

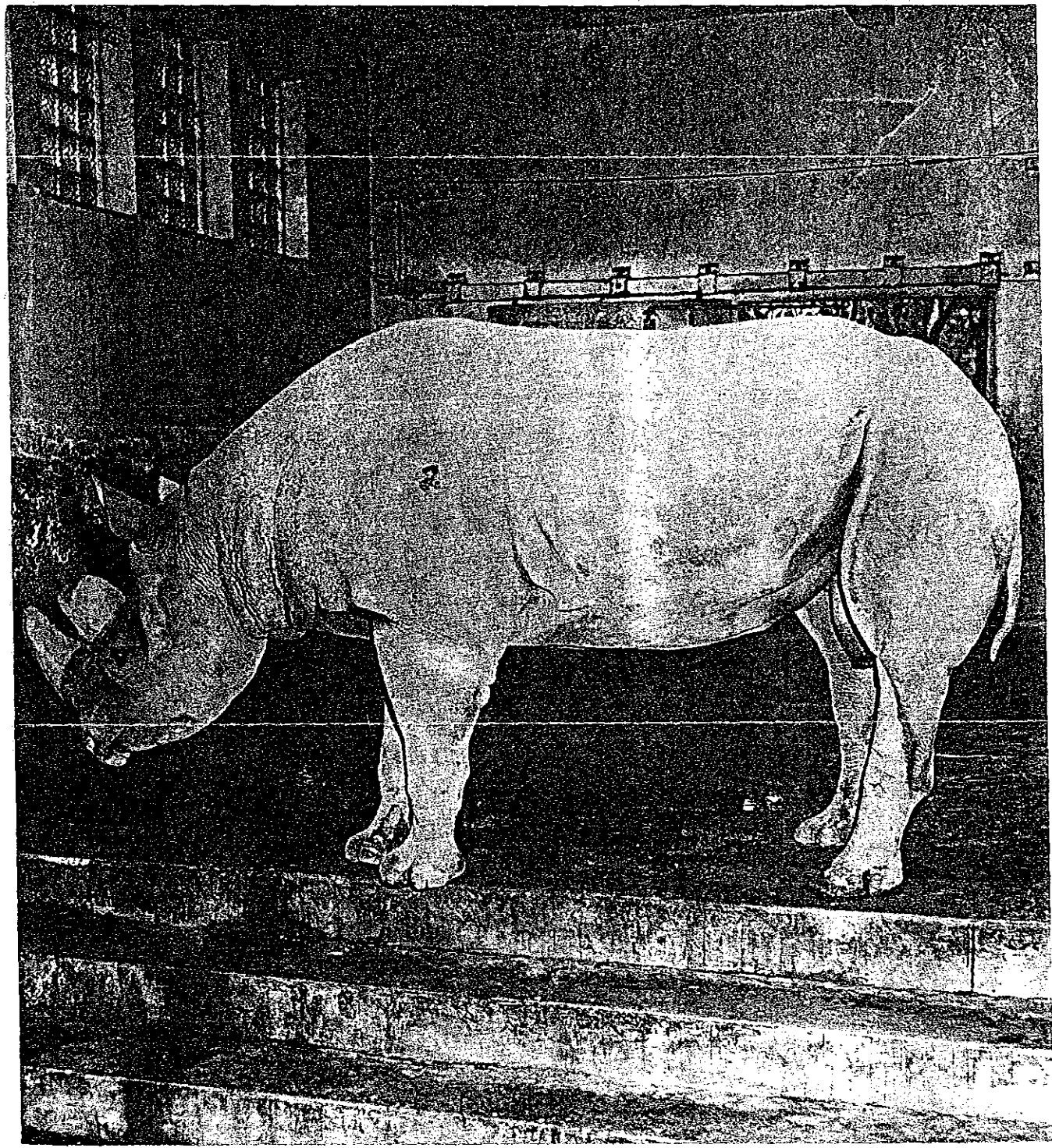
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# Milwaukee Zoo News

Volume IV

September-October, 1955

Number 8



# C. R. Dineen Will Be Missed By Lovers Of County Zoo, Parks

The passing of C. R. Dineen—whom we all affectionately knew as "Con"—was not only a severe loss to the entire community, but he will be especially missed by our Zoological Society and all of those who love Milwaukee's Zoo.

