



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.

AAZK San Diego Board Members

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Kristen Craig – San Diego Zoo Vice President, Membership, Event Coordinator

Yvette Kemp – San Diego Zoo Treasurer

Kym Janke – San Diego Zoo Secretary, Newsletter Editor

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Kim Nelson – San Diego Zoo Volunteer Coordinator

Bobby Brett – San Diego Zoo Member Liaison

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The Keeper

American Association of Zoo Keepers San Diego Chapter Quarterly Newsletter – Spring 2018

President’s Message

By Ann Knutson, AAZK San Diego President

As many of you know we have a monthly meeting that is typically used to discuss upcoming events and develop new ideas. We love when we have new members join us, as they always bring new ideas. Unfortunately, members other than those currently serving on the board rarely join us since business meetings are not always synonymous with a fun afternoon! We want to ensure all our members that although business matters are discussed, sometimes at length, we do meet at various local hangouts and we encourage everyone to join us!

At the April meeting we had Anita who is a new member join us and remind us how important it is to have new people to add their thoughts and opinions to help our chapter grow. While discussing how to encourage more people to attend meetings, Anita suggested we continue to host meetings in a more casual setting and change to a new outline.

Our May meeting will be all about Bowling for Rhinos, which is always a fun topic and then for the June meeting, our plan will be to have the first hour to conduct “business”, and then have the rest of the time to be a social and discuss any topic we want. I think this is a great idea for our chapter and I am so glad that Anita was there to contribute. I would like to invite each of you to join us, and hope that you will bring your ideas and passion for conservation to our June meeting! Look for the date in the monthly update email along with the time and place.



Seal Counts with the Seal Conservancy

By Grace Yambrach, Conservation Partner Officer



This past February AAZK SD had the opportunity to help The Seal Conservancy with their seal counts. The mission of the Seal Conservancy is to preserve and protect the La Jolla harbor seal rookery for the enjoyment and educational benefit of children; and for the ecological, scientific, historic, and scenic benefits to all. The Seal Conservancy is the only organization exclusively dedicated to educating the public about the La Jolla Harbor Seal Rookery. Over the past 15 years, they have educated hundreds of thousands of visitors to Casa Beach about the La Jolla harbor seal rookery, sharing viewing tips, harbor seal facts, and helping visitors spot the births that take place every February at Casa Beach.



For two mornings members of AAZK San Diego joined two groups of volunteers at Casa Beach in La Jolla armed with binoculars and their cell phones, counting seals and pups. The event was very successful and a great time, but unfortunately a little frustrating. The frustrating part was watching people not abiding by the rules when it comes to the mother seals and their pups. Frustrating was seeing people trying to get close to the seals and take selfies, walking their dog on the beach and getting in close proximity to the seals. I must admit, we did shout at a few individuals that they were too close.

This is an opportunity that anyone can participate in, any day of the week and anytime. All one needs to do is go to the Seal Conservancy website and their seal count page: <http://sealconservancy.org/seal-counts/> Then just follow the directions. It's a great outing for the family or for any individual.

For added information here are some facts about the Casa Beach Rookery;

- There is no beach access allowed during harbor seal pupping season (December 15 through May 15) per San Diego Municipal Code 63.0102(e)(2), Ordinance 20360 .
- Between May 16 and December 14 each year, the City's viewing guideline rope helps visitors to view the seals from a safe distance.
- Casa Beach in La Jolla is the only National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) -recognized mainland harbor seal rookery between the Mexican Border and Ventura, 160 miles to the north.
- The sea wall was built in 1931 with funds donated by Ellen Scripps. At that time, the State granted a tideland trust to the City of San Diego. In 2009 the State Senate passed

SB428, which added an additional use to the Statutes of 1931: to allow Casa Beach to be used as “a marine mammal park for the enjoyment and education of children.”

- Harbor seals began hauling out at Casa Beach in the early 1990's. The first births were documented in 1996 (Yochem and Stewart, 1998). Soon thereafter, Casa Beach was officially recognized as a rookery by NOAA.
- Federal Law prohibits harassment of seals. This includes flushing them, touching them, chasing them, feeding them, swimming with them, or engaging in any other action which causes the seals to alter their natural behavior.
- NOAA has recommended a 50-foot distance be maintained between humans and seals because this is the distance needed to prevent harassment.



