



To promote and establish good relationships among professional zoo keepers.

To promote and establish a means to stimulate incentive and greater interest in the zoo keeping profession.

To support deserving conservation projects that include educating the general public about the need for preserving our natural resources and animal life through these worthwhile efforts.

To establish materials beneficial to zoo keeper education.

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Content:	PG
President's Message	1
CA Coastal Cleanup	2
Partnership Award	2
Project Wildlife	3
SP Tiger Exhibit	3
Carlsbad Marathon	4
2012 Conference	4
Clouded Leopards	5
National Updates	6
CCF Golf Fundraiser	6
3rd Photo Contest	7
Calendar 2012/ 2013	8

The Keeper

The American Association of Zoo Keepers San Diego Chapter Quarterly Newsletter – Winter 2012

President's Message

By Yvette Kemp, SD AAZK President

It's incredible that yet another year has zoomed by!

When I reflect back on 2012, I feel great about what San Diego AAZK has accomplished. The biggest and most pleasant surprise was the Partnership Award we received from the San Diego River Park Foundation. SD AAZK and SDRPF have had a relationship for quite some time now, so it was an honor when they announced the award at their anniversary celebration in September.

There was so much happening this year that it wasn't until recently that I realized just how much our chapter does. Our chapter had a goal for 2012 to host 4 major fundraisers which would allow us to contribute to conservation projects both locally and internationally. We succeeded in holding fundraisers for sun bears, BFR, the Safari Park's tiger exhibit, and Project Wildlife. We also contributed to our guest lecture organizations, which included Wildlife SOS, Laurie Marker from the Cheetah Conservation Fund, Bat Conservation International, and the Clouded Leopard Breeding Consortium. Plus in December we'll be looking for Wish List items for the local Humane Society at our upcoming social event.

For 2013, we are looking at another exciting year. Again there will be several fundraisers: Carlsbad Marathon (Running for a Cause), BFR, and a dunk tank at the Zoo and Park, as well as our quarterly visit to Kobey's swap meet. In addition, we would like to become more involved in local projects. Last year we had fun helping SDRPF plant trees, Lions Tigers & Bears clear their roads, and helping the CA Wolf Center pull posts from their Mexican grey wolf exhibits. So, we will again check in with our local friends and help them out. We may also partake in the Balboa Park Earth Day festivities again next year. We have had fun with that in the past so it's something to think about!

And of course we all need to get together and hang out. Our goal is to do more of that in 2013. There is always National Zoo Keeper Week in July, but be sure to look for other social events. Your San Diego AAZK board members are figuring out fun ideas to bring our members together. We are open to suggestions!

Scholarship opportunities will continue to be available for continuing education and field work experience, and 2012 will mark the return of the members's Safari Park photo caravan.

Like 2012, we will host more lectures where we can learn about worthy local and international conservation projects happening in our world. Fortunately, we receive many calls from wonderful groups wishing to share their work with our members. So stay tuned for upcoming lecture announcements!

And as always, we always welcome you to join us at meetings and events. Visit our website, Facebook, call us, email us, grab a board member. San Diego AAZK is about you and conservation. Let us know what you'd like to see happen!

California Coastal Cleanup Day

By Lindsey King, SD AAZK Board Member, Sr. Mammal Keeper

Of California's 840 miles of coastline, 70 miles belong to us here in San Diego. 70 miles to clean, care for and protect, and that doesn't even include riverbed areas and watersheds. Coastal clean ups take place almost weekly in San Diego, and after nearly seven years in this beautiful city I was ashamed to admit I'd never participated in one! But as of September 15th 2012, that is no longer the case!

California Coastal Cleanup Day is an annual beach and inland waterway clean up event organized by the Coastal Commission and is the state's largest volunteer event. This year's clean up was the 28th annual and also the first time that the Living Coast Discovery Center (LCDC) participated as an official site.

LCDC sits on the Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge in San Diego Bay, and is home to some amazing creatures, even some rare and endangered ones like, burrowing owls, brown pelicans and least terns. Fellow board member, Hali O'Connor and I braved the nearly hundred degree heat that day to support our fellow SD AAZK member organization and see just what kind of crazy stuff we might stumble upon in our clean up adventure. It wasn't long before our trash buckets were full of metal, shoes, toys, and cigarette butts. Our recycling was toppled over with cans, plastic bottles, and pieces of glass, and the tire pile grew faster than any of us could have imagined!

It was a morning of hard work, but the results were definitely rewarding. In the future I hope to organize more SD AAZK participation in coastal clean ups, so if you were like me and have yet to check one out, I hope you'll join us! For information on local clean ups visit: <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/> or <http://www.ilacsd.org/>.



