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um Association awards for amphibian conservation.

"We want to educate and change attitudes about amphibians which most people feel are loathsome and disgusting," said Kevin Zippel, who came from the Bronx Zoo six months ago to take the position of center curator. "I'm excited that there is such a facility just for conserving and producing amphibian offspring, and working with rare and endangered species. The long term game plan is to break ground in three months for a 4-5,000-foot addition for native North American species and to highlight cultural aspects of amphibians. We have so many reference to frogs in our culture from Kermit to the story of the princess and the frog."

Glen Board has "learned a lot

about frogs" since taking on the task of creating murals for the zoo six months ago. Manager of Exhibit Works' museum division, Board had stayed with the crew until 10 p.m. the night before to make sure interactive activities such as the Croaking Cafe were ready in time for the opening. The cafe consists of two discs that visitors twirl until they match up the salamander and his dinner.

"The whole idea is for it to be fun and to be part of it," said Board, whose company is currently working on exhibits for the St. Louis Science Center. "The mural in the next room challenges kids to find the amphibians hiding in it. For me, the challenge has been to learn about frogs. We know exhibits and what people like to do but

we didn't know much about frogs."

Produced on a Macintosh computer, the wall murals tell the story of how all life is linked.

"The animals and environment were inspiration for the color: greens and blues and splashes of color," said Ted Swigon, Exhibit Works museum division director. "Usually these critters are very small. We want visitors to get a sense of how they develop from egg to tadpole to frog, their environments and their transition from land to water."

Becky Johnson, senior keeper at the center, stressed the delicate balance of environmental elements the amphibians must have to survive out of the wild.

"They're very fragile compared to other animals," said Johnson, who was holding a Tiger salamander from north America. "The challenge is keeping their environment moist."

That's the job of Harry Ward, associate curator of herpetology. He's had to make sure each of the species live in conditions similar to their native environment. Ninety percent of the center's inhabitants will have to

Center Information

What: The new National Amphibian Conservation Center delights visitors with hundreds of frogs, salamanders and newts



When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.
Where: 8450 W. 10 Mile Road at Woodward Ave., Royal Oak.
Tickets: \$7.50 adults, \$5.50 seniors age 62 and up, students, and children ages 2-12. Call (248) 398-0903

travel only as far as the zoo's Reptile House. But species such as the hellbender, North America's largest salamander, dart frogs, the fully aquatic axolotl, and the Japanese Giant Salamander acquired in an agreement with Asa Zoo in Hiroshima, are new to the Detroit Zoo.

"Their care requires a lot of electricity and time," said Ward. "The Japanese Giant Salamander, which grows up to 5 feet long, requires a cold stream environment and extremely clean water. The tomato frog from Madagascar requires a relatively warm and moist environ-

ment and needs to be fed a diet of crickets two to three times a week."

Many amphibians live in aquatic worlds similar to the Immersion Gallery in the center. A fine mist envelops visitors to the space that mimics the Peruvian Amazon. Orchids, palms and tropical grasses thrive on the heat and humidity as do the freest conductors, Emil de Cou leading the more than 100-member orchestra in a program that ranges from Ellington's *It Don't Mean a Thing* to selections from Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. De Cou is acting music director of the San Francisco Ballet, and conducted the American Ballet Theatre for eight years. He's led orchestras all over the world, including the Scottish National Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic, Polish Radio Orchestra, Royal Danish

Opera Orchestra, and the national orchestras of Argentina, Holland and Romania.

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra's new executive director, Emil Kang, originally came up with the idea for the Livonia concert. DSO vice president of communications John MacElwee said the orchestra is always looking for opportunities to reach out to new audiences in the suburbs.

"We'd eventually like to do a concert in every city," said MacElwee. "It's a chance to bring the orchestra to new people. For many, it's the first introduction they have to the symphony and if they have a positive experience we hope to bring them downtown."

Interested in drawing the animals? The Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center is offering two-day workshops for adults and children with Pat Allen July 15 and 22 or Aug. 5 and 12. The cost is \$60, members, \$65 non-members. To register or for more information, call the art center (248) 644-0896.

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Concert from page C1

of that is the arts."

The Livonia Arts Commission has been leading many of the efforts to encourage the growth of arts in the community. Established by a city council ordinance in 1974 under the auspices of then Mayor Edward McNamara, the commission continues to financially support several local nonprofit arts organizations in addition to showcasing artists at its annual Livonia Arts Festival and Fine Arts in the Village exhibit. It also displays the works of visual artists in monthly rotating exhibits at three venues at Livonia City Hall and the Civic Center Library.

"The Livonia Arts Commission has dedicated people spearheading a number of activities," said Kirksey. "It's an example of the interest that there is in the com-

munity."

Kirksey praised the efforts of citizens such as Robert Bennett for his work as president of the Livonia Symphony Orchestra which is now entering its 28th season. Bennett has been promoting the arts even before he was Livonia's Mayor from 1988-95. It was Bennett's idea to hold a Music Under the Stars series when he was a city councilman back in 1972. Nearly 30 years later, the musical series is still going strong. It kicks off 7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 6 with the Big Band Express playing in Civic Center Park. The Livonia Symphony Orchestra performs at the park 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 17.

"I encouraged the commission to take a bigger role in promoting the arts which are a factor in

the fabric of life," said Bennett. "We need to have the arts in our daily life to make our life whole."

Kirksey couldn't agree any more. That's why he's still out there trying to raise the \$20,000 in costs associated with the Detroit Symphony concert. It promises to be a special one with guest conductor Emil de Cou leading the more than 100-member orchestra in a program that ranges from Ellington's *It Don't Mean a Thing* to selections from Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. De Cou is acting music director of the San Francisco Ballet, and conducted the American Ballet Theatre for eight years. He's led orchestras all over the world, including the Scottish National Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic, Polish Radio Orchestra, Royal Danish

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Cultural Arts Award Nomination Form

I (we) nominate the following as the person who has done the most to further the arts in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area: (Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Bloomfield Township, Franklin)

Name of your nominee:

Address:

City & Phone Number:

Please submit on an attached, type-written sheet the reasons for your nomination. Be sure to cover the nominee's specific contribution—e.g. creative, volunteer, financial. Explain the scope and unique quality of his or her involvement. Describe the recognition and the opportunities the nominee brings to the arts.

Submitted by:

Your Address:

Your City & Phone Number:

Send nomination form to:

The Birmingham-Bloomfield Cultural Arts Award
Cultural Council of Birmingham/Bloomfield

P.O. Box 465
Birmingham, MI 48012
Or Email jberne@att.net
Or Fax to 248-851-1209

Nominations are due by July 31, 1999

This award is sponsored by
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