



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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The Keeper

American Association of Zoo Keepers San Diego Chapter Quarterly Newsletter – Summer 2016

President's Message

By Ann Knutson, AAZK San Diego President

As I sit down to write this little note, it is the last day of National Zoo Keeper Week (NZKW). This year I saw many more institutions sharing pictures and stories about how amazing their Zoo Keepers are; some were silly posts and some were more serious, but all of them were sincere in the thanks given to the keepers for their hard work.

As we celebrated NZKW here in San Diego, I came across a photo of Vickie Kudor, from the San Diego Zoo, and Goolara, an albino Koala from 1988 and it proved to be one of my favorite pictures from the event. The photo was part of the AAZK San Diego slide show that was inspired by the centennial celebration at the Zoo. Featuring photos from keeper's first days of zoo keeping, this slide show was viewed during the National Zoo Keeper Week luncheon at the San Diego Zoo and Safari Park.

Vickie has worked at the San Diego Zoo for over 40 years, and the photo of her and Goolara is one of her favorites. Over the last 40 years working at the Zoo she has seen many changes, but through all the changes her dedication to the animals in her care has never wavered. When asked her to share the photo she said she "still looks forward to getting to her animals every morning to take care of them."

Seeing Vickie's picture reminded me of where I started as a keeper, how much I have learned along the way and how much more there is to learn. I think that is one of my favorite parts of this career we all have chosen; it never stops changing. So, I hope that during this NZKW you felt the gratitude due to you and were inspired by the many other amazing keepers out there!



National Zoo Keeper Week

By Kristen Craig, AAZK San Diego Event Coordinator

Animal facilities around San Diego had a great National Zookeeper Week! We kicked off the week on Tuesday July 19th with a fun AAZK SD coordinated “Art with Rachel” night at The Rose Wine Bar in South Park. The room was packed with keepers enjoying food, wine, and learning how to paint an adorable giraffe. Check out the photo to see how impressive your co-workers’ painting skills are!



At the San Diego Zoo and Zoo’s Safari Park, Human Resources threw pizza parties on Wednesday to show their appreciation for the keepers. AAZK San Diego’s Vice President, Lindsey King, put together slideshows for each party of pictures sent in by the keepers highlighting the beginning of their careers as keepers. We had hundreds of photos sent in that spanned many decades! (By the way, if you didn’t get a chance to send your pictures in, start setting them aside for NZKW 2017!) At the Zoo, Carmi Penny and Nicki Boyd gave speeches showing their dedication to and appreciation for all the hard work the keepers have done throughout the year. Similarly, Randy Rieches spoke at the Safari Park, highlighting the great job all the keepers are doing there.

Jessica Sheftel, enrichment supervisor, had volunteers help out with making the keepers feel special during National Zookeeper Week. Plastic boards had holes drilled in them to spell out “THANK YOU KEEPERS”. Volunteers then asked guests to write thank you notes to the keepers on brightly colored paper. The notes were rolled up and stuffed into the drilled holes. The macaws in the Children’s Zoo had a wonderful time “appreciating” their keepers as they worked to pluck every last bright color from the board!



Wednesday saw another AAZK San Diego event at the Homebrewer in North Park. Keepers were given happy hour pricing throughout the afternoon and night, so long as they came in wearing any sort of animal apparel. It was a nice way to relax and beat the heat with a cold beer while mingling with other animal professionals.

Throughout the Zoo during National Zookeeper Week, keepers were encouraged to choose random families or groups of guests to give special experiences to. We asked the keepers to do VIP or behind the scenes tours, training sessions, or keeper talks with the groups they chose. Instead of talking mainly about the specific species and animals they were working with, keepers focused their talks on zookeeping, their background, and the path that led them to being a zookeeper at the San Diego Zoo. We received wonderful feedback from the keepers on how great it felt to create these moments, not only for their guests, but also for themselves. One lucky keeper even unknowingly chose a family with a young boy whose dream it is to become a keeper one day. His whole day was made by the experience and hopefully his path was solidified and he will one day join the ranks of zookeepers

around the world! We would be proud to have him. The surprise tours were such a hit that we will be working to extend them to the Safari Park during NZKW 2017!