San Diego AAZK Receives Partnership Award

By Hali O'Connor, SD AAZK Board Member, Sr Mammal Keeper

On September 27th, San Diego AAZK's president Yvette Kemp, and I attended The San Diego River Park Foundation's 11th Anniversary Celebration Fundraiser. Unbeknownst to us, SD AAZK was presented with an award titled "Partner of the Year" for our Carbon Offsetting project that raised funds during our 2011 conference.

With these funds, we donated money, time, and labor to plant over 300 trees in January and February of 2012 along our precious San Diego River. Joan Embery herself made a special appearance to present this award to SD AAZK, who is near and dear to her heart, as she is one of the founding members. Joan also serves on the SDRPF board.

Great job to EVERYONE who helped make this happen!

To see more of the great work the SDRPF is doing, check out their website at www.sandiegoriver.org.

To see pictures from the days we planted trees, visit our Facebook page photo albums at www.facebook.com/sdaazk.



Project Wildlife Fundraiser

By Ann Knutson, SD AAZK Board Member, Sr Bird Keeper

On September 27, 2012 SD AAZK hosted an event to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Project Wildlife and raise funds to help Project Wildlife continue with their work. Since 1972, Project Wildlife's dedicated volunteers have given injured, orphaned and sick wild animals a second chance at life. This commitment to helping wild animals has grown tremendously and Project Wildlife is now one of the largest wildlife rehabilitation organizations in the country.

The event was at Winesteals in Hillcrest from 6p-9p. To celebrate Project Wildlife's 40th anniversary we asked bakeries to donate a cake decorated with a Project Wildlife theme. We had 5 beautiful cakes donated. Two were donated from SD AAZK board members, one was donated from Albertson's bakery, one from Jenny Wenny cakes, and one from The Grove Pastry Shop. All the cakes were beautiful, but after a night of voting the winner was clear. The Grove Pastry shop had donated a cake that was over 3 feet tall, and included flowers, butterflies, and humming birds. As the winning bakery, The Grove Pastry Shop won two tickets to Project Wildlife's biggest fundraiser, where they were able to continue to show off their yummy and beautiful creations.

Along with the cakes, there were wine flights, and a silent auction, with proceeds going to benefit Project Wildlife. Project Wildlife volunteers were on hand with animal ambassadors to talk about the work that Project Wildlife does throughout the year. We were so happy to help raise funds and awareness for such a wonderful local organization.



The Safari Park's Tiger Exhibit

By Yvette Kemp, SD AAZK President, Sr Hospital Keeper

Over the years, the San Diego chapter of AAZK has been involved in raising funds for various conservation organizations. There's the Red Panda Project, Grevy's Zebra Program, CA Wolf Center, and Bowling for Rhinos to name just a few. So when we wanted to thank San Diego Zoo Global's for their generous assistance during the 2011 National AAZK Conference, we decided to raise funds for the new tiger exhibit at the Safari Park. With the help of many people and a dunk tank at the Zoo and Park, we raised \$1,300 plus a \$1,000 matching challenge from Mark Stuart and Tim Rupe for a total of \$2,300. Add to it the generosity of an anonymous donor, an additional \$9,000 was added to every \$2,000 raised bringing our contribution to \$11,300!

In case you haven't heard, the tiger exhibit has now been completely funded! Thanks to over 5,000 donors, a donation challenge was met in October after an original donor pledged \$9 million if the Safari Park could raise \$2 million.

Ground breaking is expected to occur later this year with completion of the habitat in 2014.

We know keepers at The Safari Park are thrilled about the new home being built for the tigers. Thanks to everyone who was a part of this fabulous endeavor!

SD AAZK and The Carlsbad Marathon, Running for a Cause

By Ann Knutson, SD AAZK Board Member, Sr Bird Keeper

The San Diego chapter of AAZK is always looking for ways to reach out to people and educate them about conservation issues around the world as well as raise money for these causes. This year, we have become an official charity of the Tri-City Medical Center Carlsbad Marathon and Half, which will be held January 27, 2013.



As the year continues on, the race has become closer to selling out and we are very excited to have a few keepers and staff signed up to run. We also have been given our volunteer location for the day of the race. Our volunteers will be placed at a very pivotal point in the marathon on miles 13 and 14. We will be looking for volunteers to come out and help us cheer on the runners, as we get closer to the race we will begin sign-ups.

