



ZOOMUSEUMDISTRICT  
*Metropolitan Zoological Park and Museum District*

2015—2016  
REPORT TO THE  
COMMUNITY





## TO THE CITIZENS OF ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY:

We are all aware of, even though we sometimes forget, the rich history of our region. That history has been punctuated with events and accomplishments that have distinguished us as a region that understands its place in history and the essence of community. Whether it is hosting the 1904 World's Fair or the 1904 Olympics, building the iconic riverfront Arch, providing a home for a multitude of Fortune 500 corporate headquarters, or undertaking a transformational upgrading of the Arch grounds, this region has always taken the long view and understood the importance of continuing to invest.

A prime example of this regional vision is the creation of the Metropolitan Zoological Park and Museum District (ZMD) and the commitment of taxpayers to support vital cultural institutions in the region. In 1971, voters approved tax support for three of these institutions. These institutions were the Saint Louis Zoo, Art Museum, and the Museum of Science and Natural History, which is now known as the Science Center. In 1983, voters approved tax support for the Missouri Botanical Garden and in 1987 for the Missouri History Museum. The ZMD has become the most successful regional cultural taxing district in the nation. This tax support, combined with the generosity of individual and corporate donors, has allowed these five institutions to grow and achieve national, and in some cases, worldwide prominence. In addition to tax dollar and private contributions, these institutions have achieved their level of excellence with the hard work of citizen volunteers and staff. In 2016, more than 6 million individuals visited these cultural institutions. Some visitors learned about the science and technology of food production at the Science Center's GROW exhibit; others surveyed the Art Museum's reinstalled American Art galleries. Guests enjoyed the History Museum's *Route 66: Main Street Through St. Louis* exhibit or strolling through the Botanical Garden during *Garden Glow*. Playing with stingrays and gaining a better understanding of the lives of polar bears are opportunities available at the Zoo.

When taxpayers authorized the ZMD to oversee the expenditure of tax dollars, it came with an important obligation to be diligent stewards of the taxpayers' dollars. Since that time, the ZMD has exercised extreme diligence in ensuring that tax dollars are appropriately accounted for. It is an obligation that the ZMD Board of Directors has always taken seriously. For example, for the past seven years the ZMD has engaged outside accounting firms to evaluate different organizational aspects of the cultural institutions. In 2016, the internal accounting controls for each of the institutions were evaluated and found to be performing at a high level. Future planned evaluations will include information technology security assessments for the five institutions.

The ZMD has also been frugal in its administrative costs and overhead. Pursuant to Missouri law, the ZMD is permitted to retain up to 5 percent of the tax revenue for administrative purposes. However, the ZMD has historically used less than 1 percent of the tax revenue for administration. The remainder has been distributed to the five cultural institutions. For example, in 2016 the ZMD's administrative costs amounted to 0.70 percent of its net tax revenue.

The purpose of this annual report is to highlight the priceless cultural contributions the five institutions make to our region thanks to the foresight of taxpayers.

