



San Diego Chapter board members and support

President

Yvette Kemp

Vice President

Matthew Akel

Secretary

Laurie Brogan

Treasurer

Aimee Goldcamp

Chapter Fundraiser

Kym Nelson

Chapter Liaison

Robert Cisneros

Support

Nicki Boyd

Bowling For Rhinos Coordinators

Aimee Goldcamp

Kym Nelson

Newsletter Publisher/Editor

Yvette Kemp

Website Keeper

Barry Fass-Holmes

The Keeper

The American Association of Zoo Keepers
San Diego Chapter
Quarterly Newsletter—Fall 2008

Message from the President

by Yvette Kemp, SD AAZK President

When I began as an educator and guide at the San Diego Zoo, I thought joining national AAZK would be a good way to meet people in the animal care profession and be up to date on conservation projects. I'd get information I could share with zoo guests.

When I became a keeper, I joined AAZK's local chapter and realized just how much AAZK can and will do. Yes, it continues to be a great way to meet animal care professionals and obtain information you can share with zoo guests, but it also gets you involved in a variety of projects. I discovered that my local AAZK chapter provided many educational opportunities and was involved with countless conservation organizations.

Did you know that every year SD AAZK donates thousands of dollars to conservation programs? Our largest event each year is Bowling for Rhinos. Every dollar raised goes to rhino conservation. This year, over \$15,000 were raised; last year over \$16,000. But SD AAZK participates in other programs too, including CA Wolf Conservation, Red Panda Project, Laurie Marker cheetah conservation program (did you see she was the cover feature in March's issue of *Smithsonian* magazine?), the Kibale Wood Project, San Diego River Project, Lions, Tigers, and Bears, and Project Wildlife. The list goes on and on. To me that's pretty amazing.

SD AAZK has about 75 members. That's 75 people who, through their SD AAZK membership, are assisting with conservation programs. That's 75 people I know who are involved in local, national, and international conservation efforts. That's 75 people who want to share and teach information about things that are important to them. To me, that's very cool. AAZK provides its members the opportunity to be a part of a much larger picture than most of us would be able to do on our own. To be involved in things that may seem too much to do by ourselves.

SD AAZK will continue to provide many opportunities like these to its members. Through membership involvement, we hope to accomplish more every year. Our next big goal is to host AAZK's national conference in 2011. It will be a large task and one that I am confident we can achieve with your help.

By the way, have you explored all parts of our website lately (www.sdaazk.org)? Well, if you haven't, you should! Our web keeper, Barry Fass-Holmes, has done a magnificent job of organizing and laying it out.

When you arrive at our home page, you encounter our mission statement and the email address where you can send questions or comments. Placed nicely to the left side of the page are links to our archives of past newsletters (all the way back to 2003), Bowling For Rhinos, conservation involvement, Keeper Enrichment Group (KEG—new), membership, our newsletter *The Keeper*, upcoming events, and links to other organizations concerned with animals.

The cool thing about the website is what you don't see right away. For example, in the BFR section you can "click here" to see pictures from our last BFR event! Then, if there are any pictures you like—say perhaps your favorite bowling team—click that picture, view an enlarged version, then print it! Phenomenal!

continued on page 3

Table of contents

President's Message	1
New Chapter for SD AAZK	2
Notes from AAZK	3
Life at the Front Desk (BFR)	4
Running for Rhinos	5
Three Are Company	6
ABMA conference debriefing	7
Calendar of Events	8

A New Chapter for SD AAZK

by Yvette Kemp, SD AAZK President

Thank you to all SD AAZK members who took the time to vote during our last election.

During this election we lost one of our past board members, Eileen Neff, and gained a new one, Kym Nelson. Although we'll miss Eileen and the experience she brought to the board, we look forward to Kym's enthusiasm and input. She will be taking over fundraising and assisting our chapter in achieving its financial goals. And, along with Aimee Goldcamp, Kym will coordinate our annual Bowling For Rhinos (BFR) event.

There were some other changes as well. Bob Cisneros stepped down from the president position to become our new chapter liaison. Bob already is a part of national AAZK's Board of Directors; having him as our direct line to national will be a great benefit.

Matt Akel has moved from Chapter Liaison and Fundraiser to Vice President, Nicki Boyd from Treasurer to Support, and Aimee Goldcamp from BFR Coordinator to Treasurer. Laurie Brogan has done a great job with Membership and as our chapter Secretary, so will remain in that position.