Up until the marathon, we will be organizing training runs. These runs will not only be great for those running the half marathon, but for anyone wanting to get some exercise with like-minded conservation folks. For a small donation, you can get some extra motivation in a group run and receive a well deserved little treat at the end of the run. The training runs will also allow people to explore new runs around San Diego County. Please check www.sdaazk.com for information on the training runs and volunteering.

2012 National AAZK Conference

By Lindsey King, SD AAZK Board Member, Sr. Mammal Keeper

This year's 39th Annual AAZK National Conference was hosted by the Rosamond Gifford Zoo chapter in Syracuse, NY. The conference site was the Sheraton Syracuse University, tucked into the beautiful SU campus, and the September timing made it a perfect for tree-peeping as the fall leaves began to turn.

As the conference format continues to shift toward a more workshop based learning experience, this year's schedule offered 18 papers on topics ranging from training, conservation, innovations and enrichment. One of which was San Diego's Zoo's very own, Crystal Schalmo, as she shared of her adventures working with Sun Bears in Borneo.

Twenty-two workshops highlighted husbandry and management programs, zoonotic disease and quarantine protocols, team building and techniques for creating a successful chapter and so much more! Zoo Day at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo was packed with training demonstrations, behind the scenes tours and just enough time to see everything. Of course there was no shortage of hospitality suites, networking and fun to be had throughout the week as well.

The end of the conference was capped off with a Bowling for Rhinos Pep Rally that brought together leaders in conservation including representatives from Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, International Rhino Foundation, and Action for Cheetahs in Kenya. National BFR Coordinator, Patty Pearthree shared the successes of BFR over the years, highlighting that since 1990, BFR events have raised over \$4 million dollars to support conservation.

Cheers to the Rosamond Gifford chapter for hosting a wonderful event. I'm sure they were very relieved to pass the torch on to North Carolina AAZK for 2013.



Spotting Clouded Leopards

By Karyl Carmignani, San Diego Zoo



They are the smallest of the big cats, leading a reclusive, arboreal lifestyle. But recently, supporters of the San Diego chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers (SD AAZK) got a special up-close encounter with three clouded leopards during a presentation with Senior Animal Trainer Maureen O. Duryee. She was inspired to travel to Thailand after hearing a talk by Joan Embery, who encouraged keepers to visit the homelands of the animals in their charge. The forces of good karma and good people coalesced into a three-week adventure to Kheow Khao Open Zoo, in Chonburi, Thailand, where Maureen got hands-on experience with their clouded leopard breeding program.

Our group met at the Backstage Pass area at the San Diego Zoo, where we were treated to a talk and clouded leopard climbing demonstration. Cameras clicked away! We then headed to the Rondavel for light refreshments, a silent auction, and a memorable slide show where Maureen shared some of the challenges and cultural nuances she encountered, as well as fabulous short videos of the endangered cats in action.

Despite the heat and humidity, Maureen worked in Thailand with the clouded leopards for long hours by day, followed by social events where she embraced Thai culture. “The people were all so polite,” she said. “But they kept asking me my age.” Palms pressed together at the chest with a bow accompany a greeting; younger people bow deeper than older people as a sign of respect. “Once I told them how old I was, I barely had to move my head!” said Maureen with a laugh.

Mentor Ken Lang of the Smithsonian’s National Zoo Front Royal Breeding Center, who has conducted research at the Open Zoo for many years, helped her navigate the unfamiliar culture. However, she was not willing to try a snack of bamboo worms, lightly warmed in the microwave, as another colleague savored on a break. (It didn’t look too tasty on the video either.) Maureen had the foresight to bring gifts for her hosts, but soon realized that the only items they really enjoyed had pandas on them. “Next time I’m bringing all panda stuff!” she said.

Her presentation was engaging, humorous, and most importantly hopeful for the endangered clouded leopard. “Conservation is not just about working with animals,” said Maureen. “It’s important to connect with local people, listen to their perspective, and earn credibility so ideas can be exchanged freely. We have the common goal of saving these animals, which we can accomplish together no matter what language we speak.” Happily, the silent auction at her presentation earned \$630 for the cause. SD AAZK also contributed an additional \$200.

But being whisker-close to the beautiful clouded leopards was my favorite part.



Updates from National AAZK

By Yvette Kemp, SD AAZK President; shared with you from Bob Cisneros, President of AAZK, Inc.

National AAZK is sharing more information with its chapter leaders through a monthly newsletter. We will be sharing much of this information with you on our website at www.sdaazk.org under the title *About San Diego, AAZK*. We invite you to learn more details of what is happening throughout the organization. Here is some of the latest news.

