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## President's Message

*By: Glenna French, President*

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### Greetings Docents:

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo continues to make the changes necessary to make the "Zoo on the Mountain" one of the best in the country. As we look back over the past year, there are a couple of happenings in 2018 that will be etched in Zoo memory. The first is the birth of giraffe calf #200, Penny. Her birth and short life touched the hearts of many people not only here in Colorado but around the world as well. She became an ambassador for her species and through the care, the love, and the devotion given to her by keepers and staff, the world learned the true heart of this Zoo not only for Penny but all the animals housed here. In the near future, she will be remembered with her statue. Won't it be a joy to sit on the bale of hay that will be part of the statue and remember her and her story?

The second event, of course, was the hailstorm of August 6th. That super cell thunderstorm totaled almost every vehicle parked at the Zoo. The damage caused by this storm will take well over a year to completely repair. However, within three days after this storm the only evidence of the destruction was the blue tarps covering skylights along with a few shredded leaves thanks to employees working hard to get things back to normal. Eventually this storm will just be a memory as all the destruction will be repaired and the blue tarps will be gone. This was the worst natural disaster that happened at the Zoo since the devastation caused by the 1965 flood that resulted in massive earth and rocks slides. Restoration from that storm was also completed as quickly as possible. However, the observable reminder of that storm is the massive ditch that you see as you walk across the bridge in Rocky Mountain wild.

Now as Docents move into the 2019/20 Auxiliary year, it is refreshing and exciting to think about what the summer experiences will be like for guests when

Water's Edge – Africa is fully operational. It is all coming together. Seeing the awesome, life-like hippo statues arrive at the Zoo makes the anticipation and excitement build. As Docents we look forward to showing guests and students this new exhibit. We are proud of all we do to support the Zoo and work hard to make sure Zoo guests have those "goosebumps" moments. The last month of this Auxiliary year is scheduled to be very busy with many safaris and tours to be conducted. The Auxiliary is a group of truly incredible, amazing and caring people who without being asked will go beyond their normal required responsibilities to help and assist both the Zoo and fellow Docents. Looking at this organization we are a very diverse group. I am not sure but I think our Docents range in age from their early 30's to their late 80's. Observing this age difference, you realize that there are great opportunities for teaching and learning from Docents at the opposite end of life's journey. It is refreshing to see the respect Docents give each other and understand there is education from what was at the beginning of the Auxiliary, what is now and what will be in the future. On September 21<sup>st</sup>, we will be celebrating this dynamic with the review our 50 years as a volunteer organization that has worked with the Zoo to make guests' experiences educational, fun, and exciting. What a remarkable group! Thank all of you for your contributions in making these 50 successful years. *Glenna French*

## 2018-2019 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

#### May 2019

1 Board Meeting Safari Lodge

8\*\* TE Meeting – Election and Evaluations Safari Lodge

11\*\* IE Meeting – Election & Evaluations Safari Lodge

#### June 2019

5 Board Meeting Safari Lodge

11\*\* Joint IE/TE Meeting – Awards LAML (Lodge at Moose Lake)

#### July 2019

13 IE Meeting Safari Lodge

#### August 2019

7 Board Meeting Safari Lodge

10 IE Meeting Safari Lodge

**REMEMBER:** The May meetings are mandatory. Therefore, TE's should let Glenna French or Nancy Hochman know if they are unable to attend. IE's should notify Ann Marie Jackson or Cris Stoddard. Please notify Glenna or Nancy if you are unable to attend the June Joint Meeting as it is also a mandatory meeting.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**TE Program – May 8** – Bob Jacobs, CC Prof in Neuroscience will teach us all about “The Elephant Brain”.

**IE Program – May 11<sup>th</sup>** – the presenter will be Joanna Husby, Lead Keeper for Monkey Pavilion, who will share stories of the animals under her care and their wonderful personalities!

### REMINDERS FROM THE PRESIDENT

- **King Soopers** rewards program – please make sure you have linked your loyalty card to the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Auxiliary rewards program. If you have a problem in getting this done please contact any Board member
- **Social Networking and Online Communications Policy** – review this document found on page Z-5 of the manual. All Docents have agreed to this policy by signing it when you first became a Docents. Therefore, please review again so you don't inadvertently do something through media or social networks that jeopardizes or harms the reputation of the Zoo.