When the City of Milwaukee voted to turn all of our City parks over to the County, our Zoo at Washington Park came under the jurisdiction of the Milwaukee County Park Commission. This is a group of 7 public spirited citizens who are appointed by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors.

It was not long after Con Dineen became a member of the Commission that he realized what a valuable asset Milwaukee had in its Zoo. When he learned that all of the animals and birds at the Zoo were supplied by and through the efforts of our Zoological Society, he made it a point to get acquainted and began to work closely with its Board of directors.

When Con was elected President of the Park Commission, one of the first things he did was to arrange a meeting of the members of the Park Commission and the Zoological Society Board of Directors so that there would be a general meeting of minds for the development of the best Zoo in America.

After many meetings and discussions it was decided that it would be utterly impossible, and a waste of public funds, to build a modern Zoo at Washington Park, and it was Con Dineen who suggested that a new site be located and that the County build a completely new Zoo. This was a bold recommendation but he had the courage of his convictions, so he personally guided tours of the County with members of the commission and of our Society, in search of a new site, and when it was decided that that beautiful 140 acre tract on the Blue Mound Road would be a perfect location, he convinced his associates on the Commission and then they as a body sought approval from the County Board of Supervisors.

This was no easy task but after several public hearings and numerous stormy sessions between the Commissioners and the Supervisors, approval was granted—thanks to Con and all of his able associates, plus the fine cooperation from our splendid Board of Supervisors.

Con, with his loving and jovial

personality, took all of this in stride but he would not rest until all of the various parcels of the 140 acres were purchased and when he realized that the electric power lines, running through the area, may prove to be a future menace, he backed a move for the removal of the power lines and satisfactory arrangements were consummated with the Electric Company.

During all of these years of hard work for our Zoo, and many other worthy County projects, he still had time to give to his highly successful legal practice.

It is sad indeed that Con did not live to see our new Zoo become a living reality, but we know that when it is completed within the next 3 or 4 years—Con will be mighty proud to look down and see the most beautiful Zoo in America, and hear all of Milwaukee say—"Milwaukee is a better place to live because "Con Dineen" was one of its far sighted—hard working—Public Spirited Citizens."

## Annual Meeting to Be Held

The annual meeting of the general membership will be held Tuesday evening, October 11 at 8:00 P.M. in the zoo auditorium.

After a brief business meeting, Zoo Director George Speidel will bring us up to date on our new zoo, a short nature film will be shown, and there will be some refreshments.

We hope you will all make plans to attend.

## New Members Listed

Following is a list of new members recently enrolled in the Milwaukee County Zoological Society.

Life: Victor Braun.

Annual Corporation: Kohl's Food Stores.

Annual Sustaining: Edwin A. Gallun, Clyman Canning Co., Dr. Malcolm Rogers, Ralph Friedmann, W. D. Kyle, Jr., L. B. Smith.

Annual: W. R. Ziemer, Richard D. Fuller, Miss Esther Brandt, George Roelke, Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Maclay, Monte Huebsch, Steven Keane, C. W. Bliedung, General Food Products Co., Jack E. Olson, Truman D. Schultz, Walter Bruss, Lee Wandling, Zeno LeTellier, Marvin E. Klitsner, Mrs. Lloyd Smith, Merlin F. Heilig, Joseph C. Barth, Walter Bliedung, W. G. Hottensen, George M. Wallace, Jr., Harry J. Barrett, Dean D. Fitzgerald, James M. Feld, Lewis J. Smith, Herman F. Fischer and George C. French, Jr.

# "Vitamin" is First Resident at New Site

Vitamin, the young moose, became the first official resident of the new Milwaukee county zoo.

The zoo isn't ready for visitors yet, but Vitamin probably doesn't mind. It's the nicest thing that ever happened to her.