We finished off the week with a bonfire and s'mores roast at De Anza Cove. AAZK SD provided the firewood and s'mores; the keepers provided the fun! It was a great turnout and the weather was perfect. Thanks to help from a local Cub Scout troop, with whom we shared our fire pit, we had the biggest bonfire on the beach! AAZK San Diego President, Ann Knutson, and Secretary, Kym Janke, along with other AAZK SD members took the time to chat with the scout leaders and Cub Scouts about the zookeeping field and what it is like to work closely with animals. The troop leaders even mentioned having keepers be guest speakers at scout events in the future!



Grace (AAZK San Diego's Conservation Partner Officer) adds that this year Sea World chose a few of their keepers to share their stories in regards to how they became keepers. Keepers were chosen from the Shamu show, Otter exhibit, Aquariums, Wild Arctic and Penguins. If you didn't get a chance to see the videos on Facebook can still find them on Youtube! Treats and snacks were also brought in and given out throughout the week.

Some of the links for the videos are as follows:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZFBOOr5FRE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LS4YNBt8YN8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbeG8xDBHSY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYtNmMYW97w>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWkA6e4YnVw>

While the NZKW events were a success and it was great to feel appreciated this week, it was also uplifting to inspire other people in regards to animals and wildlife conservation. Seeing the impact we have on each other and the public alike is appreciation enough for all the hard work we do as animal care professionals. If we can open one mind or inspire one person, we can change the world for the animals we care for and the conservation efforts we support. Cheers keepers! We rock!



Note: In addition to NZKW the International Council of Zoo Keepers will be celebrating Zoo Keepers all over the world this October 4th. Save the date and let's get planning!!!

Shirley Busch Professional Development Grant 2016

By Amanda Chapin, AAZK San Diego's Social Media Officer

After years of searching for graduate level classes for a husbandry professional, I was ecstatic to be introduced to the AZA classes: graduate level courses that are designed specifically for animal husbandry professionals. Thanks in part to the Shirley Bush grant, I was able to take two AZA classes this year: Crocodylian Biology and Captive Management in St. Augustine, Florida, and Aquarium Design, Husbandry, and Leadership in Chicago, Illinois. The classes were both full of intensive lectures, demonstrations, hands on interaction, and field trips led by the foremost leaders in their field.

The Crocodylian Biology and Captive management course was held at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm, an AZA accredited institution which has been in operation since 1893 and boasts the most diverse crocodylian species collection in the United States. If that wasn't enough, it was taught by the who's who of the crocodylian husbandry and research fields. The class was over a week long and we needed every hour of it. The course was packed with everything from crocodylian biology 101, training exercises, veterinary exercises, necropsy, breeding troubleshooting, to exhibit design. We wrapped up days in lecture rooms with group projects and socializing.

The Aquarium Design, Husbandry, and Leadership course was held at the Shed Aquarium in Chicago, Illinois. The Shed Aquarium opened in 1930 and has been one of the largest, most attended, and most innovative aquariums in the United States since. This was the first year the class was held, so I imagine it will only get better as the course is fine-tuned every year. Similar to the Crocodylian Biology and Captive Management class, we covered biology, exhibit design, chemistry, training, shipping, medical procedures, handling, safety, management style, plus a little of everything else in between. We spent our mornings in lectures, our afternoons dissecting the Shed Aquarium, and our evenings picking each other's brains for keys to husbandry success. I am so happy there are graduate level courses available specifically for husbandry professionals. These classes aren't just valuable for their content, but for the opportunity to connect with peers and the foremost professionals in the field. I highly recommend these classes for any animal care professional who wants to continue their education. If I had a reason to justify it, I would go to these classes every year.

Thank you AAZK San Diego for helping me with this amazing educational opportunity with the 2016 Shirley Busch Professional Development Grant. I cherish my experience in these classes and I look forward to my next opportunity to take another one.

