African at this time.

PAWS-ARK 2000

Pat Derby and Ed Stewart, professional animal trainers, founded Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) in 1984. PAWS is a charity dedicated to providing a place for abandoned, abused or needy animals to live in peace and contentment. PAWS operates three sanctuaries, the newest of which is a 2300 acre parcel near Sacramento in the Sierra foothills where PAWS keeps its elephants on a 100-acre section. This parcel boasts a variety of substrates, gentle slopes, natural vegetation, large lakes and wide expanses providing abundant opportunities for the elephants to engage in activities that encourage species-appropriate behavior. Due to the mild climate, PAWS' elephants forage and graze year-round. PAWS presently has three Asian elephants and two African females, 23-year-old "71" and her companion, Mara, also 23 years old. The two species are managed separately but are within hearing and viewing proximity of each other.

The elephants enjoy two huge barns. Each is 20,000 sq. ft., in size and is equipped with restraint chutes and other equipment specially designed to handle their reasonably foreseeable health and husbandry needs. In addition, PAWS constructed "an indoor Jacuzzi pool especially designed for elephants with arthritis and joint disease." The elephants are offered superb routine veterinary care. An exotic animals veterinarian is on call at all times. In addition, PAWS utilizes the expertise of faculty at nearby UC-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine.

Six keepers take care of both herds. PAWS staff manages the elephants in protected contact. Like the Elephant Sanctuary, PAWS prohibits the use of bull hooks, chains and all forms of force, punishment, deprivation or intimidation. Also like the Elephant Sanctuary, the elephants range freely over their territory and exercise social autonomy.

PAWS has long been recognized as a leader in captive elephant management. Milwaukee County Zoo, an AZA-accredited zoo, retired two Asian elephants to PAWS in 1991. Ringling Brothers Circus recently retired two more Asian elephants to Ark 2000. The staff is experienced in handling the challenge of socializing new members to the herd. Pat Derby has written extensively on the topic and, we believe, is more than prepared for any challenge Maggie might present.

North Carolina Zoo

North Carolina Zoo (NCZ) is a top tier AZA-accredited zoo which

enjoys a global reputation for commitment to captive animal welfare. NCZ, on behalf of AZA's membership, led the delivery, in partnership with international bodies, of expertise and assets to the Kabul Zoo in Afghanistan in 2001 and to the Baghdad Zoo in Iraq in 2003. These efforts continue today.

The zoo sits on 1450 acres near the geographic center of North Carolina in a mild, southern climate. Due to NCZ's abundant size, it is one of the very few AZA zoos with the potential to provide a natural environment for its herd of African elephants. NCZ is committed to providing such an environment--one that allows the enhancement of herd size and dynamics that "better meet the social needs of the animals [and] improve the likelihood of reproductive success." NCZ, a national leader in progressive elephant management, was one of the first zoos to adopt protected contact management of its elephant herd.

To that end, NCZ is committed to enlarging, improving and modernizing its elephant facilities. In 2002, NCZ Society's board of directors announced its intention to raise \$6M by 2004-2005, with exhibit work expected to commence in 2004. Renovated and enlarged exhibit areas and new holding facilities are expected to open in 2006.

The zoo has a highly trained, widely experienced staff, some of whom have decades of experience in free contact management as well as almost 12 years of protected contact management. The zoo presently has three African elephants, two females and one male, cared for by 5 keepers (who also care for 4 rhinos). Staff is experienced in planning and executing successful introductions of new herd members.

Ron Morris, the zoo's general curator, confirms his zoo is willing to consider taking Maggie under three conditions: (1) Alaska Zoo decides it is in her "best interest and theirs that she be transferred to a different facility;" (2) AZA's elephant management group endorses Maggie's move to NCZ; and (3) Maggie's physical and psychological health are compatible with her integration with the existing zoo herd.

Oakland Zoo

Oakland Zoo, one of AZA's progressive institutions, is nestled in the rolling hills of 525-acre Knowland Park. The elephant barn and exhibit will double in size this summer to accommodate an expanding herd. The new barn will cover 6000 sq. ft., while the new outside paddock area, including two

holding yards and an outdoor exhibit, will grow to 3 acres. Oakland's herd is composed of three adult females, Lisa, Donna and M'Dunda, who range in age from 26 to 37. On March 16, 2004, the zoo announced the arrival from United Kingdom of a captive born 9-year-old African bull calf named Osh.

