

Zoo Line



Volume 44 Edition 10

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President's Message

By: Ron Gray, President

Fellow Docents,

Welcome to a new year! New docent year that is. Our new year started on June 6th when a new Board took office officially during the Joint IE/TE meeting. That meeting marked the official start of the new year but we had several official "new" year starts. May 31st marked the end of the year for docents to earn service and volunteer hours and the new year started on June 1st. Our fiscal year started on May 1st when CMZ started its fiscal year. We operate on the same dates as the zoo because our fiscal accounts are maintained as part of the zoo's accounts even though we control deposits and disbursements. Finally, the official start of our program management occurred on June 6th when the newly elected Executive Committee and the newly appointed Supplemental Activities Chairpersons took office. Confused? It's certainly not difficult to be, but it all works.

As our new year begins for our Board, we have some new things to face as docents. First, AUSTRALIA! What a triumph for the zoo. The project was completed using zoo budget funds rather than capital campaign funds. That speaks well for the zoo management staff since no donors were involved. Bob Chastain and his staff used funds from the fiscal year accounts rather than donor and grant money. Just look at the results. Our budgies can have access to natural sunlight, our alligators can finally stay here rather than being migratory animals, our emu has a spiffy new home where our guests can see him up close (as with almost all of our animals), our Wallabies have an expanded and safer space to run and sleep, the guests have ADA compliant walkways

and last, but certainly not least, we have a new addition to our animal rolls with a tree kangaroo. I never thought I would see a kangaroo that climbs and lives in trees. Australia is a total success for our zoo and the guests have flocked to it in droves. So have docents. It's a great place just to hang out and meet with our guests.

Our new year also brings greater involvement and more need for our efforts with the programs we support. Last year, we set records for hours we contributed to the missions of the zoo. That trend has been steadily growing over the past 5 years resulting in over 21,000 hours of volunteer work being contributed by our membership.

We are making far more contributions to the missions of the zoo in the areas of tours, safaris, house talks, ZOOM programs and Zoopeteer programs than we have in the past. That is not expected to change as the zoo continues to grow in guest admissions and Edventure Department educational programs.

All of this says we will continue to be challenged to broaden our involvement as volunteers with the mission areas of the Zoo. I often hear the phrase, "What do you not understand about the term, volunteer?" Well, where our membership in the auxiliary is concerned, it's tough sometimes to really tell the difference since we have really hard working, dedicated, experts involved. Just to become a docent is a demanding program. All of this is to say that, your Board will be working to make sure the auxiliary will meet the challenges that the zoo needs us to meet so we stay among the top 5 zoos in the

United States and among the top 13 in the world. See you on the hill, keeping our legs and lungs in shape, going about the tasks that we perform as the volunteer organization for this great zoo.

Ron

Recycling at the Administration Building

CMZ supports various recycling efforts by collecting certain items in bins and baskets in the administration building. These items are:

- Standard batteries
- Lithium-Ion batteries
- Exhausted/Expired gift cards
- Toner cartridges
- GPS devices in working condition

GPS units are needed to support conservation efforts for giraffes in Africa. Do you count techno-geeks among your friends? Please ask those folks if they have old but functional GPS units just collecting dust somewhere. This is a terrific way to give these units a second life, rather than being broken up for parts or ending up in a landfill.

Pictured below are the bins, which are located just outside Bob's office



2015-2016 CMZ Auxiliary Calendar

Meeting Times are 9:30 AM
 Education Committee Meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of the month at 9:30 AM in the Safari Lodge. **** Mandatory meetings *Date Change**

August 2015		
5	Board Meeting	Safari Lodge
8	IE Meeting	Safari Lodge
September 2015		
2	Board Meeting	LAML ♦
9	TE Meeting	Safari Lodge
12	IE Meeting	Safari Lodge
♦ Lodge at Moose Lake		

Recycling and Giraffes in Africa

For the last two years, conservationists around the world have dedicated the longest day of the year, June 21, to the animal with the longest neck in the world – giraffe. World Giraffe Day was created to create awareness about the giraffe crisis, and what people around the world can do to help save them in the wild.