Editors Note: Make sure your AAZK San Diego membership is up to date so that you can apply for and possibly benefit from the Shirley Busch grant yourself! If you are interested in learning more about the exciting array of AZA courses, find all the information at <https://www.aza.org/courses>.





Wild About Giraffe

Fundraiser and Beer Release Party

Wednesday, August 31st
from 4-8pm

Intergalactic Brewing Company-
9715 Carrol Centre Rd, San Diego

\$20 entry- Includes keepsake glass and
pour of "Tall 'n' Blonde" Hefeweizen

* 21 and Over *

Tickets available online at:
sdaazk.org

**All proceeds to benefit giraffe conservation
efforts in Kenya**



GLOBAL
CONSERVATION
FORCE



Giraffe are disappearing... the truth is out there

Join us on August 31st as we raise our conservation glasses to those beautiful tall blondes of Africa!

The 2nd annual Wild About Giraffe fundraiser provides an opportunity to mingle with friends and have a fun night, all while raising awareness of the challenges reticulated giraffes face in the wild.

This year we are very excited about debuting #TallNBlonde hefeweizen, which is a collaboration between Pacific Plate Brewing Co. and Global Conservation Force. #TallNBlonde is a crisp and citrus infused #hefeweizen dedicated to the protection and survival of wild #giraffe populations facing a decline due to poaching and habitat loss.

Reticulated giraffe range from north-central Kenya to southern Somalia and Ethiopia. This iconic animal is integral to their ecosystem, opening up habitat for other wildlife, spurring growth of new acacia, and dispersing seeds. In the past 15 years, reticulated giraffe populations have declined drastically from 28,000 to 4,700, primarily due to habitat loss and competition with livestock for resources.

Monies raised at this event will go towards giraffe conservation efforts in Kenya.

Don't miss this exciting fundraising event! All the event details and ticket information can be found on the AAZK San Diego website at <http://sdaazk.com/2016-events/wild-about-giraffes-fundraiser-aug-31/>

Purchase your tickets today!

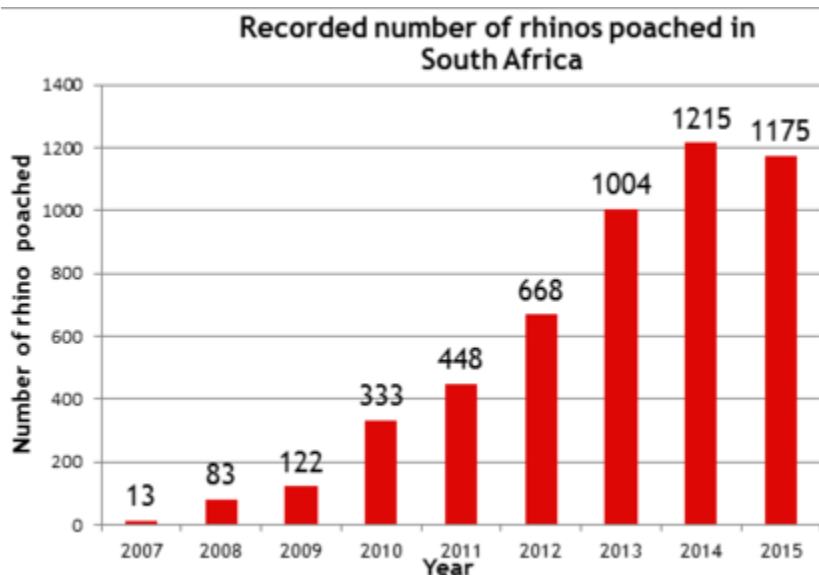
Bowling for Rhinos – A Call For Help

By Yvette Kemp, AAZK SD Treasurer/ Sr. Hospital Keeper

Every year since 1990, AAZK San Diego has participated in what is the flagship event for all AAZK chapters: Bowling for Rhinos. On June 11th, AAZK San Diego hosted its 26th Bowling for Rhinos fundraising event at Kearny Mesa Bowl in Clairemont. Thanks to the participation of 31 bowling teams and approximately 200 participants, sponsors and community businesses, together we raised \$20,187 for rhino conservation.