Oakland Zoo's elephant management program, under the leadership of Colleen Kinzley, is well known for its progressive vision and creative commitment to its elephants' well being. Like NCZ, Oakland Zoo was a pioneer in the use of protected contact to manage its herd. This practice allows keepers to be protected from elephants while at the same time permitting them to perform necessary hands-on husbandry such as bathing and veterinary procedures. Oakland Zoo committed itself to protected contact management in 1991 to maximize keeper safety while simultaneously respecting each elephant's freedom and autonomy. Oakland Zoo's elephant keepers use positive reinforcement, through fruit and verbal coaching, to gain the voluntary cooperation of the animals.

Oakland Zoo indicates it was selected to be Osh's new home because of its demonstrated ability to properly care for a bull African elephant. Osh's arrival means great things for captive African elephant conservation and education in the United States, as the introduction of new genetic lines is pivotal to reinvigorating the domestic captive population. Few zoos are able to house and manage African bull elephants. Oakland Zoo is one of the few with the behavioral expertise and physical space and technology necessary to provide a home adequate to the challenges presented by Osh.

Kinzley states that Oakland Zoo is willing to consider Maggie's placement after the barn and yard are expanded this summer on the condition that Maggie's temperament is compatible with the elephants already in Oakland Zoo's herd.

Summary

These four institutions share common features. Persons displaying knowledgeable, experienced, sincere and ethical commitment to excellence in captive elephant welfare lead these institutions and manage their captive elephant programs. Each institution has publicly obligated itself to provide its elephants richness of experience, freedom of movement and social autonomy.

In short, these four institutions have mastered the basics:
By implementing and maintaining a well-defined training system predicated on

positive reinforcement;

By providing complex and variable environmental enrichment; and

By supporting species typical behavior emphasizing “environmental design that meets needs that [elephants] themselves perceive to be important.”

The Challenges of Moving Maggie Are Manageable

Change is difficult for any animal, and elephants are no exception. Relocating Maggie would involve her transport, her learning to be an elephant again, and her eventual integration into a new social group. Each of these challenges present short-term difficulties. However, each can be overcome with planned, patient management. We believe that none present a legitimate reason for rejecting the option of relocating her.

Transporting Maggie

Transporting elephants is difficult, time-consuming and expensive. Fortunately, the four institutions profiled in this report have ample experience planning, managing and executing the successful transportation of elephants. For example, Oakland Zoo flew a young African bull elephant from a zoo in the United Kingdom in March 2004 to California. Similarly, Carol Buckley has personally overseen the international transport of an elephant by aircraft to Korea and to Hawaii. PAWS and the Elephant Sanctuary each have their own special trailers for elephant transport. The Elephant Sanctuary staff has trained, desensitized, loaded and transported 12 elephants, both Asians and Africans. Staff members at all four institutions are skilled in behavioral management techniques that obviate the need to pull Maggie into a trailer using the punitive “drug and drag” method.

Maggie can relearn what it means to be an elephant

As is pointed out in Laule’s report, Maggie would face significant change, having spent the last 21 years at the Alaska Zoo, 7 of them by herself “with only human relationships to meet her social needs.” As some zoo staff members are fond of pointing out, Maggie considers her keeper and perhaps a few others to be her family. We would point out that given her circumstances, she had no choice but to bring her human keeper into her social world if she wanted a family. In any event, Laule is confident that as a member of a highly intelligent and adaptable species, she retains the resilience to make this transition back to a more natural state: “Most importantly, the changes would be so directly

beneficial to her physical and psychological well-being... that the short term stress of the move would be outweighed by the long term benefits of an appropriate physical and social situation that directly meets her needs.”

Maggie can be successfully integrated into a social group

The third challenge Maggie will face is successfully integrating into a new social group. As Laule’s report noted, “this is an important consideration, and one that should not be taken lightly.” It is also a challenge common to managing captive populations. As such it is well studied and well understood. Specific actions can be taken by knowledgeable handlers to maximize the likelihood of success of Maggie’s integration. Laule, who has had considerable experience with social integration of elephants, primates, big cats, hoof stock and many other species, identifies in her report four important variables:

Careful consideration of potential compatibility of the elephants, taking into account their prior social experience, temperament, current role in social hierarchy, age, personality and the like

Relative experience and expertise of staff in implementing introductions, carrying out social integrations, and successfully managing elephants in existing social groups

Appropriate facilities to permit incremental introductions and areas of refuge while dominance relationships are established

Staff expertise in progressive, complex behavior management, i.e., shaping behavior by desensitization using positive reinforcement to overcome fear or discomfort rather than the use of force through physical restraint and human-based dominance.

The Sanctuary, PAWS, NCZ and Oakland Zoo have both the expertise and the physical facilities necessary to facilitate a successful introduction of Maggie and her eventual integration into a social group. All four facilities have adequate space, areas of refuge, and highly trained staff who have mastered the complex strategies of positive reinforcement and classical and operant conditioning as directly applied to social introductions and integrations.