The first moose born in captivity to live to maturity, Vitamin had a rough childhood. In spite of constant attention—very little was known then about raising moose in a zoo—she was sickly since shortly after birth.

Her name indicates a deficiency, not abundance. Her regular diet was supplemented with vitamin doses.

At four months, Vitamin went lame. A few months later the lame leg broke, probably because of improper bone development due to a lack of something moose should get in their diet.

Still Vitamin survived. Her parents, Harriet and Christie, showed they meant to raise healthy children when they gave birth to two sets of twins on successive years. But Vitamin remained the frailest of the lot, even lost weight.

The zoo officials made a decision. Moose live alone in the wild. Why not turn Vitamin loose in the new zoo site? It has 120 acres of wilderness, underbrush and trees—moose feed chiefly on browse—and two water holes.

Vitamin would be completely on her own. No daily feeding to worry about, no keepers to bother her and 120 acres of feeding grounds. There was an abundance of browse, (as well as berries and maybe even that certain something which moose

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## Milwaukee Zoo News

Published by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee County for the Washington Park Zoo which is under supervision of the Milwaukee County Park Commission

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# Zoo Caravan Enjoys Successful Season

The Washington park zoo, which has been somewhat cramped for space for years, has found one method for extending its boundaries.

Each summer it sends out to all the county's parks and playgrounds a colorful circus wagon filled with small animals. Two attendants travel along to care for the animals and answer questions. This project was undertaken through the combined efforts of the county park commission's recreation department, service department and the zoo.

They estimate they answer questions from 500 or more youngsters every day.

In the caravan this year were a red fox, a white ash opossum, a parrot, an alligator, two owls, white rabbits and some doves, guinea pigs, an albino porcupine, snapping turtles, a family of raccoons, a skunk and two South American agoutis.

The attendants, David Jeffery, a Milwaukee county park employe, and Joseph Misuraco, a school teacher, have no trouble with the run of the mill questions.

"How far can the porcupine shoot his quills?" (He doesn't shoot them, he just holds them up for protection.)

Can the owl see in the daytime? (Sure he can.)

"Why does the fox sleep so much? (A fox does most of his hunting at night, so he sleeps in the day.)

"Does the skunk REALLY smell?" (Not this one. It's deodorized.)

How old is the alligator? (Seventeen years.)

What do the animals eat? (Grain, vegetables, fruits, small chunks of meat and whatever other supplementary vitamins are necessary.)

Where's the lion and the elephant? (Back at the zoo with the other big animals.)

The caravan plan was inaugurated five years ago to help interest children in animals right in their own neighborhood playgrounds. They are allowed to get close—but not too close. A rope keeps them about four feet from the cages and attendants watch to make sure none of them throws food or other foreign objects into the pens.

Once in a while, they allow the children to handle the animals. At Holler park, where the Easter Seal day camp was hosting about 100 handicapped, one of the rabbits was passed around and petted gently.

A blind boy stroked it and asked, "Does it look something like a kitty?"



ALEX NEWELL literally has an alligator by the tail as he helps unload the Zoo Caravan at the end of the season as several interested citizens look on. Helping with the unloading was William Ehr, in truck.

## "Vitamin" . . .

(Continued from Page 2)  
like but no one else seems to know about.

Vitamin at first didn't like the idea, hobbling pitifully to try to escape the keepers who came to load her on a truck, but she finally walked into a crate and was carted to the new site.

Once there, her spirit perked up. She stood on a dirt road and looked around. Trees and bushes were within eating range. She eyed the keepers suspiciously, but turned and munched on some maple leaves.

Then she ambled up the road a short way; keepers headed her to-

ward the woods where the water holes lay. Slowly she waded in and began nosing mossy weeds floating in the water. Vitamin actually appeared to smile. She waded contentedly across the pond, then limped out onto the far bank to munch some more leaves. Soon the keepers left her to roam at will in her wide new world.

Since then workmen have reported seeing the young moose race by periodically, seemingly with happy abandon in its new found freedom. It may be some time before zoo officials know the full results of the unique experiment, but as of now it appears to be successful.

