



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 2018

### President's Message

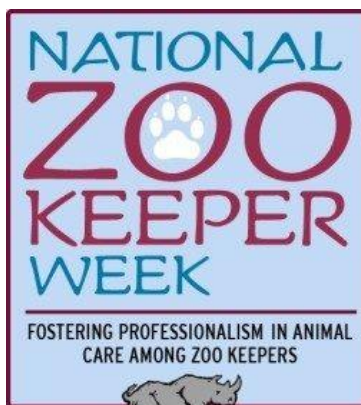
By Ann Knutson, AAZK San Diego President

National Zoo Keeper Week is usually filled with our home institutions recognizing the work we do, and of course lots of socializing with coworkers and fellow keepers. This year was no exception! In the past I have noticed though that few keepers actually take the time to thank their coworkers for all they do. This year however I saw this trend come to an end when one keeper took the time to tell me how much she appreciated the work I do and another keeper took the time to tag and reflect on Facebook about fellow keepers that made a huge impact on her career.

These actions really stood out to me, because we don't often take the time to thank each other and National Zoo Keeper Week should not be the only time we do this. I recently saw a commercial where people pass around a nice note to each other, just as a reminder that they are awesome and it got me thinking, maybe we should take some time to send a note to someone to thank them or remind them of what a great job they are doing.

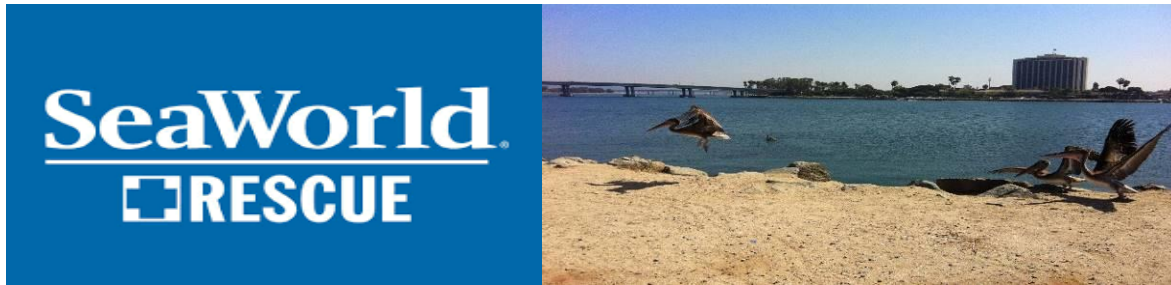
Starting a week or so after NZKW is over I am going to send out a couple thank you cards to people who really inspire me, and include an extra thank you card for them to send out to someone who has inspired them. I hope you will join me in making this a habit, and start making sure we are supporting each other every day and not just one week of the year.

Stay tuned for the fall edition of The Keeper where we will recap all the fun events during NZKW 2018!



# SeaWorld Brown Pelican Rescue

By Grace Yambrach, Conservation Partner Officer



Sea World rescues a large variety of aquatic birds throughout the year. As of the end of June Sea World has rescued a total of 502 aquatic/semi-aquatic sea birds. This spring/early summer, Sea World started receiving large amounts of Brown pelicans. These big, beautiful pelicans were showing signs of emaciation, hypothermia and anemia. The reason for this problem was still a mystery, but Sea World was working hard to do all that they could to help these magnificent creatures. The number of sick and dying Brown Pelicans had greatly increased for unknown reasons all along the Southern California coast.

An annual survey completed in June found a drastic plunge in the population of breeding pairs, according to a statement released by the University of California, Davis. Many birds arrived late to the Mexico breeding grounds this spring and "of those who nested, many abandoned their nests when they could not find enough food to sustain their stay," the UC Davis statement said. Those that did successfully raise chicks were having a hard time with the migration north as well as the chicks.

Sea World specializes in Aquatic Bird rescue and rehabilitation. This is including but not limited to Pelicans, Cormorants, Loons, grebes, Auklets, Shearwaters, Terns, Geese, Ducks, Coots, Rails, Sandpipers, Herons, and Egrets. Due to space, we can only take a limited number of Gulls and Mallards. For other bird species, please send them to Project Wildlife.

The Main Rescue Hotline is: (800)51-SEAL (7325) – Marine Mammals, Turtles and Fish

Bird Rescue Center Direct Line (for any bird questions – days only) (619) 225-4264

**If you see a pelican that seems ill or injured, do not approach the bird. Please call your local animal control immediately.**

## Cross-fostering of Mexican gray wolves (*Canis lupus baileyi*)

By Heidi Pankratz Animal Care Manager California Wolf Center; AAZK Member.

