



January 21, 2022

Casey Waugh

Communications & Annual Giving Manager

913-909-4397, cwaugh@waysidewaifs.org

Wayside Waifs' President Geoff Hall Moves On

KANSAS CITY, Missouri – Wayside Waifs' longest tenured President, Geoff Hall, has announced his resignation from Wayside Waifs. His last day with the animal shelter is February 11. Hall has accepted the job of General Curator at the Como Park Zoo and Conservatory in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Hall became President of Wayside on October 21, 2013, after a 22-year career in the zoo industry. He successfully led Wayside during a time of significant growth. During his tenure, Wayside completed over \$9 million in new building projects including the Canine Behavior Center, the Education and Training Center, and the Courtesy Comfort Station, adding more than 20,000 square feet to the 50-acre campus. To support this growth in facilities and programs, he increased full time employees by 38%. In addition to capital projects, Geoff oversaw record-setting growth in fundraising events through the Fur Ball Gala and Strutt With Your Mutt. A master at creating partnerships, Hall created a welcoming culture that supported a positive employee and volunteer culture, while also expanding the shelter's corporate partners across the community and nation. While always focusing on mission, Hall believed in the importance of not only caring for animals – but also caring about the people that love them. Through his leadership, thousands of homeless animals have been adopted into loving homes, through day-to-day operations and many large-scale adoption events like Adopt-a-thon and Mega-Match. Knowing there were homeless animals in all corners of the country, Hall expanded the shelter's Animal Rescue Unit, deploying them to rescue animals from hurricanes, tornadoes, puppy mills, and hoarding situations across the country.

“Geoff has led Wayside Waifs to many successes over the last eight years,” said Rusty Smith, Wayside Waifs' Board Chair. “We thank him for his visionary leadership that has made Wayside a nationally recognized leader in animal welfare.”

Hall grew up in Rochester, Minnesota. He always had pets, including snakes, rats, salamanders, frogs and more. This fascination of animals led him to earn a biology degree at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota and then to his first job as a penguin keeper at the Baltimore Zoo. He would go on to the National Aquarium in Baltimore before becoming the first executive director of the Red River Zoo in Fargo, North Dakota where he led the design and construction of the new zoo. His zoo career took him to The Phoenix Zoo, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and on to the Kansas City Zoo.

Based on his admiration of animals, it's extremely fitting that Hall accepted the position at the Como Zoo. As the General Curator he'll oversee animal activities and operations, support the veterinary team in providing high quality animal care, participate in the planning of exhibits, and more.

The Wayside Waifs' Board of Directors will be doing a national search using an outside firm for the next President of Wayside Waifs. More information about the search will be available at WaysideWaifs.org no later than February 1, 2022.

About Wayside Waifs

As Kansas City's largest and most comprehensive no kill pet adoption campus, Wayside Waifs prepares pets and people for the bond of their lives. Typically the organization cares for more than 6,000 animals. Wayside is a private, independent, nonprofit 501(c)(3) charity. It receives no government funding and is supported entirely by private donations and grants. To see all of the animals available for adoptions or to donate, please visit WaysideWaifs.org.

Facebook: Wayside Waifs; Twitter: @WaysideWaifs; Instagram: @WaysideWaifs

About Como Park Zoo and Conservatory Background

For over 100 years, Marjorie McNeely Conservatory and Como Zoo in Saint Paul, Minnesota has charmed, educated and entertained millions of children and adults while fostering an appreciation of the natural world. The Como Park Zoo and Conservatory is open 365 days; 10am-6pm from April 1-September 30 and 10am-4pm from October 1-March 31. Admission to both the Como Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory is always free and a voluntary donation is appreciated. For more information, visit www.comozooconservatory.org.

###