Thomas J. Campbell  
ZMD Board Chairman

J. Patrick Dougherty  
Executive Director

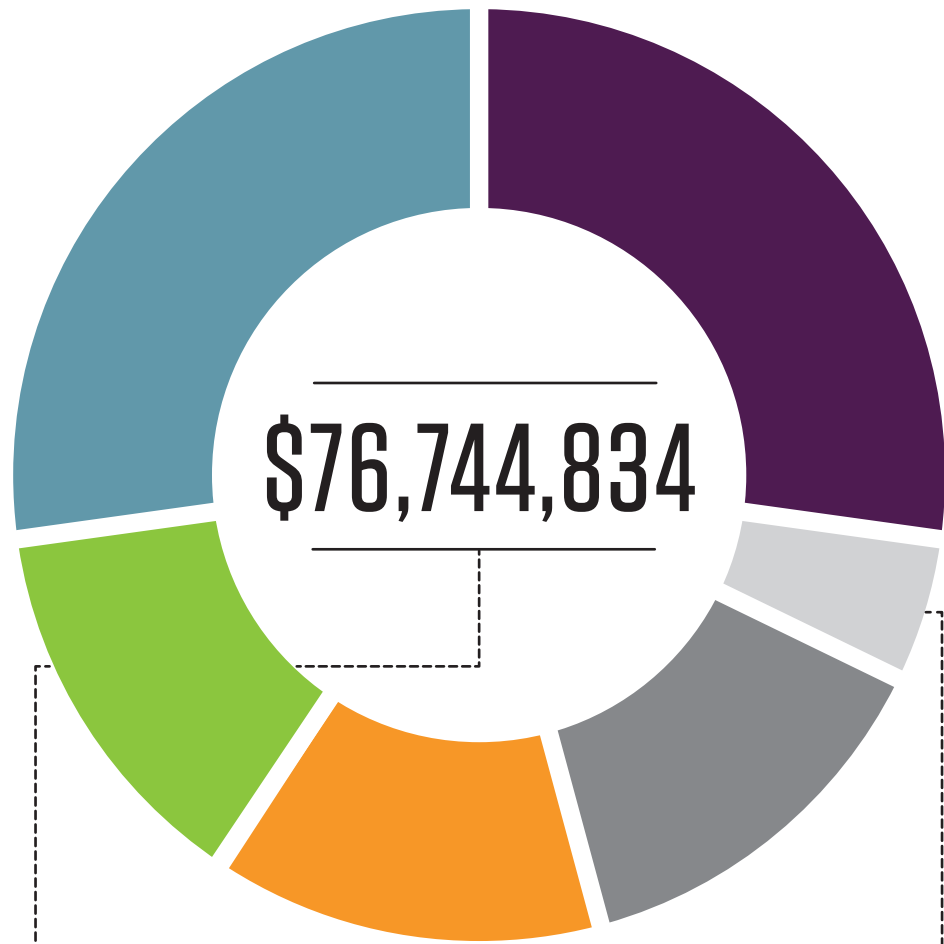


## OUR VISION

The task of the Zoo Museum District is to lead, plan, and collaborate in strengthening the Subdistricts to ensure quality institutions that educate, enhance, and benefit the residents of the St. Louis region.

## OUR MISSION

The Mission of the Zoo Museum District is to represent the taxpayers of the District in the careful oversight of the financial affairs of the Subdistricts: Missouri Botanical Garden, Missouri History Museum, Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis Science Center, and Saint Louis Zoo.



**\$76,744,834**

## 2016 Zoo Museum District Net Tax Revenue

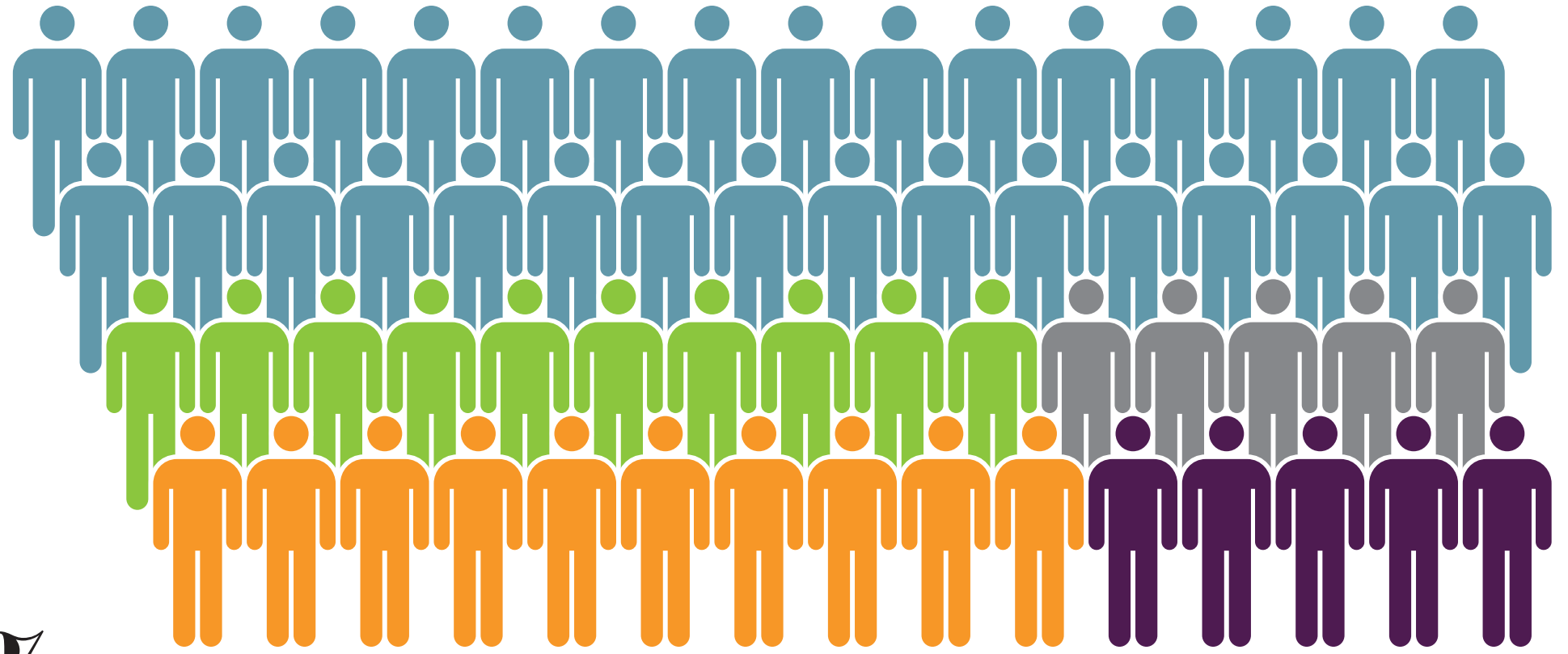
● Saint Louis Zoo	<b>\$20,840,578</b>	27.16%
● Saint Louis Art Museum	<b>\$20,840,578</b>	27.16%
● Saint Louis Science Center	<b>\$10,407,886</b>	13.56%
● Missouri Botanical Garden	<b>\$10,407,886</b>	13.56%
● Missouri History Museum	<b>\$10,407,886</b>	13.56%
● ZMD Administration	<b>\$3,840,020</b>	5.00%

**5%**

Revenue percentage that legislation allows for ZMD administrative purposes

**0.7%**

Percentage of 2016 tax revenue used for ZMD administrative purposes



## 2016 Attendance

3,180,778 51.3% ZOO	1,048,540 16.9% BOTANICAL	974,240 15.7% SCIENCE	517,337 8.4% HISTORY	475,471 7.7% ART
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### 1971

City and County voters approve the formation of the ZMD to support the Saint Louis Zoo, Art Museum, and Science Center.

