

Rotarians Go to the Top for the Zoo

BY D. FORREST CAMERON, GASSERONLINE CHAIRMAN

Two Rotary Club of Tulsa members, **Keegan Young**, Executive Director Tulsa Zoo Friends and president-elect **Phil Lakin**, Tulsa Community Foundation, TZMI Board President, are raising the bar on fund raising by climbing 13,770 Feet to raise funds for the Tulsa Zoo Friends.

The world looks a lot different from 13,770 feet above sea level – and now, so will the Tulsa Zoo thanks to a group of intrepid climbers who have taken on One Wild Challenge. These fearless Tulsans will traverse the peaks of the Great Teton, America's most famous mountain and one of the world's classic climbs to raise money for the Tulsa Zoo. With months of mental and physical preparation, and after pounding the pavement for donations, this team has embarked on an adventure of a lifetime.

The brave climbers who accepted the challenge in addition to the Rotarians are Jeff Wilkie, Wilkie Consulting; Brett Baker, Tulsa Fire Department and Part-Time Pros President; Philip Kaiser, Cosmos Café, Owner; Shai Kaiser, Philip's son; Terrell Hoagland, Flintco; David Pounds, Flintco; Peter McGraw, McGraw Davisson Stewart; Chad Smith, Becco Contractors; Stefanie Atherton; Molly Pellegrini, Lobeck/Taylor Foundation, TZMI Board; Elizabeth Ellison, Lobeck Taylor Foundation and Chris Ellison.

This pack of adventurers will traverse this peak, not just “because it is there,” as famed Mt. Everest mountaineer George Mallory once opined. It's an adventure with a purpose - to expand and improve Tulsa Zoo's unique educational outlet, the Nature Exchange. Rotarian Young says, “The Nature Exchange helps children realize that many secret treasures are found in their own back yard. Every child receives an exciting one-on-one learning experience that keeps them coming back time and time again; hopefully for a lifetime.”

The team began their journey Friday, July 30, but the challenge really started months ago. Every team member had a health assessment when they signed up, attended weekly training sessions at the Rock Gym and another health assessment before departing.

By the time you read this, the team will have already begun their quest. They will be giving updates and sending photos as they progress. The Tulsa Zoo will provide exclusive photos of their adventure on Facebook (www.facebook.com/onewildchallenge) and keep you abreast as they make their way to touch the sky. So, stay tuned for all the exciting developments!

For more information about this event visit www.onewildchallenge.com or via the One Wild Challenge Facebook page, or simply call (918) 669-6612.

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