The Mexican gray wolf is one of the most critically endangered mammals of North America. With only seven unrelated individuals left in the world back in 1977, the sub-species came dangerously close to extinction. That's when all of the individuals remaining were gathered to start the captive breeding program through a Species Survival Plan. In 1998, the first wild releases of Mexican gray wolves were done in Arizona and New Mexico. At least count in 1997, their wild population in the United States has grown to about 114 individuals. In Mexico, only about 35 Mexican wolves roam in the wild. About 250 individuals are housed in managed care, making the total population of Mexican wolves in the world around 400.

Currently, the wild population of Mexican gray wolves has less genetic diversity than the managed population. To remedy this problem, more releases need to be done to add new genetics to the wild population. However, releases of adults are severely limited as many people are afraid of the effect they may have on their livestock or on the prey population. Some people don't like the idea of having wolves in the wild just based on the fear that they could be attacked or killed by wolves. In reality, wolf attacks on humans are extremely rare. Wolf attacks on livestock are a valid concern, but some conservation organizations, including the California Wolf Center, are working on helping to prevent those attacks. Still, these concerns have led to lobbying to limit releases of wolves into the wild, and consequently, the recovery plan.

This year, instead of releasing adult wolves, Arizona Game and Fish has decided to rely mainly on cross-fostering to increase genetic diversity in the wild. Cross fostering is when pups born under human care are transferred to a litter of pups born in the wild. The hope is for the wild parents to raise the cross fostered pups as their own. To make the receiving pack more likely to accept the pups, the cross foster has to take place when both litters are between 1 and 2 weeks old, and 7 to 10 days apart or less. Wolves grow and mature so fast that pups born two weeks apart could have very different needs



Last year, the California Wolf Center was selected to participate in cross fostering, and we were lucky enough to have a litter of six pups born at our center within a week of a wild born litter. So the process began—and two pups ended up being cross fostered into the wild. Caretakers wore

coveralls and gloves to prevent the spread of disease and to prevent getting human scent on the pups. The two pups were transported in a small carrier by plane from California to Arizona. Once in Arizona, the pups were microchipped, examined, tube fed, and rubbed with fur and dirt from the den to make them smell more like their new pack. Then, they were placed in the den with the rest of the pups. Usually, the dam will return to the den within an hour or two.

Although cross fostering poses a risk to the pups involved, the potential benefits outweigh this risk. Cross fostering is a form of genetic rescue, which is important to prevent inbreeding and its negative effects. Cross fostering began in Mexican gray wolves just a few years ago, and so far we've seen a lot of success. Hopefully, one day the Mexican gray wolf will have a sustainable wild population that doesn't need our help to survive. Until then, cross fostering is one of the many ways for us to help the Mexican gray wolf population to grow and thrive.

## **AAZK's International Outreach Committee "United Saving Species"**

By Yvette Kemp, AAZK San Diego Treasurer and IOC Chair.

Since mid-2016 there has been a group of AAZK members working with keepers and animal care personnel in Latin America called the International Outreach Committee or the IOC. The IOC was developed to explore and identify the professional developmental needs of the international animal care community and provide educational and mentorship resources that support advances in the field of animal husbandry.



Since the IOC has started we have been able to work with over 400 Latin American keepers providing translated husbandry material, AAZK membership, and workshops so that they can apply some of the information received at their facilities. We have organized and developed the IOC Teaching Program where committee members and other animal care professionals lead workshops and presentations for Latin American personnel.



The IOC has also implemented a program where AAZK chapters can sponsor membership for Latin American keepers. The pilot program started with 10 sponsorships, but we hope to increase that number every year. The sponsorship program provides a communication avenue for AAZK and Latin American keepers.

Along with the AAZK Membership, the IOC has developed a grant for Latin American keepers to attend AAZK's Annual Conference. We believe that networking is a large component of keeper advancement and being able to share our knowledge is key in improving animal care at each of our facilities. The ability to meet keepers at the conferences and through member sponsorship presents opportunities to communicate and learn. It also provides keepers a friendly resource to get in touch with to ask questions and share accomplishments.

Communication is a large component in the animal care field. That is why AAZK, Inc.'s FB page will also be sharing information in Spanish! One of the IOC's goals is to make our organization bilingual. We invite you to share your stories with AAZK in both English and Spanish so that our Latin American friends can also follow your accomplishments. If you don't know Spanish, no worries, the IOC will be translating posts for AAZK.

