



Zoo Edition Archives - Fall 2000

Excerpts from interview with WPZ's Compost Coordinator, Ollie McIntyre:

WPZ: Ollie McIntyre, what is your official job title here at Woodland Park Zoo?

Ollie: I am the zoo's Compost Coordinator, but I'm also known as Dr. Doo, the Prince of Poo, and my favorite, the #1 of #2!

WPZ: What do all those job titles involve?

Ollie: I run the Zoo Doo composting program, the zoo recycling program and the vegetable garden at the Family Farm.

WPZ: How did you get into this line of work?

Ollie: Before I came here, I worked for the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in the coordinating center of a cancer prevention study. Towards the end of the study, I started looking for a change of pace. I wanted a more active job where I could be outdoors more. I saw an ad in the paper for the job of Zoo Doo Coordinator here at the zoo. It sounded really interesting so I applied, and went to the library to study up on composting.

WPZ: What advice would you give to kids who want to follow in your footsteps?

Ollie: Wearboots! Seriously though, I would tell them to keep your options open. Figure out what you're really interested in and how you want to spend your days. Think about what kind of environment you'd like to be in. When you hear about something that sounds interesting and fun, go for it!

WPZ: Why is recycling important?

Ollie: Recycling keeps our waste from taking up lots of space in a landfill and creating lots of environmental problems. We can reuse the material, save money and save resources. Composting is nature's recycling program. Animal waste is an organic material that will naturally break down. What we do at the zoo is create the best possible environment for composting to occur.

WPZ: What's your least favorite part of the job?

Ollie: When people don't separate their recyclables! Sometimes I even find dirty diapers in the recycle bins.

WPZ: What's your favorite part of the job?

Ollie: I love the huge impact we have on the environment. By composting Zoo Doo, we save 600 tons of waste from going to the landfills every year. We also save a lot of money in disposal costs. If we didn't compost, the zoo would have to pay \$50,000 - \$60,000 every year in disposal costs alone. And by selling Zoo Doo to the public, we offset our operational costs. But the most rewarding part is the environmental benefit and resource conservation: we're saving the world one poop at a time!

WPZ: Very clever! Any parting words?

Ollie: Woodland Park Zoo Doo--it's not just compost, it's a movement!