The new Town Hall Meeting format that began at the 2011 National Conference in San Diego has now been incorporated as a regular part of the conference program. The format is an open style, where conference attendees can dialogue with AAZK Executive Members and is designed to increase communication between AAZK Board Members and the membership. Notes and the power point presentation from the Syracuse 2012 Town Hall meeting are available on our website at www.sdaazk.org under the *About San Diego AAZK*.

At AAZK, our goal is to provide our leadership with excellent tools to help you achieve success at the Chapter level. Our investment in your development will help determine the future of our organization. Hear Daphne Koller talk about what is being learned from online education on our San Diego website. AAZK, Inc. is also partnering with NP Training Works to bring professional development to a new level through distance learning. The learning format will incorporate certificates, events, current and completed professional workshop courses, resources, and more. They will begin by transforming past workshops along with fundamental training. More details to follow soon!

Bowling for Rhinos Update: The highest amount of funds ever raised in a single year for BFR was back in 2007 when AAZK Chapters raised **\$316,395**. This year we have broken that record by raising over \$318,000!! Nice work everyone!

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San Diego AAZK's 3rd Annual Photo Contest



This is a digital photo contest highlighting photography's vital role in capturing conservation issues worldwide. Photos will be judged on the basis of content, overall impact and artistic quality. Each photo entry must tell a "good news" story about conservation and the environment.

Official Photo Contest Rules:

- All entries must be received online between July 1, 2012 and December 31, 2012.
- Each photo must be named and be accompanied by 2-5 sentences describing a related environmental issue.
- Each photo must be submitted in JPEG format and be no larger than 800 x 600 pixels. However, the original file must be larger for publication purposes.
- Each contestant may submit up to three photos with a single donation of \$10.60 payable using PayPal link at www.sdaazk.org. The link will be made available on July 1st.
- Once your donation has been made, you will be able to submit your photo entries to sdaazkphotocontest@gmail.com
- The prizes include: Best In Show (1) - \$75, People's Choice (1) - \$75
- Judges will select the Best In Show winner. The People's Choice winner will be selected by the highest number of "likes" on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/sdaazk>
 - Photos will be uploaded to our Facebook 2012 Photo Contest album prior to voting.
- The judges are Ken Bohn-Photographer for the Zoological Society of San Diego, Carmi Penny-Curator of the Zoological Society of San Diego, Yvette Kemp-President of SD AAZK and John Dunlap-Director of the San Diego Zoo.
- Winning photos will be announced February 6, 2012.
- The winning photos will be displayed at SD AAZK events, the SD AAZK website, the SD AAZK Facebook page and possibly printed on the cover of The Forum (National publication of AAZK)
- By entering this photo contest, the winning photographers give SD AAZK permission to publish their photos in any of its publications or other printed materials and on its web site in the context that they are the Best In Show and People's Choice photos from the 2012 SD AAZK photo contest.
- For other uses SD AAZK will seek permission from the photographers.
- The monies raised from this year's contest will go to:

Clouded Leopard Project
Supporting Clouded Leopard Conservation and Research

For questions, please contact

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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.

CALENDAR 2012 visit www.sdaazk.org for updates

- **Saturday, December 8, 2012: Swap Meet Fundraiser.** Time: 6:00 am – 1:00 pm. Location: Kobey's swap meet on Sports Arena Blvd. Volunteers and donations needed. Call (619) 231-1515 ext 4672 to participate.
- **December 11, 2012: Humane Society Social Event.** Join us as we donate items for the Humane Society's Wish List! Where: Sally and Henry's Dog House Bar & Grill 3515 5th Avenue, San Diego, a pet friendly eatery. Time: 5:00 – 8:00 pm. Bring: a gift for a Humane Society animal and your friendly dog companion to hang out with. Highlights: Receive 10% off your bill in addition to any specials already running, happy hour prices from 4 - 8 p.m, AND you can bring your furry friend (they have a backyard area your dog can hang out in with other dog friends). Be sure to let the staff know you are with AAZK so you will receive the discounts! Additional food specials will be available!
- **December 31, 2012: SD AAZK AAZK's 3rd Annual Photo Contest Deadline! See flyer on page 8 for details.**

CALENDAR 2013

- **January 15 – January 30, 2013: SD AAZK Friends can vote for their favorite photo contest contestants by "liking" pictures in the Photo Contest Album!**
-
- **January 27, 2013. Carlsbad Half Marathon.** Details on how to participate as a runner or volunteer on our website!
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- **February 6, 2013: 3rd Annual Photo Contest Winners announced.**

Visit our website at www.sdaazk.org for the latest updates.

- To see pictures from our events, visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sdaazk