Recently, the IOC led a Teaching Program at the Parque Ecologico Zacango outside of Mexico City in Toluca. Here three IOC members plus a keeper from the San Diego Zoo, along with Zacango staff, provided training for close to 100 animal care personnel and students. It was a great experience for everyone involved and we made many new friends. We have another program scheduled for November in Durango and then at least 2 more set up for 2019.



Wondering how you can participate? Would you like to lead a workshop or present at one of the programs? The IOC is looking for AAZK members to share their knowledge with our friends down south. We need people to help teach workshops. If you are knowledgeable in a topic that you'd like to lead, we need you. And if you know Spanish, even better!

So, if all of this sounds intriguing and you'd like to learn more, please send me an email at [Yvette.Kemp@AAZK.org](mailto:Yvette.Kemp@AAZK.org). Our team is always looking for participants to share their expertise – we hope that's you!

# Bowling for Rhinos 2018

By Kym Janke, AAZK San Diego Secretary

I hope that you didn't miss Bowling for Rhinos and that you already know how amazing you all are! In case you have been out in the field or just joined us here in San Diego though I want to thank and congratulate everyone on another successful BFR event. This year's main event took place May 21<sup>st</sup> at Kearny Mesa Bowl and we were able to raise over \$16,000 in just one night!

That can go a long way in the field. Funds raised at BFR support three deserving conservation organizations: Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya, International Rhino Foundation and their work in Asia, and Action for Cheetahs in Kenya. Additionally 2% of the funds raised annually are awarded to a research or conservation project through AAZK's Conservation Resource Grant.



This year's event was filled with fun and some new activities to spice up the night! Teams had the chance to compete in 2 conservation themed games in order to win some great prizes. There was the Elephant Game where team members raced relay style to get their "trunks" onto their heads without using our evolutionary advantage of hands with opposable thumbs. And then there was the Anteater Game where straws mimicked the anteater's sticky tongue and paper ants were collected from the ground and placed in a container. The whole

night was MC'd by Beau Parks from the San Diego Zoo's Avian Propagation Center – Thank you so much Beau! Things that remained the same were the awesome raffle and silent auction items, these just keep getting better each year, and of course the scrumptious baked goods! Also the wonderfully talented Nancy Dulay came out and painted faces of bowlers young and old and we had some great San Diego Zoo volunteers helping us out during the event in order for it to run smoothly. Finally I want to thank the BFR committee who helped put this whole thing together: Lauren Ayres, Kiki Craig, Bobby Brett, Jaimee Lafleur, and Yvette Kemp, we couldn't have done this without you. I know I am probably forgetting some people so thank you to everyone that donated their time this year!



Even though bowling is done, we aren't done fundraising! We have a goal to raise \$20,000 by November 1<sup>st</sup> so if you haven't purchased your BFR tank or t-shirt just ask anyone on the AAZK San Diego board and we can get one to you. We will also be hosting a couple of



fun events in the coming months to benefit BFR so keep your eye out for them being promoted around your workplace and through the AAZK San Diego's social media pages.



I want to take a moment to thank all our wonderful business sponsors, we could not do what we do without your support!

Alvarado Institute

Babycakes

Belle La Vie Day Spa

BehaviorWorks

Blind Burro

Boomerangs Gourmet Burgers

Café on Park

California Wolf Center

Cerveza Jack's

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San Diego Humane Society

Uptown Tavern

USS Midway Museum

Vom Fass

Westin Gaslamp

Wild Wonders

Winspire Trips

World Famous

Yahaira Gonzalez Jewelry

## **BFR Trip: Way Kambas Edition**

By Charlie Hyde, AAZK San Diego Member and San Diego Safari Park keeper.

Note from the editor: Charlie Hyde was the highest fundraiser for the San Diego BFR event last year. Thanks to all the amazing support we received AAZK San Diego was the third highest fundraising chapter and Charlie earned the incredible opportunity to travel to Indonesia with International Rhino Foundation in March 2018. Below are some excerpts from her journal of the trip.

**01 May 2018, 7:30pm:** We had been traveling in our van for over 7 hours. It was dark. I felt like a rhino crashing through the jungle (for real, wait until you see our sweet ride). The road was bumpy and unpaved. The only thing visible were the trees flying by at high speed. Occasionally, I could make out the moon. It was almost full and a beautiful shade of pink, presumably from the large amount of smoke from the rice paddies. The anticipation was exhausting in itself, let alone we had just done a significant amount of traveling in less than two days. But we all rallied for the destination to come. We were in Way Kambas National Park on the island of Sumatra and about to enter the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary. Folks, we were gonna see some rhinos!

