



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
23 December 2014

CONTACT: Jane Ballentine
O: 443/552-5275
C: 301/332-1742

IT'S "DAWN AND HOPE" FOR MARYLAND ZOO'S PENGUIN CHICKS!
-- Daily Penguin Encounter tours to begin January 2, 2015 --

BALTIMORE, MD – For the past two weeks, people have been voting to name the first two penguin chicks of the 2014 breeding season at The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. Voting ended this weekend with 909 out of 2,400 votes being cast for Dawn and Hope! Dawn is named in honor of the dishwashing detergent that is used to clean wild penguins and other birds that have been caught in oil spills, and Hope is named for the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, which is home to the Boulders Penguin Colony.

Dawn and Hope hatched on October 4 and October 9, the first chicks to hatch at the Zoo's new Penguin Coast exhibit. They are being hand raised by staff and will become part of the Animal Embassy outreach program that travels to schools, camps, libraries and more all over Maryland. People may also meet them or the other penguin Ambassadors during Penguin Encounter tours at the Zoo.

Beginning January 2, the Zoo will offer paid Penguin Encounters daily at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. Penguin Encounters are intimate, 20-30 minute private tours with an Embassy keeper, special photo opportunities and up-close penguin interaction. During January and February they will be offered Fridays through Mondays, and after March 1st they will be offered daily. The cost will be \$35 for members and \$45 for non-members. Tickets can be purchased on grounds at the Main Gate, Giraffe Feeding Station or the Train Station. Encounters will be limited to 8 people per tour and tours are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The Maryland Zoo has been a leader in breeding African penguins for over 40 years, winning the prestigious Edward H. Bean Award for the "African Penguin Long-term Propagation Program" from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in 1996. The Zoo has one of the largest colonies of the birds in North America, with over 60 birds currently residing in the new Penguin Coast exhibit.

About The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

Founded in 1876, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is the third oldest zoo in the United States and is internationally known for its contributions in conservation and research. More than 1,500 animals are represented in the Zoo's varied natural habitat exhibits in areas such as Polar Bear Watch, the Maryland Wilderness, African Journey and the award-winning Children's Zoo. Situated in Druid Hill Park near downtown Baltimore, the Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. For more information, visit www.marylandzoo.org.

###