



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Nov. 10, 2016

## **E.T. THE WALRUS TO BE HONORED WITH A BRONZE SCULPTURE AT POINT DEFIANCE ZOO** *Fundraising drive underway to pay for life-sized statue of the Pacific walrus loved by generations*

TACOMA, Wash. – For more than three decades, E.T. the walrus beckoned visitors to Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium. He was a beloved symbol of the Zoo’s conservation efforts and often entertained crowds with his flipper waves, pool splashes and riveting sounds that ran the gamut from whistling to thrumming like a bell.



He died last year at age 33.

Now, the community that loved him for generations is raising money to fund a life-sized bronze sculpture in his honor outside the zoo front gate, welcoming new generations of visitors. Plans call for installation next summer.

“E.T. was a well-loved member of our community who delighted and inspired us for over three decades,” said Larry Norvell, executive director of The Zoo Society, which supports the conservation and education mission of Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium. “We are pleased to lead this effort to fund a sculpture celebrating E.T.’s life and his contribution to our community.”

The fund drive by the non-profit Zoo Society includes several ways people can make a contribution to the sculpture.

- Make a donation at [www.thezoosociety.org/et-sculpture](http://www.thezoosociety.org/et-sculpture) or by calling 253-404-3651.
- Buy a commemorate T-shirt emblazoned with a drawing of E.T. and his signature wave. The unique shirts range from \$20 to \$23 and may be purchased at [booster.com/pointdefiancezoo](http://booster.com/pointdefiancezoo) through Dec. 8, with delivery in time for holiday giving.
- Adopt a walrus through The Zoo Society. Your gift of \$50 will fund the E.T. sculpture and comes with a walrus plush, an adoption certificate and a photo of one of the walruses at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.

The Zoo Society and Metro Parks Tacoma are in the process of seeking an artist to create the life-size bronze sculpture replicating E.T.'s signature wave. Funding for the \$130,000 sculpture is being sought from the community, The Zoo Society and the Metro Parks Tacoma Public Art Program.

“We want this sculpture to be a hands-on piece,” said Zoo Deputy Director John Houck. “Our visitors will be able to touch and interact with it as they connect more closely with the Pacific walrus species. We hope it will inspire our community to think deeply about the actions we all can take to help walruses and other marine mammals in the wild.”

For more information, go to [www.pdza.org/rocky-shores](http://www.pdza.org/rocky-shores).

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*Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only combined zoo & aquarium, practices and promotes responsible stewardship of the world's resources through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities. The zoo, a division of Metro Parks Tacoma, is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA).*

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