*On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2018 I left my home in Southern California to embark on an adventure that would change my life. Myself and fellow Zookeeper, Mandi, headed to Indonesia where we would meet up with 8 more people all interested in saving the worlds most endangered rhinos. CeCe, Kelly and Inov represented International Rhino Foundation. Angie, Christine, Melissa, Toni, Wanda, Mandi and I represented Bowling for Rhinos. We would be referred to by everyone as “the bowlers” for the entire trip. For 10 days we travelled through Java and Sumatra hoping to get a glimpse of either species of rhino. However, anyone who has travelled in the jungle can tell you, wildlife viewing there is extremely difficult. In short, we saw none. But we all knew we had an ace-in-the-hole because one of our last stops was the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (referred to as the SRS), home to seven Sumatran Rhinoceros.*

**02 May 2018, 7am:** Breakfast was quick and then “the bowlers” loaded into a pick-up. First on our list to see was male Sumatran rhino Harapan. I had the pleasure of meeting Harapan when he lived in the States, as did some of the other bowlers. I never thought I would get the chance to see him again. The excitement in his little paddock area was so charged I think we could have lit up the entire island. I have never been happier for an animal. Clearly, he was thriving! His color was changed, and his demeanor was enthusiastic. Next stop was the miracle rhino, Andatu. This little male rhino was the first captive born Sumatran rhino in Indonesia. In fact, the last Sumatran born in captivity in Asia was almost 124 years ago in Calcutta, India. He is the posterchild of hope for his species. After Andatu was Bina. I refer to her as the queen. Between 1988-1992 a program was conducted to save the Sumatran rhino. 18 rhinos were captured, and Bina is the last surviving rhino from that program. Unaware of her place in history, she happily ate her fruit salad prepared by her keepers. Lastly, we met Ratu and Delilah, the mother/daughter pair. But don't be fooled, at two years of age, Delilah is much larger than her mother. These two were a riot! Their keepers were taking them out of the paddock area and into the jungle but Ratu didn't want to leave her admirers. You could hear Delilah calling for her mom in the jungle. Ratu turned a deaf ear. If only Delilah had any idea the role she is playing in the survival of her species.

After we came down from our “rhino high” we were given a presentation from the Rhino Protection Unit. They explained their role and goals moving forward. Way Kambas is protected by nine RPUs. Because of them, there have been no known poaching incidents in almost 10 years. They shared stories of the rhinos under their protection and they are grateful for our support. We got a quick tour of the expansion project that is currently under construction. It holds a lot of opportunity for the Sumatran rhino. That afternoon we travelled by boat up Way Kanan river for a jungle hike. We were given a demonstration on snares from the RPUs. First, they set up a snare and asked if we could find it. It was a great example of the challenges they face while on patrol. They showed us how the snares were constructed and dismantled. We made our way back to the boat for the return trip to the SRS. The river was lined with exotic birds, primates, crocs and even a few Sambar deer! That night Dr. Zulfi, one of the veterinarians on staff, gave us a presentation on the work they are doing to care for this critically endangered species. Footcare, ultrasounds and bloodwork are always a topic among professionals no matter the location.

**03 May 2018, 8am:** It’s our last day at this amazing facility. We were able to squeeze in some more rhino viewing this morning before we departed the island for good. There were two rhinos we didn’t get to meet the day before because they were being introduced for breeding. As rhino keepers, we fully understood the importance of their task at hand and had no problems giving them their privacy. However, with the deed done, that allowed us for a quick visit. First up was Andalas, the proud papa. His name is the original name for the island of his species, Sumatra. Son of Ipuh and Emi, Andalas was born at the Cincinnati Zoo days after the fall of the World Trade Center. He is a ray of light in a time of darkness, that he has proven. He is the sire both Andatu and Delilah. We joked that he was too tired to be spunky because of the previous day’s activities. He happily chowed down on his browse while we all stared in admiration. Keepers cut browse daily for all the rhinos, even though they spend their days foraging in the jungle. After Andalas we headed to Rosa. If Bina is the queen, then Rosa is certainly the diva. The story of her arrival to the facility is a spectacular one. RPUs were contacted from a village near Bukit Barisan National Park on the western side of the island. They said they had a rhino that was eating all of their fruit and disrupting their quiet life. RPUs convinced Rosa to walk with them for 4 days up a mountain to Camp50 so she could be transported to the SRS. Full of character and charisma she charmed us all and we gave her positive vibes of a successful pregnancy. We were on a limited time schedule, so we swung by one last time to see Ratu and Delilah. It’s always a thrill to witness a success story and they are the start of it. My heart was full as we loaded up in the van to depart the SRS for Jakarta, our exit from this amazing country full of wonderful people doing extraordinary work to save the Indonesian rhino.

