The Springfield Zoological Society needed a partnership with a purpose. It met that need by partnering with the Community Foundation in the establishment of the Springfield Zoological Society Fund.

The Fund was established on the strength of a bequest from a community member. The Society’s nurturing of the gift is important to reach future goals.
"The Zoological Society was fortunate enough to be the beneficiary of a bequest. In looking at short- and long-term investment goals, our board felt that creating a fund with the Community Foundation would help ensure the future of our organization," Zoological Society President Lynne Slightom said.

"Having the oversight of the Foundation's Board of Directors meant a lot to us. We needed to be sure we were placing our donor's dollars into a trusted institution. In talking to the administration and staff, we were assured that their focus is to help us serve our mission. We are a valued partner."

The Zoological Society's mission is to raise funds for educational programs and animal exhibits at the Henson Robinson Zoo, located in Springfield. Since its establishment in 1983, the Society has helped create most of the exhibits currently at the zoo, including last year's arrival of the North American Black Bear Cubs, Klondike and Kenai to a permanent home in Springfield.

This year the Society is building a new exhibit to house two Binturongs, also known as Bearcats, that will feature numerous climbing apparatus.

"We are a group of dedicated volunteers who are committed to wildlife conservation and endangered species preservation," Slightom said. "We support and promote the Henson Robinson Zoo to increase and improve its facilities and animal collections."

The Zoo celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, and creating the Fund was part of the Zoological Society’s goal to make sure the Zoo continues to be a vital part of the community.

"As we help the Zoo celebrate its 50th anniversary, we are working strategically with the Springfield Park District to begin a "Renew the Zoo" campaign," Slightom said.

"We hope to build our fund with the Foundation so that we can ensure our zoo continues to be a family friendly recreational and educational place for all to learn about wildlife and conservation."

For more information or to donate to the Springfield Zoological Society Fund, please contact the Community Foundation at 217-789-4431 or visit CFLL.org.