As for me, I have moved from VP to the president position. Along with my duties as President, I will continue to keep our members updated as Editor of our quarterly newsletter, *The Keeper*. And thanks to the help of our web keeper, Barry Fass-Holmes, the newsletter and website (www.sdaazk.org) will keep you up to date on our AAZK chapter's events.

Here are some of your newly elected board members' thoughts on SD AAZK.

Laurie L. Brogan, Secretary/Membership—I have been on the board now the last 3 or so years, and have enjoyed being a part of this organization. We have had some wonderful fund-raisers for many conservation groups... Even helping to raise funds for our own AAZK to help send keepers to conferences...

One of the best things about being a part of AAZK and being on the board is that I get to meet other keepers from other zoos and learn how they are caring for animals under their charge. We all take our jobs very seriously, but it is great to see how we all enjoy it too!!! It is hard work, both mentally and physically, but the rewards are unimaginable. To be able to care for and work with the collections we have and to get paid for it too! I could not have asked for more!

People often ask me, what else do you see doing on the AAZK board? Where do you see AAZK going? These questions always seem to catch me off guard. I don't always think about the future, even my own. But I do see me getting more involved within AAZK—learning how to raise funds, how to approach businesses for donations, even making contacts with other conservation groups that could use our support. Since my animal specialty is birds, I do seem to think more along the lines of fund-raising for local bird sanctuaries and oil rescue organizations.

I know I have a lot to learn. I am very thankful to be a part of SD AAZK's Board and to have the opportunities to learn and grow.

Matt Akel, Vice President—While our SD AAZK board members have recently altered our responsibilities by taking on new positions, our dedication to the chapter remains. As for me, I am thrilled to take on the role of the Vice President. With my experience in having to track down businesses to donate towards our great fundraisers, I will utilize this drive in pursuing exciting speakers for our members. Being able to provide you with educational and entertaining presentations within the realm of animal care and the environment is quite a challenge. As always, I will help support the entire board in our future endeavors such as hosting the 2011 national AAZK Conference in San Diego. This will be our opportunity as a chapter to shine and show how valuable our members are to the rest of the nation. I look forward to working with the board as well as many members willing to help with this exciting event.

continued on p. 3

Notes From AAZK—Elevating Animal Care: Utah 2008

by Bob Cisneros, SD AAZK Liaison

Utah AAZK will be hosting this year's AAZK national conference, September 24–28. The conference theme is focused on creativity, professionalism, and initiative. Conference curriculum will include workshops on professional development with a take-home value. Nutritionist Mark Edwards and San Diego Zoo's Animal Care Manager Pat Witman will teach a full day workshop on neonatal care.

The conference keynote address will be given by Dr. Robert Sapolsky, author of *A Primate's Memoir and Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers*. Other special speakers will include Amy Sutherland, author of *Kicked, Bitten and Scratched: Life and Lessons at the World's Premier School for Exotic Animal Trainers*.

You will notice that future AAZK conferences will place a greater emphasis on professional development with more and more "certified" workshops added as core features.

AAZK national has a new committee: the Conservation Committee. The mission of this committee is to connect AAZK members with opportunities to engage in habitat conservation and in situ wildlife initiatives, and to provide educational resources about environmentally responsible practices. The vision of the Conservation Committee is two-fold:

- Serve as a resource that will assist members in finding *in situ* opportunities with local, national, and international conservation projects and to initiate new conservation projects.
- Provide contact information to coordinate educational and development opportunities with conservationists.

Look for exciting things to happen nationally through this committee!

Message from the President (*continued*)

The newest part of the website is our KEG section. The KEG consists of keepers at the San Diego Zoo who get together to invent enrichment for the animals in their care, and to organize keeper presentations. You can read all about what they do and their accomplishments in this section of our website. Check it out and see how you can participate as well!

Then there's the important Upcoming Events section which provides updates on what your local AAZK chapter has planned. It also lists information about the next board meeting. We'd love to see you there; fresh ideas and faces are always welcome!

So if you haven't explored our website lately, you really should. It is something we are very proud of and hope will be useful to you.

A New Chapter for SD AAZK (*continued*)

Yvette M. Kemp, President—Belonging to AAZK has always been a great experience for me. It was how I met people when I first started at the Zoo, and then it was how I met people from other zoos. Later, it became a way to be involved in various projects.

I have been on the SD AAZK board for many years. Truthfully, I can't even remember how many. I've been a supporting board member, Secretary, newsletter Editor, Vice President, and now President. I guess I don't think of my involvement with AAZK in any kind of time measurement, but more of an experience measurement. It is truly a unique organization that works for its members by providing educational, conservational, and social opportunities.