International Outreach: AAZK Across the Border

By Yvette Kemp, AAZK SD Treasurer and International Outreach Committee Program Manager

On March 3rd, a group of 23 keepers, educators, volunteers and friends headed down to Parque del Niño Zoo in Valley de Guadalupe, east of Ensenada, to assist with projects and help where needed.

Since AAZK began in 1965, AAZK has always recognized the importance of the animal keeping profession and how communication and support benefits animal care. Because of its location, AAZK San Diego has the opportunity to not only work with many great conservation organizations in the U.S. but also across the border. For over 8 years, groups of keepers and other zoo personnel have travelled south of the border to lend a hand to our friends at Parque del Niño, Tijuana, and other Latin American Zoos.



Projects always vary and are sometimes dependent on who is part of the group. On March 3rd the group consisted of several educators and a nutritionist, so we were able to assist with ideas for educational programs, tours, and dietary needs. We were also lucky to have many new

enthusiastic and talented people, so some other projects included adding plants to a tamarin exhibit, remodeling a baboon's housing, providing enrichment opportunities to a group of raccoons, and helping to move gravel for a new pathway.

Parque del Niño is a family owned facility with approximately 60 species of animals. They started the zoo around 2011 so that the children of the area would be able to connect with nature. Since shortly after they opened, we have been assisting the zoo with personnel training, exhibit design and enhancement, and projects as needed.



We have also been able to support the Tijuana Zoo, Parque Morelos. Parque Morelos is a city owned zoo and a very popular place on the weekends. Several of our groups have visited the zoo and assisted with exhibit enhancement and training workshops. Whatever the projects at either zoo, we are always rewarded with a great lunch and time to get to know each other afterwards. Another opportunity to become involved in outreach is through AAZK's Teaching Programs. The International Outreach Committee (IOC) is involved in providing learning opportunities to animal care professionals in Latin America. The IOC Teaching Program organizes mini "conferences" where keepers can share their knowledge with others.

This year, AAZK's IOC will be involved in 2 Teaching Programs. The first one is with the Zacango Ecological Park outside of Mexico City June 25th through the 28th. During this program, we will be leading courses on Animal Welfare, Enrichment, Training, Nutrition, and more. Over 100 keepers will be able to attend these lectures and hands on workshops. The second program will take place in November in Durango Mexico at the Sahuatoba Zoo of Durango. During this program, the IOC will also have keeper led courses for over 100 keepers from around the area. Both programs provide an opportunity for animal care professionals to share their knowledge and skills with other professionals. AAZK and keepers everywhere have always recognized the importance of husbandry and it's through programs like this that we are able to have a direct impact on animal care worldwide. Besides knowing that you are making a difference in animal care, you are also a part of improving the professionalism of a career that is rapidly changing and advancing.

If you are interested in becoming involved in any of these programs, please contact me. We are always looking for people to join us on day trips to the local Mexico Zoos. And if you'd like to share your knowledge as an instructor at one of the Teaching Programs, we would love to include you. You are a great resource and sharing what you do only inspires and motives others to become better animal caregivers, educators and conservationists!



Painted Dog Research Trust

By Grace Yambrach, AAZK San Diego Conservation Partner Officer

This March AAZKSD welcomed Dr. Greg Rasmussen to San Diego. His lecture was held at The Rose Wine Bar, which made for an evening of informative stories, good food and superb wine. It is always an educational and eye-opening evening with Dr. Rasmussen as he speaks about his research. With research as Dr. Rasmussen's guiding tool, he is dedicated to the conservation of the highly endangered Painted dog also known as the African wild dog. This work has been ongoing for 25 years by Dr. Rasmussen, thus making Painted Dog Research one of the longest studies into the species.



The mission of the Painted Dog Research Trust is to both continue with research into the highly endangered painted dog and build for the future of conservation by meaningfully incorporating Zimbabwean graduate students to build local capacity and tomorrow's conservationists.