### 1972

The ZMD begins operations.

### 1983

Voters add the Missouri Botanical Garden to the ZMD and increase tax rates for the Zoo, Art Museum, and Science Center.

### 1987

Voters add the Missouri History Museum to the ZMD.

### 2016

Taxpayer investment in the cultural institutions approaches \$1.7 billion.

## Tax Rates

Rates levied by the Zoo Museum District and the maximum authorized rate for each institution:

ST LOUIS CULTURAL INSTITUTION

Saint Louis Zoo  
Saint Louis Art Museum  
Saint Louis Science Center  
Missouri Botanical Garden  
Missouri History Museum

2016 TAX RATE PER \$100 OF ASSESSED VALUATION

7.99 cents  
7.99 cents  
3.99 cents  
3.99 cents  
3.99 cents

MAXIMUM AUTHORIZED TAX RATE

8.00 cents  
8.00 cents  
4.00 cents  
4.00 cents  
4.00 cents

### A NOTE ABOUT ZMD ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Section 184.356 of the Missouri Revised Statutes allows the ZMD to retain 5 percent of the total tax revenue for administrative expenses. In 2015, those expenses totaled \$537,233, or 0.71% of the year's total net revenue. The ZMD Board distributes "excess administrative fees" to the cultural institutions proportionately on the basis of the tax rates levied during the year in which the excess fees originated. The 2015 excess administrative fees of \$3,131,693 were distributed in 2016: The Zoo and Art Museum each received \$895,104.35, the Science Center and Botanical Garden each received \$447,161.32, and the Missouri History Museum received \$447,161.66.

### LATEST FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

See the ZMD website ([www.mzdstl.org](http://www.mzdstl.org)) to view the recent annual financial statements of the Zoo Museum District and the related cultural institutions.

### TAX SUPPORT'S IMPACT ON INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Tax receipts from the residents of St. Louis City and County materially affect operations at the five cultural institutions. Recent years' tax support represented at least 34% of each institution's net operating revenue.

SAINT LOUIS  
ART MUSEUM

# THE SAINT LOUIS ART MUSEUM



With dynamic exhibits, a busy slate of community events, and wide-reaching public programming, the Saint Louis Art Museum continues to serve as the focal point for visual art in the community. Last year, more than 475,000 visitors came to the Museum. They saw special exhibits and toured the galleries; many paused for brunch or a glass of wine or browsed the world-class gift shop. Some stayed for a lecture on Rembrandt; watched the St. Louis premiere of the documentary *The American Artist: The Life & Times of George Caleb Bingham* or the special screening of *Jean-Michel Basquiat: The Radiant Child*; or took a son or daughter to a class on clay, painting, fashion design, or the construction of magical, mythical creatures.

The museum's 2016 exhibitions drew the world's attention to significant holdings in the museum's collection, many donated by St. Louis collectors.

*Conflicts of Interest: Art and War in Modern Japan* vividly illustrated two wars between Japan and its imperial neighbors in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The exhibition pulled 180 works from a collection of nearly 1,400 woodblocks, prints, lithographs, screens, and even board games and clothing. Museum commissioner Charles Lowenhaupt started collecting as a high school exchange student in 1964. In 2010, he and his wife, Rosalyn Lowenhaupt, donated their comprehensive collection, making SLAM the owner of one of the world's largest public collections of such works.

Taking a wider perspective, *Impressions of War* was focused on responses to war in print over more than three centuries. The exhibit included profoundly moving works by artists Jacques Callot, Francisco de Goya, Max Beckmann, and Daniel Heyman. *The Carpet and the Connoisseur: The James F. Ballard Collection of Oriental Rugs* featured Oriental carpets that were given by St. Louis businessman Ballard in the 1920s as one of the Museum's first defining collection gifts. *Self-Taught Genius: Treasures From the American Folk Art Museum* was drawn from the superb collection of this notable museum in New York. Visiting only six other cities, it was the first exhibit in many years to present this important genre.

As those exhibits hung, plans were being finalized for the 2017 schedule, which is varied and compelling. *Degas, Impressionism, and the Paris Millinery Trade*, co-organized by the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and on view



**“The museum’s 2016 exhibitions drew the world’s attention to significant holdings in the museum’s collection, many donated by St. Louis collectors.”**

through early May, is the first exhibition to explore the importance of millinery as a key subject in Degas' work. *Learning to See: Renaissance and Baroque Masterworks From the Phoebe Dent Weil and Mark S. Weil Collection* celebrates the promised gift to the Museum of more than 150 works of art that will transform the Museum's holdings of Old Masters prints and sculpture of the 16th and 17th centuries. The summer exhibition *Reigning Men: Fashion in Menswear, 1715–2015*, organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, celebrates a rich history of restraint and resplendence in menswear over three centuries. *Thomas Struth: Nature and Politics*, opening November 5, will feature recent works by the noted German photographer.