As the new president of SD AAZK, I hope to continue that tradition. I am thankful that we have a wonderful board of directors who are enthusiastic and hard working. Without every single one of them, SD AAZK would not be what it is today.

If you are a member of SD AAZK, thanks for your help, support, and involvement. If you aren't, maybe it is something you should look into. It is a great overall animal care profession experience...whether you are on the board or a member.

Life at the Front Desk

by Aimee Goldcamp, SD AAZK Treasurer and BFR Coordinator

Bowling for Rhinos (BFR) is one of SD AAZK's most beloved events. Each year hundreds of supporters come out and display their bowling skills and desire to help out rhino conservation. This year was no different. On May 17, the masses found their way once again to the friendly confines of Kearny Mesa Bowl. The usual teams of "I Fling Poo," "The Cocks," and "The Boobies" were all in fine form.

For the last three years, I have had a blast at the check in desk. The front desk has always been the gathering place for fun and excitement. Now, it's a matter of opinion what fun and excitement might be when you're checking in a couple of hundred people and handling over \$10,000. What a rough gig. The hours at the desk can be long, but it's totally worth it. It's one of the best seats in the alley.

For three hours a total of 32 teams bowled their hearts out. It wasn't just the bowling that drew in the crowds. The raffle, 50/50 raffle, silent auction, and the days off with pay tempted all that attended.

The Human Resources team of the Zoological Society of San Diego continued their ongoing support of BFR. Their very gracious contributions of days off with pay, gift cards, and covering the cost of the bowling alley helped make SD AAZK a BFR standout at the national level.

We raised over \$15,000 this year and we're still counting.

We can never forget the people who work behind the scenes and contribute their voice, savvy, passion, and dedication. For as many years as I can remember, Ron Ringer has been the voice behind the mania at BFR. He is our own version of Bob Barker, but at a bowling alley. The backbone of the event, the fundraising crew of Kym Nelson and Matt Akel, resulted in a winning combination and all their hard work produced great results. There are always those that contain and handle the chaos with such grace and ease—Yvette Kemp and Laurie Brogan did just that. I believe they covered more ground in the alley than they do in one day at the zoo. I don't have any new words to describe the ever impressive fundraising efforts by Nicki Boyd. As the top fundraiser, for the umpteenth time, Nicki gets to throw out the first pitch at the July 28 Padres game dedicated to National Zoo Keeper Week. Way to go girlfriend! Although Bobby Earl was not able to attend, he was there in spirit and all of his prep work beforehand was much appreciated.

Honorable mentions have to go out to the grease pit—I mean the snack bar—and the ever beloved bar. Also to those who dropped off all the baked goods, and Donna Sweet who helped sell them, our tummies thank you.

I hope to see you all next year. Thank you for all the fun and dedication. BFR is only possible because of you. Keep the funny team names coming!

For pictures from SD AAZK's 2008 BFR event, visit <http://homepage.mac.com/sdaazk.org/bfr08pix.html>.



Running for Rhinos

by Kym Nelson, WAP Keeper

After 18 weeks of training Aimee Goldcamp and I ran the Rock 'N' Roll Marathon on June 1, 2008! That's right we ran 26.2 miles!

When Aimee suggested running the marathon back in December, I thought to myself it was such a ridiculous idea that I had to do it! At first the goal behind running was simply to "check that one off the list," but as training progressed we decided that we should run for a cause. With all the deserving conservation organizations around, we needed to decide which one to support. As it turns out, the decision was not difficult.

Aimee has been the coordinator of Bowling for Rhinos (BFR) for the past several years, and this year I volunteered to help with the registration and accounting portion of the event. While this was a very important duty for BFR's success, it also meant that Aimee and I would be unable to bowl. This led us to decide that we would run for rhinos rather than bowl. We set out with our pledge sheets and a marathon-training program, gathered the support of friends and family, and raised funds for rhino conservation!

We ran a "short" 5 miles every Tuesday night and a "long" run every Saturday morning with our running group. As much running as this was, it was not enough to train for the marathon. Training required we run an additional twice per week and cross train on a fifth day!

It was definitely a full time commitment during which we also found that running required a whole new wardrobe and several pairs of shoes! We also both developed a new appreciation of chiropractics, sports medicine, and massage as invaluable tools to achieving our goal and persevering over sore knees, hips, feet, and just about every other body part involved in running!

All of the time, money, and hard work paid off when we met in Balboa Park on June 1 at 6 a.m. Along with some 19,000 other runners, we lined up anxiously awaiting the 6:30 start. It was a great day for running with the weather cooperating and several Zoo and WAP employees cheering us on along the way!

