



Dia de los Muertos

Dia de los Muertos is a cultural tradition that originated in Mexico from the Mesoamerican culture, approximately 3,000 years ago. On November 1st & 2nd every year, people join together to remember and celebrate the lives of loved ones who have passed on, ultimately recognizing that death is an ever-present part of life. Building an ofrenda allows us to share our memories, love, and grief with each other, and spend an evening welcoming the departed souls back for a brief moment.

What is an Ofrenda? An Ofrenda is the altar built to hold the offerings to the departed. Every ofrenda is unique, some are as simple as a photo and a candle, and some are large and elaborate, with many tiers and offerings. What matters is what it means to the people who create it. Some of the most common components are portraits to honor the deceased, representations of the four elements - candles (fire), food (earth), papel picado (wind), water - bright marigold flowers to mark the pathway to the ofrenda, and calaveras (sugar skulls) to represent a departed soul, and the sweetness of life.

I would like to invite anyone who wishes to participate to join in assembling an ofrenda to honor our departed animals.

If you would like, please submit a digital image of any of your beloved **personal**, or **zoo** animals who have left us, and they will be placed on an altar at the banquet on November 3rd. Please send images to elaine.corbus@reidparkzoo.org