Dr. Rasmussen and his students are working to focus on Zimbabwe's largest painted dog populations residing along the Zambezi river from Kazungula to Kanyemba. Dr. Rasmussen is also pursuing his dream of constructing a conservation ecology center to further the progress of young Zimbabwean as well as international students with the intention of inspiring them to be future conservationists.

Election Update!

By Kym Janke, AAZK San Diego Secretary

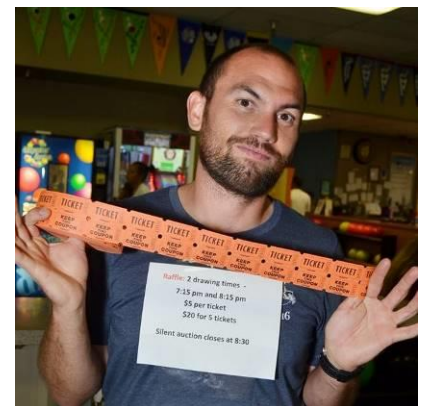
Every year the term of service for several positions on the AAZK San Diego board come up for election as according to our bylaws. This year the positions available were President, Secretary, Professional Development Officer, Volunteer Coordinator, and Member Liaison.

We received five letters of intent, the perfect match! After tallying the votes cast by our membership in an online voting process all five applicants were selected to serve on the AAZK San Diego Board for the 2018-2020 term. Ann Knutson will continue in her role and AAZK San Diego President, Kym Janke will continue as Secretary, and Lauren Ayres will continue as Professional Development Officer. We would like you all to join us in welcoming two new members to our board: Kim Nelson and Bobby Brett!

Kim (Roth) Nelson will be filling the role of Volunteer Coordinator. She has worked for SDZG since 2005. During that time, she has worked at the APC, the ICR, the Safari Park, and the Zoo, where she is currently a Senior Bird Keeper. She has a B.S. in biology from UCSD and a M.A. in biology from Miami University. She is very passionate about avian conservation and has spent a great deal of time spreading awareness about bird-window collision prevention. In her free time, Kim enjoys birding, hiking, gardening, visiting new breweries, and hanging out with her many animals.



Bobby Brett will be filling the role of Member Liaison and we are excited to see this role grow and evolve with his leadership! After graduating with a Bachelor's degree from Oregon State University Bobby was hired by Natural Encounters, Inc. (NEI) based in Orlando, Florida and was a part of their Road Show development team. While working for NEI he helped produce shows at the San Diego Zoo, Dallas Zoo, Disney's Animal Kingdom, and the Memphis Zoo. After an amazing 7 years with NEI and working up to the position as a Senior Trainer, Bobby was offered a position here at the San Diego Zoo in 2015 with the Bird Show Team in Animal Connections. Bobby has been a member of the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE), the American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) – both national and locally in respective facilities, the American Zoological Association (AZA), and the Animal Behavior Management Alliance (ABMA). With the AAZK San Diego specifically, Bobby has been an active supporter and has worked with the existing team to develop wildlife photography workshops based both at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park and the San Diego Zoo as a professional development opportunity for the membership.



Thank You Ron! MC Extraordinaire!

By Yvette Kemp, AAZK San Diego Treasurer

If you have been to AAZK San Diego's **Bowling for Rhinos** event anytime in the last, oh, 20 years, then you know Ron Ringer. Ron has been involved in BFR as the official MC since approximately 1993. As MC, Ron was always keeping the event moving along ... announcing strikes, winners, and highlights of the evening.

After over 20 years of helping our chapter raise funds for the event, Ron is hanging up his MC hat.

The AAZK San Diego Chapter would like to thank Ron for his consistent involvement in Bowling for Rhinos and recognize his dedication to our flagship cause.

Thank you Ron for your commitment to BFR and the chapter. You will be missed!



AAZK San Diego Presents

Bowling for Rhinos



Saving Rhinos is about more than just Rhinos...

Join us for San Diego's 28th Annual Bowling for Rhinos tournament and fundraiser at Kearny Mesa Bowl.