The Museum's American Art galleries, renovated and reimagined, opened in October. About one-fifth of the works on view there are on public display for the first time in more than a decade. The Museum also made significant acquisitions across the collection. Highlights include the “Double Diptych Icon Pendant,” a personal devotional object from 17th-century Ethiopia; “Power Figure” (*nkisi nkondi*), a sculpted wood figure that significantly enhances our presentation of art from central Africa; and “Pheasantry in the Forest of Compiègne,” a moonlit landscape by Théodore Rousseau.

Community events and public programs have ranged far and wide, and attendance has been consistently high. The popular Art in Bloom weekend festival attracted more

than 18,000 visitors in 2016. In its sixth season, the free *Art Hill Film Series* welcomed some 40,000 attendees. SLAM Underground, the Museum's monthly art and music event for young adults, grew to more than 10,000 annual participants. Some 5,800 visitors attended the second annual family-oriented Winter Celebrations weekend, in December. The weekly Family Sundays programs—free hands-on art-making activities, family-friendly gallery tours, and special performances—welcomed more than 13,000 visitors last year. Youth smART, a free arts education program, gave 3,200 young people from community groups and summer camps a chance to explore the Museum's collection through creative art projects and interactive gallery tours facilitated by the Museum's Teen Assistants. Teen Arts Council members also participated in classes and workshops, and SLAM sought their ideas and help in planning public programs that will attract teen visitors. The Museum's public programming played a strong, unifying civic role, celebrating Kwanzaa, the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Women's History Month with some 1,600 visitors.



The Museum continues to maintain a healthy financial position. In 2016, Moody's reaffirmed the Museum's Aa3 bond rating, and Standard & Poor's reaffirmed the institution's A+ debt rating and revised its outlook from stable to positive. Thanks to these ratings, the Museum's credit position and financial reputation rank among those of the top art museums in the country. As of December 31, 2016, the market value of the Museum's endowment was \$196 million.

40,000  
ART HILL FILM  
SERIES ATTENDEES

MORE THAN  
33,000  
COLLECTED  
WORKS

13,398  
HOUSEHOLD  
MEMBERSHIPS

In addition to the generous annual support provided by City and County taxpayers, the Saint Louis Art Museum receives significant private support from individuals, families, corporations, foundations, and other sources. At the end of 2016, 13,398 households were represented on the Museum's general membership rolls.

Back in 2014, the Board of Commissioners adopted a comprehensive strategic plan, setting in motion a five-year agenda of institutional priorities. They include a series of digital initiatives to more fully integrate technology into programming, thus better serving today's visitors; a collections survey to better understand the character and breadth of the more than 33,000 works in the collection; and an array of key projects that will create engaging and meaningful experiences for audiences today and tomorrow.



MISSOURI  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN

# THE MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN



**Founded in 1859, the Missouri Botanical Garden** has deep roots in the community and strives “to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment in order to preserve and enrich life”—a mission that reflects both its link to the past and its direction for the future.

In addition to the main campus, the Missouri Botanical Garden operates the Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House in St. Louis County’s Faust Park, in Chesterfield, as well as Shaw Nature Reserve, a 2,400-acre protected area in Gray Summit. Together, the sites welcomed more than 1 million visitors in both 2015 and 2016, and 45,000 households hold memberships.

In 2015, nearly 400,000 people visited *Lantern Festival: Magic Reimagined*, an exhibit that featured 22 unique lantern sets crafted from silk and steel. The annual winter exhibit, *Garden Glow*, continues to attract more than 120,000 visitors each season. Plans were made in 2016 for the Garden’s 2017 summer exhibit, *Garden of Glass*, a new exhibit that is the largest installation its sculptor, Craig Mitchell Smith, has ever created. The Japanese Festival continues to draw crowds, reminding them that St. Louis has one of the largest Japanese gardens and festival—and one of the most authentic Japanese teahouses—outside Japan. Throughout the year, the Garden serves as the backdrop for jazz concerts, yoga classes, romantic weddings, wine tastings, flower shows, professional and amateur photography, and morning walks and afternoons of contemplation, relaxation, and inspiration.

Novice and experienced gardeners alike seek horticulturalists’ expert advice on curbing such invasive plants as the ubiquitous honeysuckle, choosing sustainable native plants, creating rain gardens, fighting pests organically, and dealing with fluctuations in weather, among other topics. The Garden’s website receives nearly 10 million visits annually, calls flood the telephone help line, visitors bring their problems to the William T. Kemper Center for Home Gardening, and St. Louisans show up for classes such as landscaping; specific gardening challenges; the needs of roses, bonsais, and heritage vegetables; and all the arts and crafts connected with botanicals—from watercolors to eco-friendly repair, the histories of beer and chocolate, the use of herbs and spices, the lure of hummingbirds...

The Garden is such a serene place to visit or bring out-of-town visitors that it’s easy



to be lulled by its beauty—and to forget that it’s also a world leader in plant science. Over just two years, 2015 and 2016, Garden scientists discovered nearly 350 species of plants. The Garden’s herbarium, a collection of dried plants for botanical research, is quickly approaching 7 million specimens. The Garden’s trademarked Tropicos database is the largest botanical database in the world. The Garden is a member of the Biodiversity Heritage Library, a consortium of leading natural history libraries. As a result of the Garden’s participation, more than 1 million biodiversity images have been digitized as part of the Art of Life project. In 2016, a Garden researcher

**“St. Louis has the largest Japanese garden and festival—and one of the most authentic Japanese teahouses—outside Japan.”**

helped the Democratic Republic of Congo inventory the country’s biodiversity and establish Lomami National Park to preserve it. Meanwhile, another Garden researcher was among those scientists around the world compiling a complete checklist of trees in the



Amazon, drawing on data compiled in the 35 years the Garden has been active in Amazonian countries.

