



### ZOO TO OPEN PAVILION PLAINS OCT. 26

ASHEBORO—Even before its three white peaks towered over the treetops or the magnificent collection of African animals was gathered to live within it, the concept of the African Pavilion at the North Carolina Zoological Park was already one-of-a-kind in the zoo world.

"We wanted the Pavilion to provide visitors with a cross-section of typical African wildlife inhabitants representing the major geographical and botanical features of the continent," said Robert L. Fry, zoo director.

The African Pavilion towers above a tram making a trial run along the African Plains in preparation for the opening of these two exhibits at the N.C. Zoological Park on Friday, Oct. 26. [NRCD photo by Jim Page]

The dedication of the sumptuous \$4.8 million building and the \$1 million African Plains section that adjoins it will be Thursday, Oct. 25. James A. Summers, Secretary of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, will officiate at the ceremony for invited officials and guests. The dedication is not open to the public.

On Friday, Oct. 26, the African Pavilion and the African Plains officially open to the public. The occasion is a milestone in the zoo's history book, closing one chapter and beginning another. The two exhibits complete the African continent at the zoo, and plans for North America, the next of six additional continents at the zoo, will get underway.

To celebrate the debut, the zoo has lined up a weekend of festivities. On Friday, Oct. 26, through Sunday, Oct. 28, musicians, jugglers and other performers will be helping to make the weekend a memorable one.

On Saturday and Sunday the North Carolina A & T State University Dancers will perform on the Pavilion overlook. The drum music and dances, including "Rain Forest" and "African Ceremonial," are based on West African traditional pieces. Dancers will wear traditional African costumes and play authentic instruments.

The African Pavilion will be the most spectacular exhibit on the African continent at the zoo—33,500 square feet of plant and animal habitats enclosed under a translucent Fiberglass roof topped with three cupolas. It's the only structure of its kind in the zoo world. The 53,000 square foot total in the Pavilion includes the animals' night quarters, located below ground level, as well as restaurant and restroom facilities.

Adjoining the Pavilion is a 40-acre expanse which will be home to many species of

antelope and large, ground-dwelling birds. Impala, De-fassa waterbuck and Greater kudu, to name a few, will graze and rest under the shade trees on the Plains as freely as they would in the wild.

Visitors who walk into the Pavilion will enter a large continent on a small scale—and get an idea of the diversity of plant and animal life found in Africa. In the Pavilion are some 200 African animals in areas representative of Africa's lush rain forests, swamps, savannas, grasslands and semi-deserts.

In the rain forest will be Ramar, probably the zoo's most famous inhabitant. The magnificent, 400-pound Lowland gorilla will live in a three-quarter acre indoor/outdoor habitat with his female friend Hope. The exhibit is already being called one of the best in the world.

In addition to adding a year-round dimension to the zoo, the two new exhibits will offer visitors the chance to expand their plant and animal horizons.

"This is an outstanding opportunity for the public to begin to understand the importance of protecting our wild places for future generations and to take an interest in worldwide conservation problems," Fry said.

The multi-exhibit continent that took a decade to complete will take at least a day to appreciate. Zoogoers can ride the tram around the park, or stroll through and enjoy the scenery on foot.

The zoo is open every day of the year. Winter hours, which begin Oct. 15, are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. every day.

Admission is \$3 for adults and \$1 for children ages 2-15 and senior citizens. Tram fare is \$1 per person.

The zoo is located 6 miles southeast of Asheboro off U.S. 64, U.S. 220 and N.C. 159. For information, call (919) 879-5606.

### Senator John Melcher [D-Mt] to Meet with NICC Participants

It was announced today that Senator John Melcher (D-MT), Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs will be the keynote speaker at the closing banquet of the Sixth Annual National Indian Child Conference (NICC) on October 31, 1984 at the Albuquerque Civic Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference, which is sponsored by Save the Children Federation, is expected to draw over 1,000 Indians from across the country.

It was also announced that on November 1st Senator Melcher will conduct a legislative forum from 9:30 until 11:30 A.M. also in the Albuquerque Civic Center. Helen Scheirbeck, Director of the Indian Nations Programs for Save the Children explained, "It has always been our practice to invite national leaders from Washington to meet with Indians at the NICC. For most Indians, geography prohibits any personal communication with decision-

makers." Scheirbeck continued, "On October 31st, Indians will have an opportunity to listen to Senator Melcher and on November 1st Indians will have the chance to speak with the Senator. We're very pleased."

Scheirbeck explained that the forum on November 1st will be divided into two parts. First, young Indians will have an opportunity to address the Senator on the problems they face. Later, anyone with comments for the Senator will be provided an opportunity to speak or deliver written comments. "We hope that everyone will have time to speak," she added, "but the time may become a factor. Therefore, I recommend that anyone with comments bring a written copy for the Senator." Scheirbeck also stated that she was optimistic that Indians would not want to miss this opportunity and urged all concerned participants to arrange their schedule to be at the forum on November 1st.

### South Robeson Open House

Open house is planned at South Robeson High School for October 22. It is an event held annually at South Robeson to allow teachers and parents to confer on the progress of students. The time is from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

A Monday has been selected for holding open house with the hope it would not conflict with the night or evening plans of too many parents. Teachers will be on duty in their individual rooms.

Parents are urged to attend this open house at this time because it will give an opportunity for an early conference between parent and teacher, and may well help teachers guide the progress of students on through the school years.

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