We both finished with smiles on our faces and a cold beer waiting for us.

Thank you to everyone who supported us and congratulations to all the runners of the Rock 'N' Roll Marathon!



Three Are Company

by Nicki Boyd, Animal Care Manager, San Diego Zoo

What do you get when you mix an agouti, a Patagonian cavy, and a rock hyrax? Three best friends! Well, happy companions at least. This unique trio has an interesting story on how they became friends.

First let's start with Cutie the orange rumped agouti. He came to the Children's Zoo (CZ) from an exhibit. When he was born in the Zoo about 15 years ago, he was the size of a mouse and his mom wasn't taking care of him. The nursery is just the place for animals like Cutie! After some tender loving care from our nursery staff, he was on his way to becoming a great animal ambassador for our educational programs.

Cutie has entertained thousands of people about what life is like for his cousins in the rainforest. He loves going for walks, eating nuts and having his back pet by all his adoring fans. He feels a little greasy since his coat repels rain in the forests of South America where they live in the wild. Cutie is pretty old for an agouti, but because he gets such good care he has surpassed our expectations. He is in the rodent family and has large gnawing teeth, some of the strongest in Brazil; he is the only mammal that can crack Brazil nut pods' hard exterior just by using his teeth. He is also great at storing nuts like a squirrel. If he forgets to go back and eat them, then he has just planted another tree for the forest!

His roommate for the last two years has been Mara our Patagonian cavy, also known as the Mara. She too is a rodent from South America but looks like a cross between a rabbit, wallaby, and deer. Mara was actually found abandoned in a ditch up in Washington State. She was probably someone's pet and got out. Luckily a little boy found her and took her to the Humane Society. We were contacted to see if we could give Mara a home, and we happily agreed.

Mara likewise goes for walks and gets petting by the guests in the CZ. In the wild, she would live in marshes and grasslands of South America, primarily Patagonia (thus the name Patagonian Cavy). Mara has a little bit of a nasty habit though, although it is a great defense in the wild—when we go to pick her up, she will turn around and pee on you. Yikes, I know, but that is something we deal with more often than we like as zoo keepers.

Last but certainly not least is their newest roommate Dassie, our South African rock hyrax. He was born recently at the Zoo, but due to complications at birth his mother could not care for him and he too was raised in the nursery. Dassie is another name for hyrax in South Africa. He greets all the keepers and educators at the fence as he hops over with his prong hop.

Even though they look like a rodent, rock hyrax are not. Their closest living relative is the elephant. Now keep in mind that although hyrax are only a few pounds and elephant are thousands of pounds, they do have some similarities. Hyrax have tusks and foot structure similar to an elephant's, but hyrax are in their own family.

Dassie is only about one quarter of Cutie's size. He looks like a growth on Cutie's side while they're snuggled up. When Dassie is about to go for his walk, he greets his handler at the door. He can be seen running around and playing with both the cavy and agouti. Even though they are much older, they both seem to enjoy the young new roommate and actively chase him around and let him chase them back. He too can be seen on walks in the CZ. All three of them live behind the scenes in our Education String Building in the CZ. Often Cutie and Dassie sleep together in the hammock provided for them. They usually get out on walks alone, although sometimes they get a chance to cruise the CZ all together.

If it weren't for the excellent care from our nursery staff, these three might not have made it. The ability to raise so many different kinds of babies makes our nursery world famous! People call from zoos all over the world to ask us about raising rare and endangered species. We have such an amazing collection it gives our nursery staff a chance to raise many different species and share that information with our colleagues world wide. As with Mara, sometimes exotic pets are abandoned since they require special care. We were lucky enough to have room to give her a wonderful home with two strange but friendly companions.

The Animal Behavior Management Alliance Conference

by Nicki Boyd, Animal Care Manager, San Diego Zoo

The Animal Behavior Management Alliance's (ABMA) annual conference was held in Phoenix, Arizona, April 27 through May 2 this year. They had many favorites such as "Training 101" and "Advanced Training" workshops. It was also exciting to add an evening for discussion groups to allow for greater networking and more specific answers to training and enrichment questions. Here are some of the speakers and programs offered at the conference.

Keynote Speaker—Temple Grandin

Temple Grandin is an Associate Professor at Colorado State University and the bestselling author of *Animals in Translation* and *Thinking in Pictures and Other Reports from My Life with Autism*. Temple has traveled the world speaking about both animal behavior and autism.

Advanced Training—Dr. Randy Brill

Dr. Randy Brill is a recognized expert in marine mammal science, training, and behavior with over 30 years of experience.