Maggie’s Move Will Benefit the Zoo

The advantages to the Zoo if Maggie is relocated are both immediate and long-term. In the short run, her relocation will free significant assets and personnel to carry out the zoo’s mission to provide refuge for Arctic and sub-

Arctic wildlife. In the long term, Maggie's relocation would identify Alaska Zoo as a progressive institution dedicated to the conservation of a vanishing species and principled animal welfare. Maggie's relocation would undoubtedly strengthen Alaska Zoo's application for membership in AZA if the zoo chooses to pursue membership.

Alaska Zoo would not face change alone

Friends of Maggie recognize that giving up Maggie is a big step for the zoo as it represents significant institutional change. Change of this magnitude is never easy or without risk. Therefore, Friends of Maggie has solicited offers of professional support for the zoo in the event that it elects to move Maggie. Ron Kagan, Director of Detroit Zoo, has offered the assistance of his staff to develop a strategic plan addressing exhibit redesign and collection acquisition for Maggie's space. In 2002, Detroit Zoo opened an Arctic exhibit; the exhibit went on to win AZA's highest award for exhibit design. Given this recent and complex undertaking, Detroit Zoo's staff is particularly conversant with the special challenges presented by large-scale projects with Arctic themes.

Benefits of AZA membership

Benefits of AZA membership would be particularly relevant to the Zoo at this juncture. Accreditation would confer a publicly recognized badge signifying the zoo's commitment to excellence in collection management, veterinary care, ethics, physical facilities and staff. Accreditation and the process leading up to it would confer immediate access to mentors, information and knowledge exchange, access to assistance from experts and colleagues within the profession, and access to AZA's resource center.

Friends of Maggie is happy to inform the zoo that Ron Morris, general curator of North Carolina Zoo, has generously offered to advise Alaska Zoo on the accreditation process if it decides to seek accreditation. He has offered to act as the zoo's mentor and to travel to Anchorage. We believe he has considerable expertise to offer, "having participated on six accreditation teams, chairing three of them, and have hosted teams reviewing my zoo (NCZ) five times."

Letting go without losing touch

Maggie's relocation to the Elephant Sanctuary carries two significant potential advantages to the Alaska Zoo. First, because of the sanctuary's

extensive, daily live camera feed via the Internet, Anchorage citizens can personally follow Maggie's transport, arrival, and her introduction to the facility, staff and new companions. Daily access via the Internet will continue without limit into the future.

Maggie's relocation would also trigger a unique, public educational opportunity for the Zoo, unparalleled anywhere in AZA today. Dr. Jane Hardin, a college educator in natural sciences, has offered to work with Zoo staff "long distance" to develop a state-of-the-art educational outreach program for arctic and sub-arctic species. Dr. Hardin has specifically offered to explore external funding, grant proposal preparation and developing partnerships between the Zoo's educational staff and other experts in the field to create multimedia materials engineered for the Internet and telecommunications technology. This visionary and unprecedented offer would propel the Zoo into the top tier of conservation educators. The Zoo would be rightly proud of such a result.

Conclusion

We believe that Maggie's future is a matter of intense and sincere interest to Zoo leadership. We also believe that the Zoo is committed to providing Maggie the best life possible in captivity. Because children and adults are naturally drawn to Maggie, she helps the zoo to fulfill its pledge to connect people to animals. But because the Zoo is located in the sub-Arctic, it's ability to provide a high-quality life for Maggie is handicapped. And to the extent the Zoo dedicates scarce resources to Maggie, it diminishes its ability to meet its other important institutional responsibilities.

This dilemma has inspired an outpouring of support from institutions and talented individuals that would allow the Zoo to refocus on its Alaskan roots. Four premier institutions are willing to consider offering Maggie a home. North Carolina Zoo and Oakland Zoo are ready, willing and able to deliver the highest quality life available to captive zoo elephants in the United States, including superior physical facilities, experienced, highly trained long-term staff, benign management techniques, functioning African elephant social groups, and excellent veterinary care. The Elephant Sanctuary and PAWS Ark2000 offer all of that and vast space and a no-breeding policy. We believe that Maggie's relocation would be fiscally prudent for the Zoo and allow it to fully realize its unique potential to educate the public about arctic and sub-arctic species while simultaneously serving Maggie's best interest.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this information for the Zoo's consideration. We look forward to our continuing exchange of ideas and viewpoints on these very important issues.

Respectfully submitted this ____ day of March 2004.

Penelope Wells

Paul Joslin

Lisa Kane