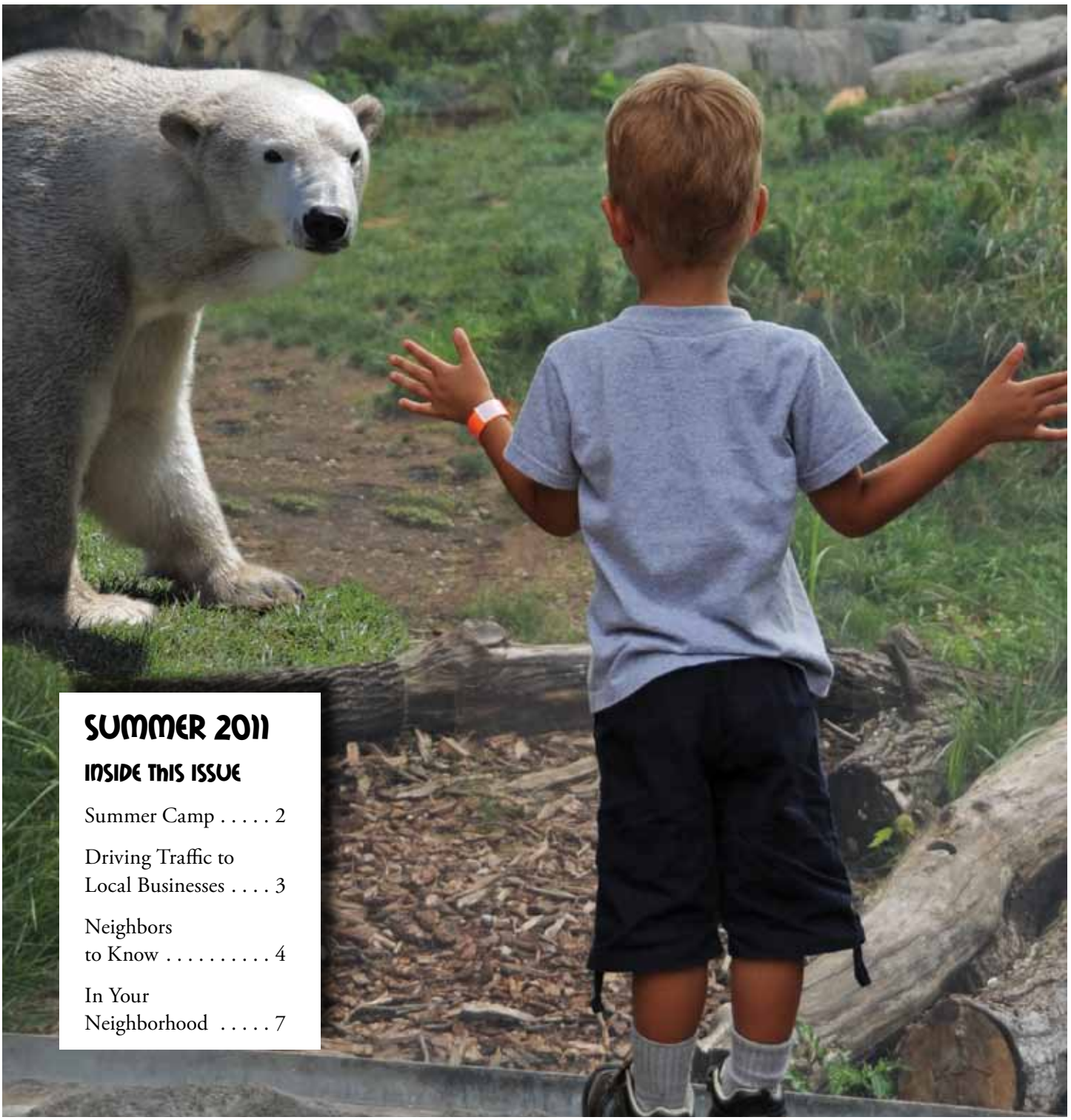
NATURALLY NEIGHBORS

KEEPING BROOKFIELD AND RIVERSIDE RESIDENTS INFORMED ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING AT BROOKFIELD ZOO