“People hear about elephants, tigers and rhinos, but few are aware that wild giraffe numbers are in drastic decline,” Amy Schilz, Lead Giraffe/Lion Keeper, said. “There are fewer wild giraffe in Africa than there are elephants, and together we can raise awareness and do our part to help them.”

This year’s World Giraffe Day theme was “Stick Out Your Neck” for giraffe, and our keepers challenged guests to do just that.

“Giraffe habitats are being affected by oil drilling for plastic products, so we are encouraging guests to



‘give the gift of conservation’ to giraffe by recycling used and empty gift cards,” Schilz said. “Guests can bring us their used gift cards to recycle through August.”

Giraffe keepers are also collecting no-longer-used, but still-functional GPS units through August. The donated GPS units will be given to park rangers and researchers in Africa to aid in tracking wild giraffe. Two of Cheyenne Mountain Zoo’s keepers will personally deliver the GPS units this summer when they travel to Africa to assist with a wild giraffe census in Uganda.

“It’s truly amazing to know that each GPS unit that’s donated will directly help save a wild giraffe in Africa,” Schilz said. “The technology for giraffe researchers in Africa is behind the technology here;



they can’t just pull up a map on their phone, so they rely on donations of stand-alone GPS units to do their vital work.”

CMZ’s giraffe keepers will be helping count Rothschild’s giraffe in Uganda in preparation for a potential translocation of the species to the Northern part of Murchison Falls National Park. The goal of translocation is to give the giraffe more habitat and range in the protected park. The additional habitat should help to increase their population numbers. The giraffe surveys, research and translocation in Uganda is being lead by Giraffe Conservation Foundation under the name “Project Twiga.” In May of this year, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo members voted to fund \$16,000 for the giraffe surveys that will take place in Murchison Falls later this summer. The money was a portion of the \$100,000 total donated by members to conservation through membership packages in the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

“Even if people don’t have an extra GPS or empty gift card laying around, there are several other ways to stick your neck out for giraffe!” Schilz said. “For

starters, it's important that we all reduce our carbon footprint. This can be done by turning off lights when you leave the room, shutting off the water when you're brushing your teeth, or even carpooling to work."

Another reason for the decline of the wild giraffe population is the lack of rainfall in Africa due to climate change – something each one of us affects with our everyday actions. A decrease in rainfall means a decrease in the trees that giraffe eat and a decrease in their habitat.

"Cheyenne Mountain Zoo members and guests love our giraffe herd," Schilz said. "It's also very apparent that they love wild giraffe and are passionate to join us in the fight to save them. Together, I know we can make a difference."

Melanie Sorensen

Director of Education

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo

Pickett Canyon Dinosaur Tracks Field Trip Redoux

From Ron Capen,

I am putting out another call for docents, their spouses, and their guests who are interested in going on the Saturday, Oct. 17 field trip to the dinosaur trackways south of La Junta. This is an 8 hour guided auto tour that visits old homesteads and petroglyphs, as well as the dinosaur tracks. The tour requires a 4-wheel drive vehicle, and previously we were limited by the number of 4WD vehicles available. Sandy Flynn, whose sister works in Bent's Old Fort, has arranged for an additional three 4WD pickup trucks with back seats. At this time we can accommodate an additional 8 persons. The tour requires reservations that cost \$15.00/person (\$7.50 if you have a federal senior parks pass). You would have to make your own online reservations (at this time there are 28 spaces left of the 40 allowed on the tour). For more information about the auto tour and to make reservations use this link: <http://www.recreation.gov/tourParkDetail.do?contractCode=NRSO&parkId=74974> , but please do



not make reservations until after you email me and I respond. This is to make certain there is room for you in one of the 3 trucks.

You would need to be ready to leave on the auto tour at the Comanche National Grasslands Headquarters in La Junta at 8:00 am on that Saturday morning. I can help organize carpooling to La Junta once I have the 8 additional persons committed to the field trip.