Scientists are not the only members of the Garden team who are worldwide leaders in their field. Horticulturists showcase the Garden’s exquisite beauty, as well as its commitment to conservation. The Garden holds one of the world’s most diverse living plant collections, with more than 17,000 species represented. In 2016, more than 2,100 specimens were added, and 41 percent of them were collected from their natural wild habitats. Several trees and orchids from the late 1800s, in founder Henry Shaw’s time, can still be found growing on the Garden’s grounds.

The Garden for the World campaign concluded last year with more than \$120 million pledged. These gifts ensure that the Garden’s historic buildings—the 1882 Linnean House conservatory, the 1859 Stephen and Peter Sachs Museum, Henry Shaw’s 1849 Italianate country home and his granite mausoleum, and the 1879 Bascom House at Shaw Nature Reserve—will be preserved, the grounds will be flawlessly maintained, and the cultural offerings of the St. Louis region will continue to grow.

As part of the capital campaign, the Garden opened the Brookings Exploration Center in Edward Jones Hall last April. This redesigned space allows visitors of all ages to learn more about plants, how and where they grow, the roles they play in human life, and why it’s important to protect them. Designed with families and children in mind and open year round, the space features hands-on activities for interactive learning. The hall also houses the Garden’s Plant Lab, a 1,100-square-foot greenhouse-like classroom. Visitors to the Plant Lab can explore plant science and connect with the Garden’s work in ways meaningful to them. Edward Jones Hall also features family restrooms and a calming corner that serves as a quiet space for nursing mothers and young families in need of a moment’s respite.

In addition to managing the Brookings Exploration Center, the Garden’s Education Division serves people throughout the region, offering programs, activities, and classes not just on the Garden’s grounds but also in the community. In the summer of 2015, a group of teens began building the Baden Youth and Community Garden. With the help of Garden educators, they planned and planted gardens, watered and picked vegetables, pruned and harvested fruit trees—all the while learning social and professional skills. The Garden’s Therapeutic Horticulture Programs work with several agencies and organizations in St. Louis to bring the gentle focus of gardening and immersing oneself in nature to people with physical or mental challenges. Arranging flowers, learning about herbs, seeing examples of gardens in different parts of the world, creating a container garden that’s a riot of blooming color...the Garden is an ideal setting for countless activities that can transcend limitations, ease stress, engage people’s interest, and distract them from pain or worry. The Zimmerman Sensory Garden offers fragrance, color, and texture to reawaken and engage the senses. Therapeutic horticulture services are made available to groups on the grounds but also brought to area hospitals, cancer centers, schools—anywhere they can make a difference.

In short, the Garden’s diverse avenues of work in plant discovery, conservation, sustainability, and education—for St. Louisans and around the world—all have a single goal: to ensure a future that is healthy, sustainable, and replete with serene beauty for generations to come.

Missouri  
History  
Museum

THE  
MISSOURI  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM



Operated by the Missouri Historical Society, the nationally renowned Missouri History Museum is one of the nation's most visited history museums, earning the highest level of accreditation in its field—an achievement attained by only the top 3 percent of the nation's 35,000 museums. Last year, the Museum welcomed a record 517,337 visitors—the most since the 1930s, when trophies awarded to Charles Lindbergh were on display at the height of his popularity.

The staff credits a new approach to special exhibitions, with a renewed focus on regional history, for the rise in attendance. In 2014, when emphasis was placed on local exhibitions, the Museum saw a 63 percent increase in attendance over that of the previous year: From 2000 through 2013, the average attendance was 354,789; the most recent three-year attendance average is 484,235. Four of the top five best-attended exhibitions in the organization's 150-year history have opened during the past three years. The Museum also credits robust programming and a strong museum collection. The Museum's Library and Research Center welcomed 6,722 visitors in 2016—the most since 1992, when it opened.

Through an exciting mix of exhibits, the Museum strives to tell stories that are both familiar and surprising. *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda* (April 11–September 7, 2015; attendance 122,785), a traveling exhibition produced by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, examined how Nazis used propaganda to win broad voter support in Germany's young democracy after World War I, implement radical programs under the party's dictatorship in the 1930s, and justify war and mass murder; the exhibit challenged citizens to actively question, analyze, and seek the truth. *A Walk in 1875 St. Louis* (May 30, 2015–February 14, 2016; attendance 236,895) highlighted a topographical survey drawn in perspective by Richard J. Compton and Camille N. Dry in 1875; the exhibit included pieces of St. Louis that remain and places that have changed dramatically, with contemporary photography, images from the Museum's collections, and facts and figures about 1875 St. Louis. History Clubhouse (opened June 27, 2015; attendance 1,065 daily) is a space for families to foster a love of history, learning, and museums. Created with input from regional families, the gallery allows the Museum's youngest visitors to explore the historic significance of some of the region's most important areas