SUMMER 2011

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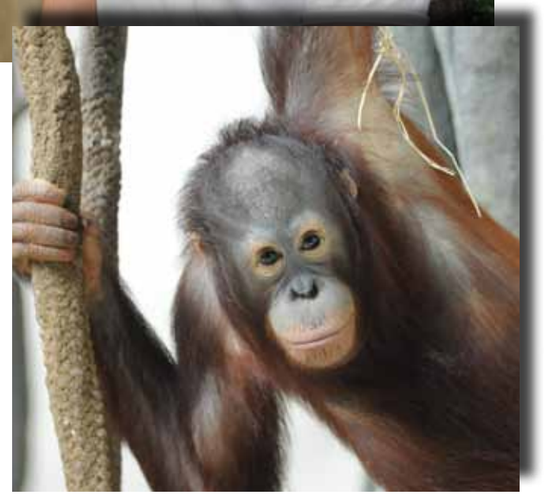
NEIGHBORS TO KNOW

Neighbor:
AMY COONS

Neighborhood:
BROOKFIELD

At the Zoo:
PRIMATE KEEPER
TROPIC WORLD



WHEN DID YOU FIRST BECOME INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH ANIMALS?

In 5th grade, I wrote a report on blue whales and that got me hooked on animals. Then later, in a high school class, I watched a film about Jane Goodall. I was fascinated by her work with great apes. I have always had a deep interest in animal intelligence, and great apes are highly intelligent animals.

I majored in biology and minored in oceanography at Palm Beach Atlantic University in West Palm Beach, Florida. Before coming to the zoo, I worked at Colsey Zoo in Wheaton, Illinois, and later raised Gentoo penguins from hatchlings at Shedd Aquarium. I worked for a while at the Rare Species Conservatory in Loxahatchee, Florida. In all, I've worked with animals professionally for 20 years and counting.

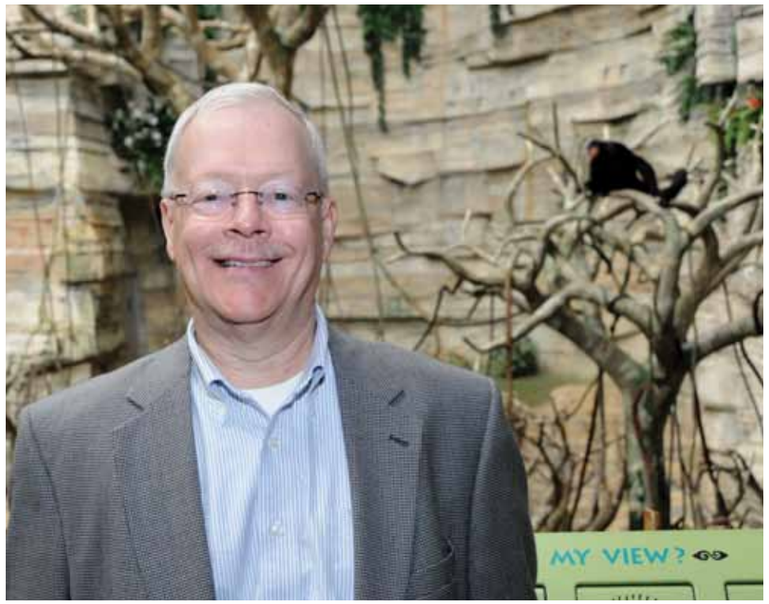
WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO THE VILLAGE OF BROOKFIELD AND THE ZOO?

Brookfield is a tight-knit community with wonderful people. Having grown up in the Chicagoland area, I was interested in living near my family again. I settled here because I like the neighborhood and all of the trees. Also, I really wanted to work with great apes, and we have great apes at Brookfield Zoo. Plus, I can walk or ride my bike to work.

Neighbor:
DAN WHARTON

Neighborhood:
RIVERSIDE

At the Zoo:
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT EMERITUS



WHEN YOU MOVED TO THE CHICAGO AREA IN 2007 TO WORK AT CZS, WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO MAKE YOUR HOME IN RIVERSIDE?

We looked at several communities, but we fell instantly in love with Riverside.

It's no wonder. About five minutes after discovering Riverside, we learned that it was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted.

You could describe my career, in part, as "My Life with Frederick Olmsted." I began my zoo career in 1974 at Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle, Washington, in a park designed by Olmsted. I later moved to New York City to serve as the Director of Central Park Zoo, and that park was co-designed by Olmsted (with Calvert Vaux).

I have long been immersed in all things Olmsted, so Riverside was the obvious choice for me and my family.