Sandy has also made a reservation at Bent's Old Fort for 1:00 on Friday, October 16 for a guided tour, \$3.00 per person, and she's hoping our tour guide will be John Carson (grandson of Kit Carson). He works there with Sandy's sister. The tour is about an hour, and after the tour time can be spent on the nature trails or people can go back to some of the areas in the Fort. Parking is about a quarter mile or so from the Fort but there is a shuttle for those who don't wish to walk.

Each car full of persons going to La Junta will need to make their own hotel reservations in La Junta, if they want to stay overnight. Some people are planning to drive from Colorado Springs Saturday morning and drive back to CS after the tour. Some people want to do both Bent's Old Fort and the auto tour and will want to spend Friday night in La Junta, and other combinations are possible.

Please email me when you are ready to commit to going on this field trip. Let me know whether you want to do both the dinosaur tracks auto tour and Bent's Old Fort, or just the auto tour. And if you have questions, of course you should email me. Note that although Caraigh Clarkson is our new field trip coordinator for this year, she and I decided that I

would continue to coordinate this particular field trip since I started it last spring.

Ron Capen (rcapen@coloradocollege.edu)

Zoo Docents Aid Ellicott Wildlife Rehabilitation Center



Docents Judy Schlei, Jeanie Baratono, Marie Poyzer, Kathy Kidd, and Lovice Riffe

On June 21st, Father's Day, joining up with others, five intrepid docents donning their summer zoo t-shirts along with two guests of docents, participated in the three mile "Walk for Wildlife" sponsored by the Ellicott Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. The event took place at Fountain Creek Regional Park and was held as a fund raiser to support the Center's important mission – caring for, healing, rehabilitating, and releasing back our local wildlife including owls, hawks, deer, squirrels, turtles – well you name it. If it is a local critter and is in trouble they will take it in and care for it. Base of operations was in a picnic pavilion in the Duckwood Active Use area.

But an added bonus was the fact that several swallows had built their nests in the rafters and were actively caring for young as we occupied the pavilion. Clockwork exchanges of one adult

for another, no nest was left unattended for even a second as the adults literally entered and left in an instant. We docents were not so agile, though, but did all complete the walk and some of us even won prizes! And an extra bonus, due to our summer Zoo outfits, we were questioned about the Zoo, not only by other participants but other people strolling through the park that day. We met Zoo fans and Zoo wannabe helpers. Jeanie even had to pull out one of her famous cards! Even more we had fun and knew we were giving back to another non-profit animal welfare organization.



Swallows in the rafters!

A Conservation Story

In the June 2015 ZooLine, our own Cynthia Preston told us about her upcoming trip to South Africa. This is a followup article outlining some of the things Cynthia has seen and experienced, particularly the issue of stunted tusk development in the local elephant population.

The Editor

Tusklessness is become more and more common. I went to another sanctuary in Plett and they had taken in a tuskless elephant, basically to remove

her from the wild gene pool. They also had two elephants with nubby trunks. Their trunks were caught in snares and they ripped them out, severing the two fingerlike projections. That really touched me. They are trained to walk with you, trunk in hand, but it is hard for them to get a grip since their trunks are nubby.

Cynthia Preston



Kisha



This is Sally, one of the elephants that Cynthia is working with in a refuge along the Garden Route in South Africa.



A Plains Zebra. Note the shadow pattern with the stripes.