through interactive activities and educational programming. *Coffee: The World in Your Cup & St. Louis in Your Cup* (October 3, 2015–January 3, 2016; attendance 51,249), organized by the Burke Museum and the Missouri History Museum, explored how coffee affects cultures, economies, and environments around the world; the exhibit also featured a local component, *St. Louis in Your Cup*, which explored coffee's rich regional history. *Little Black Dress: From Mourning to Night* (April 2–September 5, 2016; attendance 184,173) showcased a sartorial staple, once reserved for mourning, that French designer Coco Chanel revolutionized; this fun, thought-provoking exhibit explored the transition of black from a symbol of grief to one of high fashion. *Spies, Traitors, Saboteurs: Fear and Freedom in America* (February 6–May 8, 2016; attendance 66,921) explored fascinating and frightening stories, from Benedict Arnold to 9/11, “issues that people around the world are grappling with,” said Peter Earnest, founding executive director of the International Spy Museum, which organized the exhibit. With *Route 66: Main Street Through St. Louis* (June 25, 2016–July 25, 2017; average daily attendance 1,065), visitors got their kicks by learning about the motels, custard stands, tourist traps, and countless stories found along the Mother Road as it passed through St. Louis. Finally, *Toys of the '50s, '60s, and '70s* (October 29, 2016–January 22, 2017; attendance 104,873), organized by the Minnesota History Center, captured the nostalgia and history of popular playthings: Gumby, Barbie, Mr. Potato Head, and more.

The Missouri Historical Society also explores our region's past through print and online publications. The Missouri History Museum Press publishes books on vigilantism, cemeteries, love letters, and sports, as well as a slate of memoirs, children's books,

guidebooks, biographies, and other narratives that offer perspectives not usually found in simple history lessons. Recent titles include *Little Black Dress: From Mourning to Night*—the Museum's first exhibition catalog, which was reviewed by *The Wall Street Journal*—and *Capturing the City: Photographs from the Streets of St. Louis, 1900–1930*. Books and magazines published by MHM Press have won awards from the American Alliance of Museums, the American Association for State and Local History, and many other organizations. The Museum also publishes *Gateway* twice a year for members in addition to overseeing the History Happens Here blog.

The Museum recently received several significant pieces of recognition, among them inclusion in “10 Places to Meet in St. Louis—Other Than the Arch” by *USA Today* in 2016; the critics' choice for “Best Museum in St. Louis” and the readers' pick for “Best Place for a History Lesson” by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch's Go! Magazine* in 2016, and two Awards of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History's Leadership in History Awards—the highest recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history—for *History Clubhouse* and *A Walk in 1875 St. Louis*.



“Four of the top five best-attended exhibitions in the organization's 150-year history have opened during the past three years.”

6,722 VISITORS TO THE LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER

2016 HAD THE MUSEUM'S HIGHEST ATTENDANCE SINCE THE 1930s

Finally, on November 11, 2015, leaders of the Missouri Historical Society and the City of St. Louis signed a construction oversight, museum development, and operating agreement for The Soldiers Memorial Military Museum. The Missouri Historical Society will lead a multimillion-dollar renovation to create a state-of-the-art museum facility that honors military service, its veterans, and their families. It will be responsible for the Soldiers Memorial Military Museum, at 1315 Chestnut Street, and the Court of Honor, located across the street. In addition to the renovation, the Missouri Historical Society will care for the Memorial's collection of artifacts and be charged with all exhibitions, among other museum operation responsibilities. The Missouri Historical Society closed the Soldiers Memorial last spring to begin extensive renovations, estimated to take more than two years. The renovation and operating costs will be entirely funded by anonymous donors. Renovations include an overall building facelift, with cleaning of the exterior and Walker Hancock sculptures, as well as installation of a museum-quality HVAC system and interior storm windows that minimize artifacts' light exposure and updates that will bring the building into compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act. The Memorial's lower level will be refurbished for use as galleries, more than doubling the amount of exhibition space. The Court of Honor will be revitalized with the addition of fountains, as well as new monuments honoring St. Louisans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.



# THE SAINT LOUIS SCIENCE CENTER



There's plenty to discover at the Saint Louis Science Center, from learning about the science and technology of agriculture and food production, to exploring Mars and experiencing unique special traveling exhibitions such as *Above and Beyond*, *MathAlive!* and *The Science of Ripley's Believe It or Not!*®

"The Saint Louis Science Center is igniting passion for science and technology learning for both children and adults by taking complex subjects and making them interesting and relevant to their lives," says Science Center President/CEO Bert Vescolani. "The world is rapidly changing, and we strive to be the resource on innovation and discovery in science and technology."

Ninety-three percent of surveyed guests reported having a positive experience. At the same time, the past two years have seen a steady rise in attendance. In 2015, 963,789 people visited the Science Center; the next year, 974,240 came. Fortunately, the number of volunteers was increasing apace. In 2015, 368 volunteers worked a combined 13,964 hours; in 2016, 416 volunteers worked 20,870 hours.

In June 2016, the Science Center opened its newest exhibit, *GROW*—the largest addition since 1991—to showcase the science and technology of food production. The outdoor exhibit includes such daily activities as combine demonstrations, "chicken chats," and greenhouse tours. Visitors find a different experience in every season, showing up to watch as tomato seedlings go in the ground or pole beans are harvested. In an exit survey, 92 percent of visitors rated their experiences "good" or "excellent," and most said they were "extremely likely" to return.