- **Gate Key Card** – after completion of training all Docents receive a gate key card that allows access to the Zoo. Docents are encouraged to park in the Zoo whenever possible. Remember when using the card to enter the Zoo, flasher should be on. Make sure you close the gate after you enter. As you exit the property, pull forward enough to allow the gate to close behind you and wait to make sure it closes if Zoo employees are not working in the gate house.
- **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – save the date – Saturday, September 21 for a fun celebration.

## FIELD TRIPS

Our Field Trip to Pueblo included 27 Docents and 13 family and friends.

We started out meeting at the Raptor Center where Don Haller met us and, because of the large group, he divided us into 3 groups that rotated thru the Center: The Barn owl talk by Diana Miller; Don talked to us in the actual building which originally was restructured from a big barn; and Coralee took us to the viewing area which contains raptors in permanent residence due to their injuries and also serves as the Educational Center. The only area we were able not to view was the rehabilitation area where birds that were injured would eventually be able to return to their habitats after healed.

Many of these birds became injured as a result of motorists throwing out their trash that then attracted smaller prey for the raptors who were then hit by other vehicles. We also met Marcus the cat, who is the official greeter. His purr is heard throughout the Center.

The next stop was The Pueblo Zoo where we were greeted by the Assistant from the Education Dept., Anne Casey, and 2 Docents. They were our hosts and made us so welcome. We were then given the option of dividing into 2 tour groups. Some of our group that had been to the Zoo in the past, opted to go on their own and meet later at the Cactus Flower Restaurant on the way home. As I visit other Zoos, I find each has its own unique animal habitats and I see the care that Pueblo gives theirs. Some of the animals that are not at CMZoo include the wild painted dogs, camels, red pandas and an interactive farm animal exhibit. The Education goal is as important to staff and Docents at the Pueblo Zoo as it is to us.

This field trip showed us much about our Raptor Friends and what we could do to protect them in their habitat. *Joan Adkins*



Piper (photo by Linnea McDonald)



Osprey bringing fish to the nest and Watusi Cow (photos by Linnea McDonald)

## WANTED – MENTORS AND PRESENTERS

Even though we are still working on getting the 2019 mentor training class fully certified, it is not too early to start thinking about next year.

A mentor is needed for each trainee. At this writing, there are 12 people on the waiting list, with hopes of having a full class of 15 trainees. The mentor is probably a trainee's most important contact with the Docent program. The mentor provides an introduction to the Zoo (if needed), as well as the introduction to the Docent program. The mentor is there to provide support and additional information to his/her trainee during the class. The mentor also supplements the classroom information by teaching the trainee things there is not time to cover in class, like helping them practice cart talks, making sure they know the standard ARV, AM and ECO tour routes, and reinforcing "inside" information like when are the monthly meetings and what is the King Soopers and Safeway card program anyway?

Presenters have an obvious teaching role. While it is possible to study up and learn a particular subject matter, the hardest quality to find in a presenter is good public speaking/presenting skills. Many of you are former school teachers or were otherwise engaged in dealing with groups, so I am sure there is a large pool of great speakers out there.

If you want to be a presenter, please be able to commit to teaching both halves of any particular subject matter (i.e. both the characteristics section and the ecology section). The two halves are generally scheduled 3 – 4 weeks apart. Also, it would be great if you were available to attend the September 25, 2019 Education Committee meeting.



If you want to be a mentor – please do not sign up to be a mentor if you plan to be out of town for more than a week from January – March 2020. Life happens and things come up, but if you know you are planning to travel or otherwise be unavailable to your trainee during that period, this is probably not the year to be a mentor. Also, it would be great if you were available to attend the August 28 Education Committee meeting.