**Saturday,
May 19, 2018
6:00-9:00 pm**

Registration begins at 5:00 pm

**\$10 Registration &
\$50 Minimum Donation
per player - Teams of 5**

**All funds raised will be donated
to in-situ wildlife conservation
in Africa & Asia.**

- Raffle & Silent Auction**
- Contests & Prizes**
- Bake Sale**
- Food Truck & Full Bar**

**T-Shirts & Women's Tanks
available for purchase
online for \$25 each**

**For more information &
to register, visit:**

www.sdaazk.org

or

bit.ly/BFRSD2018



Bowling for Rhinos 2018!

By Kym Janke, AAZK San Diego Secretary

Have you registered for Bowling for Rhinos??? Don't miss out on this amazing night of fun, friends, and conservation! The event will be held Saturday May 19th at Kearny Mesa Bowl, 6-9pm. All the registration details can be found on our website at <http://sdaazk.com/2018-events/bowling-for-rhinos-2018-may-19/>

Teams are made up of 5 individuals, but don't worry if you don't have a team you can still register and make some new friends! Registration is \$10 per person and includes the lane and shoe rentals. Each bowler is required to bring a minimum \$50 donation to the event and remember you don't have to do this alone, ask your friends and family to support this great cause and make it easy for them by creating a fundraising page on Crowdrise!

<https://www.crowdrise.com/o/en/campaign/bowling-for-rhinos-2018/americanassociationof>

This year will feature amazing food from "O" Food Truck – serving delicious organic food with vegan options! There will be some new contests, amazing raffle prizes, great silent auction items, and of course the bake sale! Don't forget that the bowling alley has a full bar – just remember to drink responsibly!

Remember to buy a t-shirt or tank! I am in LOVE with this year's shirt design and know you will love it too! We didn't skimp on low quality shirts, these ones are so comfy you might want to buy two! You will have the option to add a shirt at the end of your registration or you can simply buy a shirt from the main registration page.

AAZK encourages fundraising through an amazing opportunity to win an all-expense paid trip to either Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya, or to Indonesia with our partners at the International Rhino Foundation. The chapters who raise the four highest amounts will be eligible to nominate one individual for the trip, and in San Diego we nominate our top fundraiser. I can't promise it will happen again (that depends on all of you and your amazing dedication!) but I can say that we have seen our members travel for the past 5 years!

In case you have been living under a rock here is some basic information about the event and why it is so important!

What is Bowling for Rhinos?

Bowling for Rhinos (BFR) is a national bowl-a-thon fundraising event geared to assisting rhino conservation in Kenya and Indonesia. 100% of all funds go directly to in situ conservation projects, conserving 4 species of rhinos, their habitats, and hundreds of other endangered plants and animals; research projects benefitting all 5 species of rhinos; AND cheetah conservation in Kenya.

Why Support Bowling for Rhinos?

Only 5 species of rhino exist today when once there were over 100 species. All 5 species- the white, black, greater one-horned, Sumatran and Javan are endangered. In 1960, 60,000 black rhinos roamed Africa. Today only 5,500 remain in isolated populations. On the Asian continent, the greater one-horned population remains at 3,333. The Sumatran species numbers less than 100 and the Javan species has fewer than 60 animals.

In addition to protecting rhinos and all other species that live within their habitat, ***Bowling for Rhinos*** provides an opportunity of media coverage and marketing surrounding this event. We also invite you to use this experience as a team building event, encouraging conservation participation.

Who Coordinates Bowling for Rhinos?

Bowling for Rhinos is a fundraiser that began on a small scale in 1990 by the American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK). It is now an AAZK-sponsored North American event raising *over \$500,000 annually*. AAZK realized that the zoo keepers of the world are extremely conservation oriented and want to help save rhinos and their habitats, yet do not have the financial resources themselves to make any significant impact. That's when the idea to start a national bowl-a-thon called ***Bowling for Rhinos*** emerged.

These fundraisers are organized by AAZK chapter members who are volunteers and donate their time and organizational skills to help raise money to send directly to the places in need. Since all the people involved are volunteers, **100% of all donations** are sent directly to these in situ rhino conservation areas!

If you are interested in getting involved in this amazing, conservation centered, event please email Kym at kymjanke@hotmail.com.