The *GROW* exhibit takes food from farm to fork, helping illuminate the surrounding Midwestern agricultural world. Programming includes several interactive field trip packages focused on plant and soil science, farm technology, and animal biology.

In May 2017, the Science Center opened its newest special exhibition, *The Discovery of King Tut*. This exhibition allows visitors to walk in the footsteps of archaeologist Howard Carter and experience the tomb of King Tutankhamun and all of its treasures as they were at the moment of discovery. The special exhibit features 1,000 breathtaking replicas that leading Egyptian artisans expertly handcrafted over the course of five years. The artifact re-creations include the iconic gold mask, a portable shrine with an Anubis



figure, the inner gold coffin, and the throne of Tutankhamun. Guests can navigate the 15,000-square-foot exhibit with an audio tour based on Carter's diary entries.

The Science Center continues to offer educational programming tailored to kids of various ages. For early childhood, there's Science Storytime (a weekly program in which Ready Readers volunteers read a story and conduct a related hands-on activity) and the Preschool Science Series (a three-part series involving interactive stories and hands-on exploration to teach about science, language, problem-solving, and social skills). Makerspace programs—geared to the general public, school groups, and Scouts—include *Telegraphs* (exploring early communication science and Morse code); *Laser-Engraved Holiday Decorations* (in which visitors can create custom keepsakes and learn about engraving); *Salvage Bots* (teaching participants how to build robots from repurposed objects); and, for 2017, the *Dream Big Field Trip Package* (a new offering for grades 3–12 that highlights the latest in engineering, ingenuity, and innovation, involving a design challenge and a screening of the new film *Dream Big: Engineering Our World*, showing in the OMNIMAX® theater through September).

At the James S. McDonnell Planetarium, *Live Sky: The Constellations* explores star formations and how various cultures developed their own interpretations of the night sky. *Eclipse: Shrouded Sun, Veiled Moon* highlights the cosmic ballet of the moon, sun, and Earth that results in a solar or lunar eclipse. Using the Carl Zeiss Universarium Model IX LED projector to display a simulated night sky on the planetarium's 80-foot dome, *Live Sky Tonight* highlights visible constellations, planets, special astronomical events, and the current moon phase and tells the story of space exploration. The Planetarium also hosts two new field trip packages: *Eclipse* (a special topic offered through August 21, in anticipation of the historic total solar eclipse) and *Mission: Mars* (for grades 3 and up, featuring



the history of space exploration as it relates to the Red Planet and giving an Amazing Science Demonstration, *Rocket to Mars*).

The Life Science Lab hosts Daily Dissections, in which visitors can learn about the anatomy and physiology of living things through educator-led dissections of a different organism each week.

The Science Center also offers new field trip packages each year, based on the year's films and exhibits, as well as topics tailored to schools' curricula.

The Science Center's three-year, \$240,000 grant from the Mysun Charitable Foundation provides staff salaries and wages for teens in the Youth Exploring Science program. The program emphasizes STEAM learning, college and career readiness training, and long-term mentoring. Teens in the Agriscience class have, for instance, participated in scientific research at the Litzinger Road Ecology Center, cultivated a community garden, studied current issues in agriculture and the environment, and helped in the *GROW* exhibit. Teens in Sustainable Design & Engineering have built oil presses and extracted oils from raw materials to use in hair and skincare products as a means of exploring chemical engineering.

In partnership with the Mound City Medical Forum, the Science Center put on a Scary Science summer camp, during which students from Ferguson's Vogt Elementary engaged in some "mummy making" and several other

projects, deepening their appreciation of science, engineering, and technology.

The Science Center works with St. Louis Children's Hospital to give patients who may not be able to visit in person because of health challenges the chance to tour the Science Center remotely, controlling a robot from the hospital. Children are able to interact with guests and staff, as well as explore the exhibits and Amazing Science Demonstrations.

In 2016, the Saint Louis Science Center was named a Smithsonian Affiliate, the first in the St. Louis area. The affiliation provides the opportunity to engage Smithsonian speakers for special events, showcase Smithsonian artifacts, and offer exclusively priced Smithsonian Affiliate memberships to Science Center members. Earlier this year, the Smithsonian Institution announced the Saint Louis Science Center as one of four museums nationwide to host *Destination Moon: The Apollo 11 Mission*, a traveling exhibition that will commemorate the first lunar landing, in 1969. The Science Center will host *Destination Moon* in the spring and summer of 2018, including the 49th anniversary of the moon landing.

Finally, the Science Center is one of seven science museums in the U.S. developing a system for collecting data about visitors. Funded through a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, the Collaboration for Ongoing Visitor Experience Studies (COVES) is designed to systematically collect, analyze, and report on visitor experience data. By facilitating collaboration, developing common instruments, and providing training that makes sense of the findings, COVES enables science centers to become collaborative, data-driven organizations that are focused on their audiences. In 2015–2016, the project's pilot phase was completed and the initial round of data collection begun. Now, as programming is expanded and improved, the rewards will be measurable.







# THE SAINT LOUIS ZOO



The Saint Louis Zoo has distinguished itself as a leader in wildlife conservation, both locally and in hotspots around the globe. It was voted America's Top Free Attraction by *USA Today's* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards. The Saint Louis Zoo was the only zoo selected for consideration when, in 2016, *USA Today* asked website visitors to help pick the top 10 free attractions from a list of 20 options that travel experts selected.