With so many species in peril throughout the world, why choose the rhino? Rhinos have existed for over 50 million years but due to habitat destruction and fragmentation, and what has become an out of control demand for their horns, there is the very real possibility that they may become extinct within our lifetime. Actually, several subspecies have recently disappeared and it is up to us to stop this trend.

As hard as it may seem to believe during this day and age of awareness and conservation, African white and black rhino killings have increased for the 6th year in a row with at least 1,338 rhinos killed in 2015 according to the IUCN's African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG). That is the highest level since the current crisis began in 2008. Since 2008, poachers have killed at least 5,940 African rhinos alone! While Africa does have the largest numbers of rhinos on the planet, they are also the ones being hit the hardest in the illegal wildlife trade.



In Asia, rhino populations are not doing much better, with the Javan and Sumatran species listed as critically endangered and a subspecies of the Javan rhino declared extinct in 2011. While they all cling to survival, the greater one-horned rhino has had a bit of a reprieve and even had their status changed from endangered to vulnerable.

Rhinos have become a symbol of conservation and by preserving them we also have the ability to save the many other species that live within their habitats. That is why AAZK San Diego has made it a point to make BFR our most important fundraiser every year. While amounts raised each year may vary, the commitment to the cause and the species never change.

We were very excited when this year's BFR Committee included some new participants who brought great ideas and energy to the event. Besides the usual bowling, which is always fun in itself, we continued the Best Costume Contest and Dancer tradition, the great silent auction and bake sale. New to the event were the photo ops and the ever so popular Mystery Goodie Bags. SDZG elephant keeper, Ron Ringer has also been a yearly staple. With his humor and ability to keep things moving right along, we are able to get through a fun evening of activities and fundraising. We can't thank him enough for his commitment to the event.

We had many winners during the evening too. Thanks the San Diego Zoo Global's HR Department, 4 lucky SDZG employees each won a day of annual leave just for participating at BFR. Katie Miller from Zoo Animal Connections, Jon Rolfs – Safari Park Mammal Dept, Angelica Chaves –Zoo Security, and Justin Tibbott – Safari Park Horticulture, were all SDZG employees who will be enjoying a little extra time off.

There were great costumes to pick from during the Best Dressed Team contest, but in the end it was the Horns Are The New Black team that took the trophy with Rhino Wars bringing up a close 2nd. And for the 2nd year in a row, everyone's favorite dancing SDZG volunteer, Toby Appel, won the coveted best dancer award. Peppermint Narwhale won the design for this year's BFR t-shirt with a colorful logo that helped raise more funding for BFR.

The evening's biggest winner was Jennifer Tibbot who not only raised the highest funds of \$975, but will also be entered into National AAZK's raffle to win a trip to Africa's Lewa Conservancy or Indonesia's International Rhino Foundation to see firsthand how rhino conservation is helping this incredible species. As usual, AAZK San Diego's President Ann Knutson was close behind in her fundraising abilities but was beat out by Jenny's determination to make a difference.

And of course, none of this would even be possible without help from everyone who participated. Many thanks to all the bowlers who each raised at least \$40 to help rhino conservation and to the volunteers who actually contact us well before the event to start signing up to help. Thank you to the Focusing on San Diego Zoo photographers for their awesome photos! To all the businesses in the community that donated items to the silent auction and our wonderful bowling lane sponsors: Vulcan Materials Company, Nerd Fitness, Café On Park, and San Diego Zoo Global, thank you. To see the complete list of BFR 2016 sponsors, please visit our website's Events, BFR Results section or our BFR Facebook album.

AAZK San Diego is a proud participant of Bowling for Rhinos. We hope that again next year you too will join us and help us make a difference in rhino conservation!

The logo for "Cafe on Park" shows a black silhouette of a fork and a knife on the left. To the right, the text "Cafe on Park" is written in a serif font.

