

READER TO READER

What is your secret to a successful day trip?



"Bring plenty of water and sunscreen, good friends and matching colors!"

*Amy Burns
Lake Zurich*



"Gift shop last. That's our rule. They don't get it unless they're good."

*Barbara Kakn
Oak Brook*



"Make sure your toddler has adequate rest."

*Beth Ngo
Naperville*



"Bring extra clothes and hats ... and lots and lots of water!"

*Rachael Correa
Naperville*



"Wear comfortable clothes so you can walk a long time and bring along a good disposition."

*Nina Gibson
Mount Prospect*



"Keep a close eye on your kids. Bring a spring coat and towels just in case."

*Kathleen Fewell
Waukegan*



"Be prepared with special equipment: Bacitracin, Band-Aids, water and little treats and bathing suit."

*Brigitte Baer
Naperville*



"Pack everything the night before."

*Andrea McGee
Bellwood*

Compiled by Bethel Swift



PHOTO BY JIM SCHULZ/CHICAGO ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

SIX QUESTIONS

Meet gorilla keeper Betty Green

1 What do your kids think of your job at Brookfield Zoo? I have two girls: Erin, 11 and Dana, 8. They love it. They think it's really cool that their mom is a zoo keeper.

She has all the video games for it like Zoo Tycoon. My oldest wants to be a dolphin trainer.

2 What are the perks of having mom be senior primate keeper? Every year I do talks for their classes. Sometimes I take them behind the scenes. They aren't allowed to interact with the gorillas quite the way I do, but they do get to come back with me.

5 Which gorilla do you train and what is the most interesting experience you two have had? Binti Jua. Her name means "daughter of sunshine." I did ultrasounds on her when she was pregnant with Bakari. She was trained to present her belly for it. It was the first ultrasound on an ape to be done at Brookfield.

3 What is it like to train a gorilla? It's neat! They are so intelligent. You almost feel like you are in a battle of wits.

6 How many children does Binti Jua have at Brookfield? She's a mother and a grandmother. She has a daughter named Koola, 11, a son, Bakari, 2, and a 3-year-old granddaughter, Kamba. Her daughter Koola gave birth [to Kamba] on exhibit while the guests were here.

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4 Do your kids want to do what you do when they grow up? My youngest wants to be a zoo veterinarian.

Snapshots needed

When you and your kids are going places and you get a great shot, send it to us for a chance to have it printed in an upcoming edition of *Going Places*. We are looking for shots that feature your cute kids as well as what they are doing or where they are. Please e-mail hi-res digital files to chiparent@chicagoparent.com and include where and when the picture was taken and your child's name, age and what town you live in.



Addi Silha, 3, of Oak Forest, reads the summer issue of *Going Places*.

Secrets, shops and a strange **spy**store



If your kids love mysteries, they'll love the **Centuries & Sleuths Bookstores**, 7419 W. Madison St., Forest Park, (708) 771-7243.

Owner Augie Aleksy has been hosting "Meeting of Minds" for more than a dozen years and this year introduced a young people's reading group. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. Sunday and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday-Friday.

Have a magician-in-the-making? **The Chitown Magiland & Novelties**, 4926 W. Diversey Ave., Chicago, (888) 71-TRICK (718-7425) sells a variety of beginner magic tricks in addition to custom T-shirts and pictures. Sign up for one or more workshops on magic, clowning and balloons.

If you can't make it out to a mystery shop, how about having the "shop" come to you? **The Mystery Shop**, 551 Sundance Court, Carol Stream, (630) 690-1105, www.themysteryshop.com, is a traveling theater group that offers participatory mystery shows for kids in kindergarten and older.

Younger kids, those in kindergarten to second grade, use their knowledge of numbers and the alphabet to solve puzzles while those in third through sixth grades watch performers act out a "case" and work in groups to solve it. Middle school age kids can solve



a "crime." The Mystery Shop also offers workshops and storytelling options. Shows are from one to two hours and coupons are often available on the shop's Web site.

What can be more interesting than a store that advertises its own boredom? **The Boring Store**, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, (773) 772-8108, www.theboringstore.com, opened this year to curious shoppers in the Wicker Park area.

The store carries an assortment of oddities for undercover spies as young as 4. Proceeds from the store benefit the 826 Writing Center, one of several across the nation, that tutors and mentors kids ages 6 to 18. Parents will enjoy the clever writing on the mysterious packages that comically advertise what they do NOT contain. Kids will enjoy the sleuthing products such as laser trip wires, rearview glasses and voice traps.

Bethel Swift



Clockwise from left, Grace DeCarlo spies through periscope; banana cell phone disguise; magnetic retriever; the Spy Scope, all from the Boring Store.

PHOTOS BY LIZ DECARLO