*Huge thanks goes out to Bowling for Rhinos and AAZK. Because of them I was able to participate in this once in a lifetime experience. Another huge thank you goes out to the International Rhino Foundation and Yayasan Badak Indonesia (YABI, Rhino Foundation of Indonesia). They are fully committed to saving the Indonesian rhino and without their hospitality this trip would not be possible. They have charged my drive and shown me that we, as rhino keepers, can make a difference. Sumatran rhinos are in great need and we must deliver. A species is depending on us.*

# Ken Morgan: The Legend



June 19, 2018

Ms. Yvette Kemp  
Treasurer  
AAZK San Diego Chapter  
P.O. Box 632984  
San Diego, CA 92163

Dear Yvette,

On behalf of the Komodo Dragon SSP steering committee, please let me extend our thanks to you and your organization, for the generous contribution of \$1,175.00 to the Komodo Dragon SSP conservation fund in memory of San Diego Zoo Global Reptile Keeper, Ken Morgan. I was very saddened to hear of Ken's passing. He was a friend and valued colleague whose life ended far too soon. Though we have no control over our death, we can choose how to live and Ken was a very kind person with a deep respect for wildlife. I know how much he loved Komodo dragons and a fund raising tribute to his life is a gesture I am sure would make him smile.

Thank you, again, for your contribution to the Komodo dragon SSP fund in Ken's memory.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D Boyer".

Don Boyer  
Komodo Dragon SSP Coordinator  
Curator of Herpetology Bronx Zoo

2300 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10460  
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June 26, 2018

Ms. Yvette Kemp  
Treasurer  
AAZK San Diego Chapter  
P.O. Box 632984  
San Diego, CA 92163

Dear Yvette,

On behalf of the Komodo Dragon SSP steering committee, please let me extend our thanks to you and your organization, for the additional contribution of \$750.00 to the Komodo Dragon SSP conservation fund in memory of San Diego Zoo Global Reptile Keeper, Ken Morgan. The second donation was such a welcome surprise. Again, thank you for the AAZK support on Ken's behalf, I know he would appreciate it.

The Komodo SSP conservation fund has now contributed over one hundred thousand dollars that have been sent directly to the Komodo Survival Program (a nonprofit Indonesian NGO) focused on dragon conservation and research. This is only possible through the generous support of numerous zoos, organizations like yours and individuals.

Thank you, again, for your contribution to the Komodo dragon SSP fund in Ken's memory.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Boyer", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Don Boyer  
Komodo Dragon SSP Coordinator  
Curator of Herpetology Bronx Zoo

2300 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10460  
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## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State/ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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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

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- 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

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- 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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Membership  
P.O. Box 632984  
San Diego, CA 92103**

**AAZK San Diego**  
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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](http://www.sdaazk.org) for updates

**September 3, 2018:** Scavenge for Scavengers event 4-7pm.

Come out and join AAZK San Diego for a fun-filled Scavenger Hunt around the Miramar brewing district that will raise funds supporting vulture conservation throughout Africa. Assemble your 5-person team (\$20/person or \$100/team) and have a great time conserving wildlife! Please visit our website to register your team today. Don't feel like scavenging? Come join us for Happy Hour as well as a Silent Auction and a Raffle at AleSmith Brewing Company.

**September 5, 2018:** AAZK San Diego Presents: Mary Wykstra with Action for Cheetahs Kenya 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm in the San Diego Zoo's Dickinson Family Center Auditorium (formerly Otto Center). Learn about the status of cheetahs in Kenya and the conservation actions ACK is taking to sustain their populations. ACK has been involved in cheetah conservation for over 18 years, conducting research & surveys, working with local communities, and developing activities related to cheetah conservation. They also receive support from various organizations, including AAZK's Bowling for Rhinos annual fundraiser.

**September 15, 2018:** Join us for the California Coastal Clean-Up. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for more information coming soon!

**September 25, 2018:** You are invited to participate and join us at the next AAZK Board meeting at 5:30 pm, at Spice and Soul Kitchen and Tap in Bayho. [www.spiceandsoulrestaurant.com](http://www.spiceandsoulrestaurant.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](mailto:annkntsn@yahoo.com)

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

**October 25, 2018:** Croctoberfest 2018. 5:00pm-9:00pm at Bay City Brewing. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for more information coming soon!

**Details about these and all our events available on our website at [www.sdaazk.org](http://www.sdaazk.org)!**

**Visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/sdaazk](http://www.facebook.com/sdaazk)**