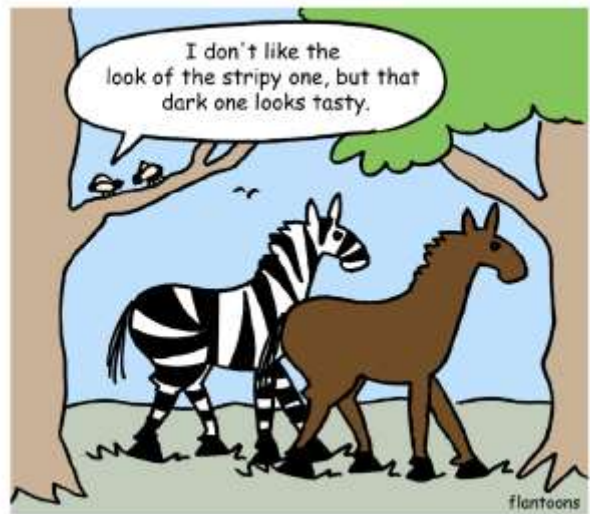
There will be sign-up sheets at the June 8 Joint Meeting. If you are not able to attend that meeting, but are interested in being a mentor or presenter, just send me an e-mail. *Cate Kelly*

## RECENT RESEARCH RESULTS STRENGTHEN HYPOTHESIS THAT ZEBRA STRIPES HELP DETER BITING FLIES

By *Ron Capen*

With video recordings and direct observations, researchers studied the behavior of Tabanid flies (horse flies) around captive plains zebras and uniformly colored horses on a horse farm in Britain (published in PLOS one Feb. 20, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0210831>). The researchers found that fewer flies landed on zebras than on horses per unit of time, although the rate of flies circling around, or briefly touching, zebras was the same as around horses. Detailed analyses of videos (marking the position of flies every 0.02 seconds) showed that when approaching zebras, flies often failed to decelerate in speed (unlike when approaching horses) and just bumped into the zebras and flew away. When cloth coats colored uniformly black, uniformly white, or with faux black and white zebra stripes were placed on horses, far fewer flies landed on the striped coats than on the uniformly colored coats, although the same number of flies landed on the horses' heads, which the coats did not cover. In the words of the researchers, "Averting attack by biting flies is increasingly regarded as the evolutionary driver of zebra stripes..."

HOW THE ZEBRA GOT ITS STRIPES



## CEC REPORT

Our group has almost reached 100% completion of the 2 CEC requirements for the year. Congratulations to all of us. We had a very successful Endangered Species Tour Refresher/Certification in March presented by Jean McKenna, Cate Kelly, Cris Stoddard, and Judy Sondermann. They are still accepting completed quizzes for certification. There were 50 active Docents in attendance and 9 trainees. The presentation on our new exhibit Water's Edge: Africa in April was also well attended by 65 active Docents and 6 trainees. At the Wednesday class Kelley Parker from Development and Jeremy Dillion the Animal Care Manager for ARV spoke and gave us some great information about the physical features of our new exhibit and the animals that will we have. On Saturday Jeff Halter, the Director of Animal Collections, spoke and wowed us with his wealth of information and showmanship. When you see any of these three around the Zoo, extend a big thanks for their assistance in preparing us for the new exhibit. Both days Charlotte Greene presented basic animal information and then a quiz of fun facts. Now's the time to brush up on hippos, penguins, lemurs, ground hornbills, puffins, warthogs and small old world primates (species to be determined most probably NOT the vervet monkey). The new exhibit will be opened in phases this summer. Jeff gave us the date of 15 May for seeding and planting the hippo area. I'm still accepting the Spring Fling if you'd like to have it count on your CEC total. Once again, congratulations to all for a very successful CEC year. *Charlotte Greene*



## SOCIAL CHAIRS REPORT

Saturday, June 8th is the joint IE/TE meeting where we also recognize our 2019 Docents graduates. Following the meeting there will be a potluck luncheon with emphasis on salads. There will be a large sheet cake in honor of the 2019 Docents class. Sign-up sheets will be available at both the IE and TE meetings in May.

We look forward to seeing all Docents at this annual event. *Anne Wardrop and Eileen Derry*

### MY TRIP TO THE NATIONAL ZOO

*by Cris Stoddard*

I chanced to visit the Smithsonian's National Zoo twice during recent business trips. This Zoo is very impressive with 173 acres; the exhibits are all very large and have multiple vantage points. Frederick Law Olmsted, famous for his design of Central Park, designed the original Zoo here, carved out of an area with hills, streams and a deciduous forest. This is one of the prettiest Zoos in the nation!

Of course, this Zoo is known for its pandas! Bei Bei, Mei Xiang's 3rd cub, was noodling around in a tree and then snacking on tasty bamboo when I visited. There is an observation station right in their exhibit with cameras on every corner of the exhibit, for staff and volunteers to study panda's behavior.