619•293•7275
cafeonpark.com
3831 Park Boulevard • San Diego 92103



Vulcan
Materials Company
WESTERN DIVISION



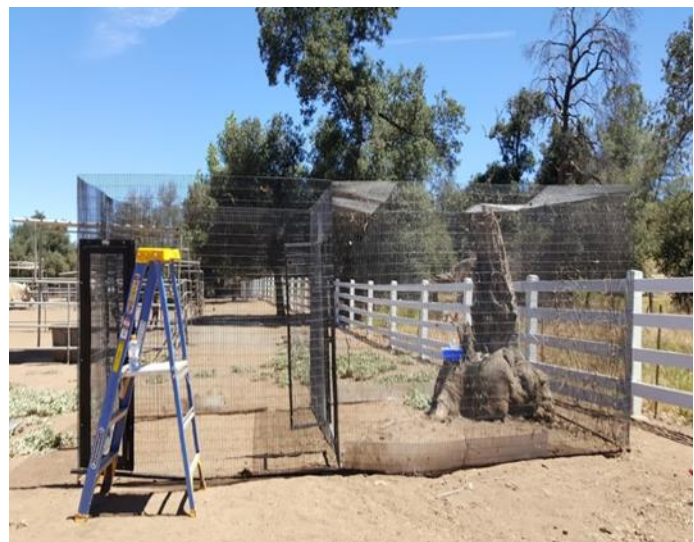
NERD Fitness



Horses of Tir Na Nog Volunteer Day

By Grace Porreca, Conservation Partner Officer

This past June 17th, five volunteers from AAZK San Diego went out to Horses of Tir Na Nog to help this wonderful non-profit horse sanctuary. Horses of Tir Na Nog's mission states: "Our goal is to create a safe-haven for horses that have few options remaining, thereby ensuring them a better quality of life. At Horses of Tir Na Nog we help build connections between people and horses in the San Diego community, increasing awareness about responsible horse ownership and care through education." Our volunteers quickly saw that horses were not the only animals that call this sanctuary their home. The major project we helped with was to put together an aviary for their Guinea Fowl. Materials had been donated but labor was needed and that is what AAZK San Diego was able to provide! Prior to the hard work of our volunteers, the Guinea Fowl were kept in a pen that they were hoping to use for a few of their rescued pigs. Thank you AAZK San Diego volunteers for gladly accepting the challenge, with great success. If you missed this fun filled day and are interested in how you can still help please visit their website at www.horsesoftirnanog.org



Golf for Wildlife

By Jeremy Fontaine, Social Media Officer

Golf for Wildlife FUNDRAISING TOURNAMENT *Coronado Golf Course, June 5, 2016*

A round of applause...

To you! Thank you to everyone who came out and played on Sunday, June 5th at the Coronado Golf course. We had 87 people, an increase from last year! Not only that, but we raised \$3,000 for the Fiji Conservation Fund, the Sumatran Rainforest and all of the animals and plants associated and we will be providing a \$500 scholarship for a graduate student during research on plant or animal conservation. This is a total of \$3,500 raised! This was a very exciting year. We are growing, we are learning and we are excited to continue to spread the message about conservation. To quote Harriet Tubman, "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." This quote about passion rings true for Golf for Wildlife. We intend to continue our quest to inspire, conserve and bring people together to protect wildlife. Wildlife conservation might not be easy, relaxing or fun, but saving animals by playing some golf surely can be!



Who we are helping...

Fiji Iguanas, part of the Fijian Iguana Conservation Fund at the San Diego Zoo Global, are in urgent need of our help. The Fiji iguana is currently listed as 'Endangered' by the International Union for Conservation (IUCN), due to habitat loss and the existence of almost identical looking invasive species. Many locals mistakenly kill Fiji iguanas believing they are completely different species. Funds raised will benefit genetic research of several new species recently identified on various islands throughout Fiji. Genetic research helps identify markers in iguanas to highlight their unique genotype, which is used to examine the genetic diversity within and between species and to also look for hybrids.

