

'Hoppy' Days!: Lv Zoo Welcomes Two Joey

By Matt Provence

SCHNECKSVILLE, PA. -- Lehigh Valley Zoo, in conjunction with Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN), is hopping for joy over the announcement of two kangaroo joeys. LVHN is the Official Motherhood Partner of the LVZoo. First-time mother, Cara, and second-time mother, Sadie, have recently shown enlarged pouches and significant pouch movement; indicating the presence of a joey. Keepers have also occasionally observed a foot sticking out of the pouch and are eagerly waiting for the little ones to emerge.

Last year, Sadie gave birth to the then newest member of the mob, Hopscotch. All three recent additions were fathered by George, the lone male kangaroo at the Zoo. Kangaroo pregnancies and newborns are unique, as joeys are born and then continue to grow inside the pouch. When they are born, newborn joeys are smaller than a cherry.

After birth, the mother will lick a pathway up the fur of her pouch for the joey to climb unassisted into the pouch where it stays until it is between 2- and 4-months-old. For this reason, our kangaroos don't have birthdays but "pouch days!" A "pouch day" is the first time a joey makes an appearance outside the pouch and can be seen on exhibit, so it is difficult to determine the exact day a joey is born.

While joeys will occasionally leave the pouch to explore, they will immediately dive back into the pouch if they feel scared or sense danger. As joeys grow, it is a common occurrence to see their head and feet hanging outside of the pouch since they are becoming larger over time. The pouch will continue to expand to accommodate their growth. When joeys are between eight and 10 months, they are mature enough to leave the pouch for good.

During this time, the mother kangaroo can produce two different types of milk to feed two separate babies: one that has emerged from the pouch but is still nursing and another newborn. The newest residents of the LVZoo still need a name. In partnership with LVHN, the LVZoo is hosting a naming poll. The zookeepers narrowed their list of possible names down to five finalists – Jax, Jenga, Jinx, Taz and Uno. Fans will then decide the final official names by voting for their favorite one in person at the Lehigh Valley Zoo using tokens. Two lucky winners will receive a family four pack for picking the winning name.

Anyone interested in helping further the care of the new joeys– or any of the animals – during this critical time is encouraged to visit lvzoo.org/sustainourmission or to donate on the Zoo's Facebook page.



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Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Build Tight, Insulate Right

Insulating a home will always be one of the most important things that can be done during construction. There are also many insulating upgrades that can be done after construction. Always keep in mind that contractors will be required to meet the building code with respect to the amount of insulation they install but they are not required yet to seal air leaks in the building envelope. This means you will have an average job at best and depending on what insulating material is used and who installs it, you may have a job that looks fine but doesn't perform well at all. There are a lot of things to manage during the construction of a new home and passing inspections is what keeps everything on track. Improving the performance of the home with respect to energy usage is nowhere on anyone's list so it is neglected. There is confusion even among contractors when insulation upgrades are discussed.

Because codes are written to address the materials commonly used, everyone assumes all insulation needs to be installed the same way. A vaulted ceiling can't be insulated with fiberglass unless there are baffles to guarantee ventilation. However, a vaulted ceiling can be insulated better if the cavities are sealed and dense packed with cellulose.

The argument made by the less informed contractors is that moisture will ruin the plywood on the roof or that the shingles will bake and be destroyed. Neither is true and neither of those things has ever happened in real life unless one of the products was not installed correctly. The gloom and doom talk prevents contractors from doing something they are not familiar with and that costs the homeowner many thousands of dollars in unnecessary energy usage.

What it boils down to is a lack of understanding about what conditions each building material really needs to function and what they can tolerate based on their makeup. Manufacturers will have the conversation about application with contractors but they don't call the manufacturer. They usually ask the guy at the sales counter who is not an authority on anything. Code inspectors also are not familiar with upgraded methods and practices because they never see them. I have explained superinsulation jobs to code officials several times during inspections and they were surprised at the performance that is possible and the logic of the methods. A few of my superinsulation projects have been in service now for well over 10 years and no shingles were baked and no plywood has rotted and no money has been wasted on energy.

Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

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