They have seven Asian elephants, one of whom is the oldest female in human care in North America at the ripe age of 71 years (her name is Ambika)! The elephant's yard is 4+ acres- with a variety of pools, hills, enrichment and a new barn that replaced their old building. In fact, they do not have many large mammals anymore so that they could focus on rebuilding the elephant barn and yards. They say they will start adding back in the megafauna now that the elephant exhibit is complete. They also have a 1/4 mile elephant trail for their herd for exercise, much like ours. Males and females do share the same yard spaces here.

Their keeper talks consist of a keeper basically being available to guests for questions at specific times, and are less canned talks. They do not use mics and speakers as our keepers do. Not many people pay attention to these talks a result but then you also get them to yourself if you like! I spoke with the lead keeper at Big Cat Hill for about 20 minutes with 2 other guests and it was fab. They are down to one retired female Sumatran tiger -Damai, who is beautiful. They've just received two Amur tigers (Paval and Nikita) from Lincoln Park and the Bronx Zoos for an SSP breeding recommendation. Their lions are retired from breeding after 15 cubs! So their pride is split

up, with their adult boys on hold and the females either spayed or on birth control since they are genetically over-represented now. Just like our pride!

This Zoo has tons and tons and tons of signage (although I saw few people reading any of them). There are volunteers everywhere whose job is to just monitor and record animal behavior. There are also volunteer interpreters with biofacts, who do a really great job. No carts- they must go get the biofacts from a central building somewhere. That program is also managed by the Zoo, so there are formal shifts they sign up to work (minimum of 3 hours/day, three times a month, year commitment).

They also have a Conservation Biology Institute, some 1000 acres and not open to the public, where they are breeding a bunch of different animals for release into the wild. In fact, this Zoo saved the Scimitar-horned Oryx from extinction in the wild by breeding them here and then releasing them into the wild. It's quite the story and you can learn more here:

<https://nationalZoo.si.edu/animals/scimitar-horned-oryx>

The Institute also breeds cheetah, black footed ferrets and many other species for release.

The National Zoo is free to the public and quite beautiful. It is well worth the trip to visit if you find yourself in the DC area!

**(Editor's note: Several years ago the CMZoo conducted a research project about signage and how much time people spent actually reading them – just a few seconds. As a result our exhibit signage numbers and holds less, but perhaps the most important information. Also some signage is really big - like the Palm Oil info and our conservation projects, for instance.)**



*Bei Bei snacking*



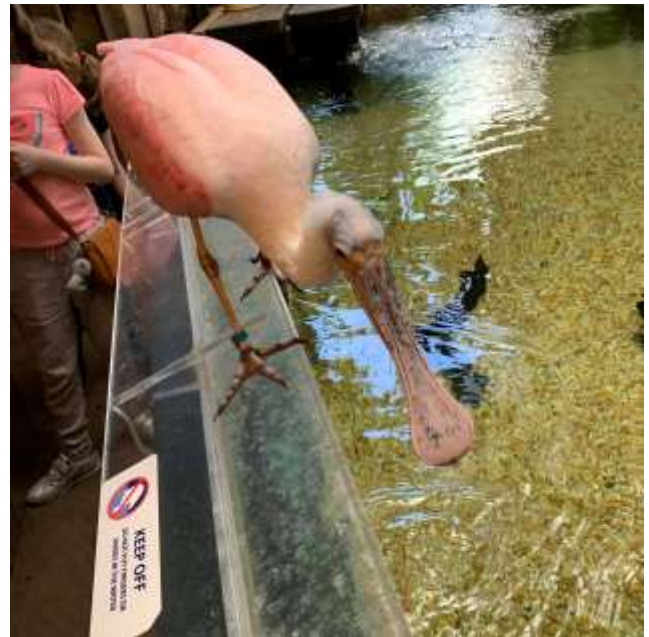
*Scimitar Horned Oryx*



*Clouded Leopard. Look closely.*



*Mixed Exhibit of Hornbill and Meerkats*



*Spoonbill*





**Fennec Fox**



**Sumatran Tiger (burning bright)**



**Sand Cat**

**Panda Observation Station**





CMZ Auxiliary

ZooLine  
May, 2019

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