The Leuser Ecosystem in Sumatra has been identified as one of the foremost "irreplaceable areas" on Earth. It is the only place in the world capable of supporting the Critically Endangered Sumatran Rhino, Sumatran Tiger, Sumatran Elephant, and Sumatran Orangutan. Rainforest

Trust and Golf for Wildlife are working with a local partner to purchase land within the Kluet Watershed of Leuser to safeguard 184,795 acres and to block access to the proposed 2-million-acre Gunung Leuser National Park.

Taking action to secure the Kluet Watershed and to create a protective zone beside Gunung Leuser National Park is critical to halting poaching and the expansion of oil palm and rubber plantations in the area. Your support will help us to strategically purchase and protect precious acres of the Kluet Watershed, train and equip wildlife patrol units, and provide a safe haven for Sumatra's critically endangered wildlife.



To our Sponsors, you are the best!

We cannot thank everyone enough who helped out this year for the 3rd Golf for Wildlife fundraising event. We received donations in so many ways. Through voluntary time, golf participants, funding, and product donations; we thank you so much!



AAZK San Diego Membership Form

- Check here if you are renewing
- Professional (must already be an AAZK National; adding local San Diego membership w/access to workshops) \$25.00
- Full (must already be an AAZK National; adding local San Diego membership) \$15.00
- Supporter (local AAZK San Diego Membership Only) \$15.00
- Institutional (organizations/institutions; requires board approval) \$50.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ Zip _____

Email _____

Zoo Affiliation _____ Job Title _____

Work area _____ Species you work with _____

Professional AAZK San Diego Member. Benefits include:

- Access to online animal professional courses offered through CollaborNation Collaborative Learning Environment
- Free admittance to all our hands-on workshops and events
- Opportunity to sign-up for hands-on workshops before it is offered to others
- One-year subscription to our quarterly newsletter, *The Keeper*
- Free admission to special presentations by guest speakers
- Support of local and international conservation projects
- Free admission to our annual AAZK SD photo caravan at the Safari Park
- Ability to participate in local board member elections
- All National AAZK membership benefits

Full AAZK San Diego Members. Benefits include:

- One-year subscription to our quarterly newsletter, *The Keeper*
- Free admission to special presentations by guest speakers
- Support of local and international conservation projects
- Free admission to our annual AAZK SD photo caravan at the Safari Park
- Ability to participate in local board member elections
- All National AAZK membership benefits

AAZK San Diego Supporter. Benefits include:

- One-year subscription to our quarterly newsletter, *The Keeper*
- Free admission to special presentations by guest speakers
- Support of local and international conservation projects

Please fill out form and send to:

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CALENDAR 2016 visit www.sdaazk.org for updates

Aug 24, 2016: AAZK Meeting.

You are invited to participate and join us at the next AAZK Board meeting at 5:00 pm at the San Diego Zoo's Warner Building Board Room. Our meetings are open to all and we welcome everyone's input and participation. For more information, email AAZK San Diego president at annkntsn@yahoo.com

Aug 31, 2016: Wild About Giraffe. Join us as we partner with Global Conservation Force to raise our conservation glasses to those beautiful tall blondes of Africa! The 2nd annual Wild About Giraffe fundraiser provides an opportunity to mingle with friends and have a fun night, all while raising awareness of the challenges reticulated giraffes face in the wild. Details and tickets can be found on our website.

Sept 17, 2016: California Coastal Cleanup. AAZK San Diego invites you to join us as we participate in the 32nd Annual CA Coastal Clean Up Day on Saturday, September 17th. Join 8,000 volunteers for this countywide cleanup project as we beautify 100+ cleanup sites countywide. At last year's event, volunteers removed 190,000 pounds of debris and participated in beautification projects like invasive plant removal, trail building, painting, and planting. Our AAZK San Diego group will be cleaning the North Imperial Beach YMCA Surf Camp area from 9:00 am until noon. Space is limited, please register today on our website!

Details about these and all our events available on our website at www.sdaazk.org!

Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sdaazk