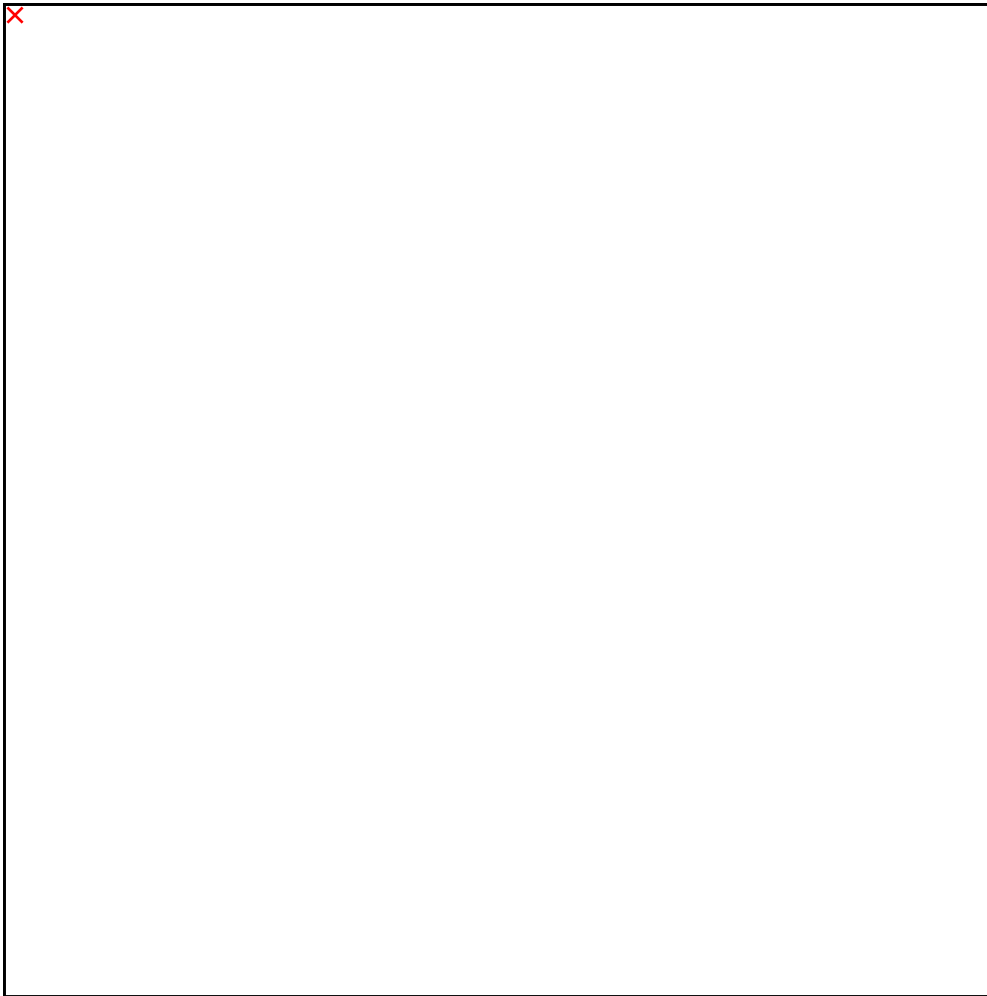


Moody Gardens Welcomes the Last Penguin Chick of the Season as the Aquarium Pyramid's 25th Anniversary Approaches

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GALVESTON, Texas (February 26, 2024) – Moody Gardens is excited to welcome the last penguin chick of the season as the 25th Anniversary of the Aquarium Pyramid approaches.

The King penguin chick hatched weighing 216 grams and now weighs a whopping 2.8 kilos, and is gaining weight quickly. “Its parents, Professor and Astro, are taking excellent care of this chick,” states Diane Olsen, Aquarium Pyramid curator.

The hatching of this new chick marks the milestone of a penguin legacy. “As we approach the 25th anniversary of the aquarium it’s super cool that our chick’s father is Professor, the very first chick that was hatched from the expedition back in 1998,” states Olsen. Professor is Moody Gardens’ Original Galveston (OG) penguin and was hatched aboard a Russian research vessel named Professor Multanovskiy. Professor became the namesake of the pioneering vessel.

In March 1998, scientists from Spain and Moody Gardens staff chartered the vessel to explore the King penguin colonies on South Georgia Island, located on the edge of the Antarctic. They were able to collect one hundred King penguin eggs which were transported back to Galveston Island pioneering the King penguin exhibit at the Moody Garden's Aquarium Pyramid twenty-five years ago.

“Bringing those birds back in 1998 has created a great genetic stock of birds throughout the Association of Zoos and Aquariums facilities, so we’ve increased the genetic diversity one hundred-fold and this will allow us to keep good, stable, healthy populations for many years to come,” states Olsen. Every successful hatch that Moody Gardens has adds to the mission of education, conservation, recreation, and research that the organization values. Additionally, it adds to the sustainability of penguins in zoos and aquariums all over the world.

The arrival of this new chick signifies the next generation of King penguins for the Moody Garden's Aquarium Pyramid. Because of its significance, staff wanted to extend the invitation for fans to vote on its new name. Many of the Moody Gardens' King penguins are named after famous sports figures and because this new chick is the rookie of the rookery this season, this will perpetuate the trend. Beginning today, voters can go to Moody Garden's Facebook page to name the chick after their favorite *rookie of the year* – Coleridge Bernard, CJ, Stroud, or Seven.

The Moody Gardens Aquarium Pyramid is one of the largest and most diverse aquariums in the Southwest. The South Atlantic Penguin Exhibit is home to King, Gentoo, Chinstrap, Macaroni, Southern Rockhopper, and Northern Rockhopper penguins. Moody Gardens added a second penguin exhibit featuring a new species of birds – the subtropical Humboldt penguins.

Guests can experience a fun and awe-inspiring journey wonderfully complemented with conservation messages that underscore the vital importance of the oceans inside the Aquarium Pyramid. Travel from the Gulf of Mexico to the South Atlantic, South Pacific, North Pacific, and as each ocean exhibit highlights different marine sanctuaries and different aspects of our relationship to the seas.

For more information, please call 409-744-4673 or visit www.moodygardens.org.

Moody Gardens® is a public, non-profit, educational destination utilizing nature in the advancement of rehabilitation, conservation, recreation, and research.

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