



NEWS

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PHILIP MORRIS LAUNCHES INTERNATIONAL ZOO PROJECT

KNOXVILLE, TN. April 9 - Philip Morris U.S.A. announced today the establishment of a new relationship with the Knoxville Zoological Parks and Aquarium's (AAZPA) International Species Inventory System (ISIS).

Initial support from Philip Morris U.S.A., the nation's largest cigarette manufacturer, comes in the form of the purchase of a special computer for use by the AAZPA's International Species Inventory System in its "Captive Conservation Programs."

The new computer will be assigned to the Leipzig Zoological Garden in The German Democratic Republic for computer-based tracking and data management of all tiger species on the endangered species list. The Asian lion and the tiger are a part of the Knoxville Zoo's collection.

The Knoxville Zoological Park Executive Director, Guy L. Smith III, heads an international committee monitoring the protection and expansion of the extremely rare species of Asian lion. The Knoxville Zoo has a large collection of Asian lions in its world-renowned big cat collection.

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Presentation of the computer took place today at a special luncheon at the Knoxville Zoo, hosted by Philip Morris U.S.A.

On hand to accept the computer were Professor Dr. Seigfried Seifert, Director of the Leipzig Zoo, and Peter Muller, Assistant Director.

In making the presentation, Guy L. Smith IV, Vice President, Corporate Affairs of Philip Morris U.S.A., said, "We are proud that our corporate involvement in this exciting project can have meaningful and tangible benefits for the protection of endangered species worldwide. We feel that the project managed by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquarium's International Species Inventory System fulfills a vital need around the world toward saving the wild animal resource."

Professor Seifert and Mr. Muller are visiting Knoxville as part of a U.S. tour that will also take them to zoos in Cincinnati, Omaha and Minneapolis. Professor Seifert and his colleague will be attending the upcoming International Tiger Symposium being hosted by the Minnesota Zoo, where wildlife experts from throughout the world will discuss the critical problems of the tiger in its wild habitat, and propagation of captive animals throughout the world. Professor Seifert is the international "Studbook" keeper for the tigers and one of the most knowledgeable persons on the plight of this magnificent big cat. Additionally, ISIS is headquartered at the Minneapolis Zoological Garden.

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Knoxville Zoological Park Executive Director Guy L. Smith III said, "Philip Morris U.S.A. has a long and respected record of corporate support for wildlife and for many years has supported the World Wildlife Fund and its programs. The company's new relationship with the zoo here and worldwide adds a new dimension to an already impressive record."

Smith explained that the new computer link with the Leipzig Zoo will have a very positive impact on the flow of critical animal data between North American and European zoological colleagues. Smith stressed preservation of the world's wildlife resource must be an international effort if endangered species are to be saved. Captive propagation, greatly enhanced by ISIS, is a key to the long-range objective of re-introducing animals to their natural habitat. ISIS now has 215 participating institutions in 14 countries, tracking more than 67,000 living specimens.

Philip Morris U.S.A. has supported special wildlife and endangered species projects for the past 25 years. During the Knoxville World's Fair, the Knoxville Zoo received a large grant from the company for purchase of a double-decker bus for transporting zoo visitors.

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Philip Morris has also actively supported the Bronx (New York) Zoo. The Bronx Zoo provided Toto, the female African elephant who bore the first African elephant born in captivity in the Western Hemisphere at the Knoxville Zoo in 1978. Toto is at the Knoxville Zoo on a "breeding loan" from the New York Zoological Society.

Philip Morris U.S.A. Vice President Guy L. Smith IV is a Knoxville native and son of Knoxville Zoo Director Guy L. Smith III. Before joining Philip Morris in 1976, Smith IV was press secretary to Knoxville Mayor Kyle C. Testerman.

Commenting on the Philip Morris involvement, Professor Seifert of Leipzig said, "The success of this international effort depends very much on the computer revolution extending to many foreign countries where technology and finances are not always yet up to the task. Hence, the donation of a microcomputer by Philip Morris to the Leipzig Zoo, which will serve as the international coordinator for the various continental tiger programs, is an important contribution to all species survival programs throughout the world".

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