



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Cochrane Polar Bear Habitat Launches IndieGoGo Fundraising Campaign for Polar Bear Week.

Cochrane, Ontario – February 23, 2015

On the momentum of Federal (FedNor) and Provincial commitments of 80% of the funds needed to expand and improve the facility, the Cochrane Polar Bear Habitat is launching an IndieGoGo Fundraising campaign to raise the remaining amount.

“We’ve come so far, we can’t stop now,” said Director and renowned polar bear advocate, Robert Buchanan. “The facility has already gotten the attention of the world’s best polar bear behaviourists, researchers and scientists, so by raising just the small remaining portion, we can create something unique that will be the envy of those who really care about finding out how to create a sustainable future for polar bears.”

The goal of the campaign is \$250,000, which will make the entire fund raising effort almost \$1.5 million. The facility will use the funds to fence a lake to create the world’s first human care facility that includes a natural lake, complete with flora and fauna. Improvements to the facility will also include web streaming cameras that double for overnight security, upgrades to the Bear Holding building to make bear transfers easier, and a new training crate for the bears.

www.IndieGoGo.com is a crowd sourcing website dedicated to helping causes – both creative and philanthropic. By utilizing the site, Cummings hopes to take advantage of their wider reach. “People already know that IndieGoGo is a direct resource for charities and not for profits, and the page templates already exist there to offer perks and rewards to people who support you.”

And the perks for the Polar Bear Habitat campaign are as unique as the facility. One on one Skype -in’s with a polar bear and Keeper are offered at a support level of \$1,000 – but probably the most interesting perk is Bear Keeper Mireille Caron’s offer to shave her head at the \$20,000 level. “When you see how long Mireille’s hair is ... you’ll understand why it’s worth it,” said Cummings. “She’ll also be donating her hair for cancer patients.” The biggest prize is naming the new Enclosure, at an investment of \$150,000. “Although we don’t necessarily care what they call it ... we have one stipulation – that they keep it clean. If they want to call it ‘George’ – you’ll just hear us referring to it that way from that point forward.”

“We know everyone can’t afford to help financially, but they can help in so many other ways as well. We’re asking people to share the link on their FB pages, think about buying gifts in our store or online, or even donating items like watermelon, pumpkin or vegetables to off-set our feeding costs,” said Cummings.

The campaign went live February 23rd and will run for 40 days till April 3, 2015 at <http://igg.me/at/polarbearhabitat>. The link will also be available on the Habitat’s Facebook site (www.facebook.com/polarbearhabitat), on their website at

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www.polarbearhabitat.ca, or just by going to www.indiegogo.com and searching for Polar Bear Habitat Expansion. All funds raised, even if the entire \$250,000 is not realized, will still go to operating the facility.

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