Ken Morgan: The Legend

By Jeremy Fontaine, AAZK San Diego Social Media Officer

After graduating with a Bachelor's of Science degree from the University of Saskatchewan, Ken Morgan began his long and noteworthy zoo career at the Toronto Zoo. While Ken did work with reptiles his entire career, at Toronto he was assigned to a zoogeographic region for his string. So, he gained experience with many mammal species including tapirs and lemur species. Having gained the respect of the Curatorial staff at Toronto, he acquired a position at the much respected Fort Worth Zoo (FWZ) Department of Herpetology. FWZ has a large



and diverse reptile and amphibian collection which offers new experiences for even the most seasoned of keepers. While continuing to focus on gaining new experiences and knowledge Ken moved to the Columbus Zoo. At Columbus, where they supported his desire for continued education and participation at conferences, he really started the phase of his career where he began to offer his own experience and collegial support. From there, in 1999 he joined the staff at the San Diego Zoo Reptile Department as a Senior Keeper where he stayed until December of 2014 to become Animal Care Manager at the Phoenix Zoo Reptile Department. It didn't take Ken long to miss his home of the last 15 years, so he came back with open arms in September of 2016 to the San Diego Zoo.

In 2006, Ken Morgan was asked to be the first keeper from the San Diego Zoo to participate in a five year long post-doctoral study on Komodo Dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*) through San Diego Zoo's Institute for Conservation Research (at the time called CRES). Ken spent two weeks in Indonesia helping with this project and fell in love with being in the Komodo Dragon's natural habitat. Working with local rangers for the Komodo National Park and with Indonesian students working on their Master's degree, Ken was in his element. Those two weeks came and went, but Ken could not quit thinking about studying Komodo Dragons and being in **THEIR** environment. Later in 2006, Ken decided to spend a month in Indonesia on this very same project and spent much of his own time and money doing so. Ken came back a different man. Physically and mentally Ken was hardly recognizable. He loved the knowledge he was gaining from his adventures and soaked up every ounce of culture that went with it. In this career field, most of us can see we are living our dream, but for Ken his trips to study Komodo Dragons were the pinnacle of his dreams.

Many keepers, through the many zoos Ken has worked, have had the privilege to work alongside and be trained by him. Ken's work ethic, dedication, intellect and love for reptiles (and animals in general) was felt by each and every co-worker he worked with. Not only was Ken a great co-worker, but he was a great friend. Ken's sudden passing in December, 2017 was not easy to cope

with. He was loved by so many people and by so many animals. Even though he is not with us, his smile, laugh and stories will forever be engraved in our minds.

*“Angels come down from the heavens
Just to help us on our way
Come to teach us, then they leave us
And they find some other soul to save”*

Ken, in his unique, quirky ways, was very special to many people. He taught us, he helped us and now it is our turn to help him by remembering his life. Things in life cannot be controlled, but we can control how one’s life is remembered. Ken, even though you are no longer with us, this Memorial Fund will help continue your legacy. Thank you to his many friends, colleagues, and AAZK members, over \$1000 was raised to continue Ken’s dream. The money raised by Ken’s Memorial Fund will help support the Komodo Species Survival Plan (SSP) and will provide students, researchers and rangers support to learn about and protect your favorite animal, the Komodo Dragon. We love you Kenny.



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:

- 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
- 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
- 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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The Keeper is published quarterly by the American Association of Zoo Keepers San Diego Chapter, Inc. (AAZK SD), 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—AAZK SD, 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 AAZK SD. Subscriptions are included with the membership in AAZK SD or by paying \$15 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 AAZK SD, AAZK, Inc., or the board of either chapter or parent organization.



CALENDAR 2018 visit www.sdaazk.org for updates

May 15, 2018: AAZK Meeting.

You are invited to participate and join us at the next AAZK Board meeting at 5:30 pm, at Boomerang's Gourmet Burgers in Clairemont. <http://www.boomerangburgers.com/> 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

May 19, 2018: Bowling for Rhinos! Register today! Check out the articles in this edition of *The Keeper* or head to our website at www.sdaazk.org for all the details and to register!

September 5, 2018: AAZK San Diego Presents: Mary Wykstra with Action for Cheetahs Kenya. More information to come.

October 2018: AAZK San Diego Presents: Snow Leopard Conservancy. More information to come.

Details about these and all our events available on our website at www.sdaazk.org!
Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sdaazk