How to Raise a Wild Child, The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature

By Scott D. Sampson

When we were children we spent at least 7 hours a day outside, unstructured time as our parents had sent us outdoors and didn't expect us back until the street lights came on. Today children spend 7 hours a day and more in front of electronic screens. Some schools have even abolished that 15 minutes per day recess. Some estimate the average American child's outdoor unstructured activity time at 7 minutes or less. We, as CMZ docents not only love to teach but love to teach about nature. Sometimes that is an effort reminding us of the Greek fable about Sisyphus, especially in light of the fact that the average child doesn't experience actual nature—"actual" as in being outside in it, watching it, breathing it, feeling it. Our library in the DRC has acquired a new book written by Dr. Scott Sampson, Vice President of Research and Collections and Chief Curator at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. To those of you really in the know, you recognize him as Dr. Scott on the PBS series Dinosaur Train. This book is intended to offer teachers, caregivers, parents, and grand-parents the tools they need to

engender a meaningful and lasting connection between children and the natural world. At the beginning of the book he relates the story of one of his first childhood memories. His mother had walked him down to a neighboring pond where pollywogs were in full hatch. He remembered wading in and his boots filling with water and thinking of the pollywogs swimming around in his boots. He is as excited about nature now as he was then. So, this book is available for all of us wishing to plant similar memories in the minds of our children or grandchildren and our young guests at our wonderful zoo. Please give Joan Adkins a few days to get it catalogued and into the system, but then please check it out and read it.

Lovice Riffe

Manatees show up in North Carolina again as more 'sea cows' leave Florida¹

Researchers say manatees have again been spotted in the marinas and waters in southeastern North Carolina – far from their natural Florida habitat.

The StarNews of Wilmington reported that local researchers have found that the manatees have travelled north to Georgia, the Carolinas and even Virginia.

Erin Cummings with the University of North Carolina Wilmington has charted the “sea cows” in North Carolina waters since the 1990s. Cummings says manatees have been reported in North Carolina dating to the 1930s.

She says manatees swim through open ocean, the Atlantic intracoastal waterway, sounds, bays, rivers and creeks searching for sea grass.



Cummings says there have been nine manatee sightings in North Carolina this year. She thinks there could be a couple of dozen in North Carolina waters.

Only 4 Northern White Rhinos Left on Earth²

(CNN)And then there were four.

Nabire, a female northern white rhino, died of a ruptured cyst on Monday at a Czech Republic Zoo, leaving only four known northern white rhinos on Earth.



Nabire, December 2013

¹ <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jul/30/manatee-north-carolina-florida-sea-cows>

² http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/29/world/northern-rhino-dies/?iid=ob_article_topstories_pool&iref=obnetwork

The 31-year-old rhino's cyst was so huge, it was untreatable, a rhino curator at the Dvur Kralove zoo said in a statement.

"It is a terrible loss. Nabire was the kindest rhino ever bred in our zoo. It is not just that we were very fond of her. Her death is a symbol of the catastrophic decline of rhinos due to senseless human greed," the zoo's director Premysl Rabas said in a statement.

The northern white rhino has been hunted to the brink of extinction for its horn, fueled by the belief in Asia that it cures various illnesses. The highly prized horn is made of keratin -- the same material that makes up human hair and fingernails.

The only living male, 42-year-old Sudan, lives in Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya, under 24-hour armed guard. His horn has been cut off to deter



poachers.

With 1 male left worldwide, northern white rhinos under guard 24 hours.

The fate of the subspecies rests on his armored shoulders, and on the two female northern white rhinos at the conservancy, Fatu and Najin, who also once lived at the Czech Republic Zoo.

"Sudan is currently old and may not be able to naturally mount and mate with a female," said George Paul, a deputy veterinarian at the conservancy.

In addition, he has a low sperm count, experts say.

Najin could conceive, but her hind legs are so weak, she may be unable to support a mounted male.

"There has been recorded mating between different pairs over the last few years, but not conceptions," said Paul.

The fourth remaining member of this dwindling subspecies, Nola, lives at the San Diego Zoo.

The dead rhino's potentially healthy ovary and other tissue has been taken to an Italian laboratory, where her eggs may be harvested for future in vitro fertilization, the zoo said.

The northern white rhino's cousins, the more populous southern white rhino, may serve as surrogate mothers, as could the remaining northern white rhino females.

"It is our moral obligation to try to save them. We are the only ones, perhaps with San Diego Zoo, who have enough of collected biological material to do so. We are aware that our chances are slim, but the hopes are still alive," said Rabas.



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