"This honor was made possible by the strong support of the taxpayers of St. Louis City and St. Louis County and our generous donors, members, volunteers and employees," says Jeffrey P. Bonner, Ph.D., Dana Brown President and CEO. "They make the Saint Louis Zoo great. This is a win for the entire St. Louis region and its residents and civic leaders who have long supported and appreciated St. Louis' world-class free zoo."

The Zoo's popularity is also reflected in its attendance figures. In 2015 and 2016, approximately 3.2 million visitors came to the Zoo from all over the nation and world, making it one of the most visited zoos in the U.S. One major draw has been a wild 1,150-pound polar bear that was orphaned in Alaska. In June 2015, the Zoo brought visitors nose to nose with a swimming polar bear and offered new insights into the lives of polar bears and the Arctic people who rely on them through its 40,000-square-foot McDonnell Polar Bear Point.

"This wonderful habitat shows our commitment to protecting this species, which is declining in the wild and highly vulnerable," says Dr. Bonner. "By working not only to conserve polar bears in the wild but also to offer a wonderful habitat for breeding and caring for bears, we can help save these iconic animals."

The debut of McDonnell Polar Bear Point was followed in 2016 by the opening in the Emerson Children's Zoo of the Tasmanian Devil Den, where two female devils now serve as ambassadors for a species that was almost wiped out by a rare cancer in its native habitat. The Saint Louis Zoo was one of only six U.S. institutions selected to care for these animals.

Opening in September 2017, Grizzly Ridge marks the complete reconstruction of the Zoo's historic 1920s bear grottos. There, visitors will be able to watch two orphaned wild bears from Montana through gigantic viewing windows.

The last half of 2015 and 2016 saw several successes in the Saint Louis Zoo's efforts



to save wild things and places. In 2016, for the second consecutive year, the Zoo played a major role in a program that is succeeding not only in saving the Partula snail but also in returning the species to its native habitat in French Polynesia. Through the work of an international coalition of zoos and conservation organizations, the Partula snail was reintroduced in Tahiti; of the 870 Partula snails returned to the wild, 630 were from St. Louis.

The Zoo's staffers are especially proud of their role in reintroducing two dozen scimitar-horned oryx, long extinct in the wild. A captive-bred herd of these antelopes is again roaming the grasslands of Chad in central Africa, thanks to a project involving government agencies and conservation organizations. The Sahara Conservation Fund, which the Saint Louis Zoo helped create and strongly supports, played a key role in this initiative. The fund was also instrumental in establishing Africa's largest wildlife reserve and has been working in Niger to save the biggest bird on the planet, the Saharan race of the red-necked ostrich.

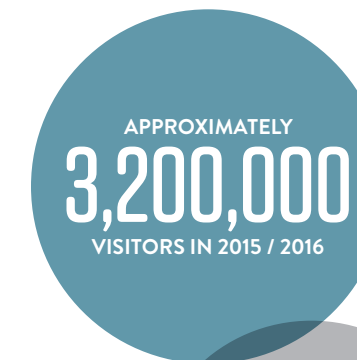
Closer to home, in Missouri, the Saint Louis Zoo, through its WildCare Institute, has successfully bred Ozark hellbenders in each of the past six years and, in partnership with others, including the Missouri Department of Conservation, participated in three releases into Missouri river systems. The Zoo reared 3,383 Ozark hellbenders that were then released as juveniles to augment wild populations.



**"In 2017 and beyond, we will continue our discussions with community leaders throughout the region to create a sustainable plan for responsible long-term care of our beloved Zoo."**

In southwest Missouri, an eightfold increase in American burying beetles was found in 2016. The Zoo and its partners have reintroduced the beetles for the past five years, also through the WildCare Institute. The burying beetle is the first endangered species to be reintroduced to Missouri, where by the 1970s it had disappeared. Researchers went from finding only a few beetles in the early years to finding 110 in 2015 and 850 in 2016.

On Zoo grounds, plenty of conservation work continues as the Zoo focuses on providing the best possible care for its 15,000 animals, representing nearly 600 species.



Whether observing natural behaviors of multiple species or talking to zookeepers and other animal experts, the Saint Louis Zoo Preschool's students use the entire Zoo as their classroom, and more than 100,000 children and their teachers visit on 1,500 school trips each year.

In 2016 alone, the Zoo's Education Department offered 4,800 programs to more than 800,000 people. One way in which the Zoo is able to offer so many educational opportunities to all visitors is through contact with our experienced staff and with highly trained volunteers, who connect with more than a million visitors each year. Offering a range of programs, docents contributed nearly 26,000 hours—valued at \$600,000—to the Zoo. They are only some of the 2,200 volunteers from across the metropolitan St. Louis area who in 2016 contributed more than 100,000 hours, valued at more than \$2.3 million.

"In 2017 and beyond, we will continue our discussions with community leaders throughout the region to create a sustainable plan for responsible long-term care of our beloved Zoo," says Dr. Bonner. "With this support, the Zoo can continue for the next 100 years to provide superior care to animals here and around the world and to continue to offer a world-class experience to generations of residents across the region. Thanks to the taxpayers of St. Louis City and St. Louis County and to the Metropolitan Zoological Park and Museum District commission for all they do to make our Zoo a great place and for keeping it accessible and forever free."

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