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## Despite His 26 Years, Karonga Is a Spry Specimen of Rhino

(See Cover)

Karonga, the Washington park zoo's rhinoceros, is probably the liveliest of its species ever to appear in the United States.

It is believed that Karonga has survived longer than any other African rhino shown in an American zoo. He has enjoyed good health all through the years. However, during March he was troubled with a stubborn intestinal condition which finally yielded to medication and the fact that he was able to get outside in the sunshine on the first few mild Spring days. Now, despite his more than 26 years of age, he is as spry as ever.

No accurate records can be kept on the age of rhinos, since most are captured in the wilds, but the previous high was believed held by a Bronx (N.Y.) zoo African rhino which lived more than 25 years. Indian rhinos last much longer. One was known to have lived 42 years.

Karonga was captured in Africa and spent some time in an Amsterdam, Holland, zoo before coming to the United States to take up residence in the Brookfield (Ill.) zoo in 1934. He was believed to be five years old then.

Karonga was purchased for the local zoo in 1943 by The Milwaukee Journal, along with Tony and Cleo, the zoo's hippopotamus pair. Tony and Cleo settled down to domestic tranquility, but not Karonga.

The rhino, the first ever shown in Milwaukee, gave notice of how things were going to be the day he arrived. Karonga charged out of the crate and banged into the concrete walls of his new home with such

force it shook the building. His snorts and bellowing roars kept visitors out of the building for several days.

Karonga's feats of strength have become legends at the zoo. The rhino has learned to open and close the one ton steel door to his outside enclosure; he once tore off a tree at its base and carried it around on his horn like a toothpick (keepers later had to saw it into five pieces to carry it away), and recently he jarred the door so badly that an overhead iron guide bar was bent out of shape and had to be replaced.

Karonga's appearance is disarmingly mild—except for his ugly face. He no longer charges the walls, unless something unfamiliar disturbs him temporarily, and even ambles down to the edge of the moat to accept bran bread or other rhino delicacies from the hand of keeper Harold Borkenhagen.

Visitors are often heard to say, "My, he doesn't look dangerous."

But keepers reply, "Don't kid yourself. That guy's a killer."

No one has ever been in the enclosure with Karonga, and even at 26 no one will ever dare.

Karonga is a black rhino, the most common and the most ill tempered species. The white rhino—so called because it rolls in a whitish claylike substance—is becoming extinct and is far less aggressive than its African neighbor. Only a few are known to exist in captivity.

There are three species in Asia, the Indian, the Malayan and the Sumatran rhino. These are larger and closer to the old dinosaurs, having reddish hides that have folds in

them like a suit of armor. The Sumatran and the two African rhinos have two horns, which are actually not horns at all but an accumulation of long hairs made tough by a solution secreted at the base. The Indian and Malayan rhinos have one horn each. In the wilds the horns grow much longer than in captivity, because the rhinos do not have the concrete walls on which to rub them.

They also have little occasion to use them elsewhere in the wilds, because the rhino has no natural enemy, except perhaps parasites. There are no large animals that would dare challenge, and there would be little reason for it.

Rhinos, although they are born mad, are usually content to live and let live. They are vegetarians and bother no other animal unless bothered themselves. This is often easy to do, however. It has been said that the rhino is near-sighted and suspicious, and that when in doubt about what is approaching it will charge first and ask questions later.

It's favorite haunts are the local water hole, where it drinks and wallows in the shallow mud. There is a good reason for the latter. The parasites are the only living thing, perhaps, that can dent the rhino's hide, and the mud soothes the sores.

At the zoo Karonga gets regular treatment—via a very long pole—for the sores around his ankles. There are no tick birds, like there are in Africa, which live on top of the rhinos, following them everywhere and eating the parasites on their hides.

Karonga, like most captive animals, has adopted the ways of civilization, sleeping nights and eating days. It is usually the other way around in Africa, because the hot sun is too warm. The rhino usually finds some tall grass or trees to rest under.