Behavioral Enrichment Workshop—Marty Sevenich MacPhee

Marty Sevenich MacPhee currently is Curator of Behavioral Husbandry at Disney's Animal Kingdom in Florida. Marty has worked at Brookfield Zoo, Natural Encounters, Inc., and with the American Zoological Association as an instructor.

Emily Insalaco—Training 101

Emily Insalaco is Manager of Behavior Programs at the Denver Zoo. She has an animal care and training background that includes a license in wildlife rehabilitation, and works with marine mammals, a wide variety of birds, and various small mammal species.

We visited four animal facilities during the conference—the Phoenix Zoo, Wildlife World Zoo, Sonora Desert Museum, and Reid Park Zoo. Each of these treated us to behind the scenes tours, training sessions, great food, and show entertainment. As always, the conference was enlightening and great networking with fellow trainers.

For more information about future conferences or other ABMA information, visit the website at theabma.org.

Stay Tuned for National Zoo Keeper Week Review

by Yvette Kemp, President, SD AAZK

The second annual celebration of National Zoo Keeper Week (NZKW) was July 20–27.

Keepers from the Wild Animal Park and the Zoo celebrated NZKW by getting together for a continental breakfast and video viewing, Human Resources hosted Happy Hour, CHS Department hosted pizza lunch, and recognition at a Padres game.

During that week keepers were able to "brag" about their jobs while informing guests of what they do, why they do it, and how others can become keepers. By speaking to guests on the bus tours and sharing stories of their jobs at the "Keeper Tent," keepers inspired and awed young and old.

Our winter edition of *The Keeper* will be dedicated to the Zoo's and WAP's celebration of NZKW. Be sure to look for it in November!

San Diego AAZK

P.O. Box 632984

San Diego, CA 92108

Phone: (619) 231-1515, ext. 4672

Email: TheKeeperSDAAZK@cox.net

Web site: www.sdaazk.org

our contact
information



The Keeper is published quarterly by the San Diego Chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers, Inc. (SD AAZK), a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization with offices at P.O. Box 120551, San Diego, CA 92112; (619) 231-1515, ext. 4672. Address for editorial, advertising and membership inquiries—SD AAZK, P.O. Box 632984, Hillcrest Post Office San Diego, CA 92103. Reproduction or use without written permission of editorial or

pictorial content in any manner is prohibited. Copyright © 1996 by SD AAZK. Subscriptions are included with the membership in SD AAZK or by paying \$12 per year, U.S. currency only. *The Keeper* assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials. Manuscripts or artwork not accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope may not be returned. *The Keeper* makes every effort to ensure that the products and services advertised in our pages are consistent with the environmental ethic that we promote. Opinions expressed on these pages do not necessarily reflect the view of the SD AAZK, AAZK, Inc., or the board of either chapter or parent organization.

Send us your email address so we can notify you when the latest issue of *The Keeper* is available at our web site.

CALENDAR

LOCAL EVENTS

AUGUST 19, 2008: Board meeting—The Urban Grind, 3799 Park Blvd, 3:30 p.m. Open to all. Call our hotline (619 231-1515, ext. 4672) or visit www.sdaazk.org for more info.

SEPTEMBER 2008: Kobey's swap meet—TBA. Call our hotline (619 231-1515, ext. 4672) or visit www.sdaazk.org for more info.

OCTOBER 2008: Photo Caravan—TBA. Call our hotline (619 231-1515, ext. 4672) or visit www.sdaazk.org for more info.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

September 12–18, 2008: American Zoological Association Annual Conference—hosted by the Milwaukee County Zoological Gardens. Contact Cheryl Wallen at cwallen@aza.org.

September 24–28, 2008: 35th Annual American Association of Zoo Keepers National Conference—hosted by Utah Chapter AAZK, Salt Lake City, UT. For more info visit utahaazk.org/nationwww.al.htm.

October 5–14, 2008: 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress—Barcelona, Spain. More info at http://cms.iucn.org/news_events/events/congress/index.cfm.

October 6–10, 2008: Embassy 180 advanced animal training workshop: Velocity Animal Training—visit <http://embassy180.com/Child%20Pages/Animal/velocity.html>.

October 12–14, 2008: 2nd SSP Orangutan Husbandry Workshop, St. Louis Zoo—contact Terri Hunicutt for more info hunicutt@stlzoo.org.

October 27–November 1, 2008: Animal enrichment programs—for more info visit www.aza.org/prodev/.

Go to SD AAZK's web site, www.sdaazk.org, to find out more about upcoming events!