Fencepost at Topeka Zoo Inspires Hat and Glove Drive

This isn’t your typical story about an ordinary fencepost. For years, this fence post just stood there doing what fence posts do; holding up a fence. When a certain live
streaming giraffe camera was installed, things changed.

At first, he was just in the way. He would be standing there sometimes blocking the view. As popularity of the live streaming cameras grew, more and more people saw the same fence post. Soon, he became familiar.

Then one day, the miraculous happened. He found a name. Someone who had been watching the same camera day after day said, “Well would you look at that, there’s old Barkley blocking the view again.”

And just like that, his personality was born. He wasn’t just any fencepost anymore. He had a name. He was Barkley.

As the number of people online chatting about the livestream feed grew, so did the complaints about Barkley being in the way.

Barkley didn’t care. He had a name and he was going to change the
way people felt about him. He thought to himself, “I’m a Kansas fencepost. I’m going to show people my cowboy side.” And just like that, there was Barkley with eyes, arms and a cowboy hat.

Now, when people tuned into that camera view they didn’t complain about Barkley being in the way. They smiled and said, “Look! There’s Barkley.”

When summer gave way to fall, Barkley found his Halloween costume and put that on. He was a pilgrim for Thanksgiving. For the Christmas season, he donned the red and white of course.

It was when he put the red and white on that the miracle happened. At someone’s home far far away, someone who used to complain about a fencepost being in the way looked at their computer screen and saw Barkley standing there in his full holiday cheer. She smiled and said, “There’s Barkley in his holiday spirit. I wish we could find a way to
give back to his community to thank him for the joy he has given ours.”

And that is the story behind why live streaming giraffe chatters from around the country have been donating stocking caps and gloves for children in the Topeka community. Donations of hats and gloves have been sent to the Topeka Zoo from all over the country. If you would like to donate you can mail or bring in children's hats and gloves to the Topeka Zoo.

Who can deny a holiday miracle when a simple fencepost inspires giving across communities? Thank you Barkley!

Camp Cowabunga Receives Award

The Topeka Zoo and Mohan Construction have been awarded the Associated General Contractors of Kansas (AGC) State Building

Award of Excellence for their work on the Camp Cowabunga exhibit.

Camp Cowabunga broke ground on July 6th, 2017 and was completed and opened to the public on August, 31st 2018. Camp Cowabunga was the largest project in the Topeka Zoo’s history and creates the atmosphere of being on a safari in Africa, with the exhibit honoring Gary K. Clarke’s safari experiences in Africa as a tour guide. Camp Cowabunga houses several animals including African lions, African painted dogs, Red Patas monkeys, guinea fowl and ostriches. Camp Cowabunga also features interactive learning experiences that are fun and education for guests. Opening weekend of Camp Cowabunga saw 9,857 guests who enjoyed their first experience of the Topeka Zoo’s master plan. Camp Cowabunga cost $4.5 million and was funded privately and through sales tax. Private donations to Camp Cowabunga were represented by donors in 38 states.
The award will be presented on Friday, February 1st 2019 in Wichita at the Associated General Contractors of Kansas State Building Awards Luncheon. Head to the Topeka Zoo to experience the award winning exhibit. The Topeka Zoo is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the gates closing at 4:30 p.m. The Zoo will be closed on New Year’s Day.

Road Construction Update

Road construction updates

The image on the right is a list of featured road construction projects for 2018.

Work continuing on:
• All four lanes of SW Fairlawn from 25th to 28th opened Thursday afternoon. Northbound lanes were closed while a storm sewer pipe was replaced.

You can find updates to all street projects on the Capital Projects Dashboard.

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Recent Updates

• There have been 60 broken water mains this month with 867 year to date. Last year at this time there were 414 breaks.

• The street department filled 365 potholes and graded 4,200 linear feet of aggregate alley.
The Municipal Court will be closed January 1. No dockets will be held, but the daily bond determination call will be held as usual.

Fire crews will be handing out smoke detector applications in areas of recent fires.

Snow and Ice Removal Plan

Winter weather is here. Check out the city's snow and ice removal plan.

You can also see a map of all the streets in Topeka to see if they have been treated.
Priority 1:

Primary Streets: Arterial Streets and Emergency Snow routes

Service Level – Plowing will typically begin with 2” of snow accumulation. Complete snow and ice control within 24 hours of snowfall ending.

Priority 2:

Secondary Streets: Collector Streets

Service Level – Plowing will typically begin with 4” of snow accumulation. Complete snow and ice control within 24 hours after Priority 1 completion.

Priority 3:

Residential Streets: Local Streets

Service Level – Plowing will typically begin with 6” of snow accumulation to ensure that they are passable to emergency services and general public as necessary upon
 completion of Priorities 1 through 2.

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**Coming up**

- City Council Meeting, January 8th at 6 p.m.
- Safe Streets event at Great Overland station, 01/02/2019
- The Zoo’s Christmas Tree Recycling Program will run December 26 through January 8.

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**Brent Trout**

This weekly report is presented to you from the office of City Manager Brent Trout.

For other weekly reports, visit the City's website

This report was produced through our open data portal. We have several other open data portals to
help connect you with the work we do, including portals that let you:

- **Visualize Topeka's $270M budget**
- **See Topeka's expenses, one check at a time**
- **Navigate our major infrastructure projects**
- **Track departments' progress toward our goals**