Ocelots Dinner Program

When: Thursday, February 13, 2019
Where: Treetops Room,
San Diego Zoo
Who: Jessie McInelly
What: Embrace the Bear
Utilizing Seasonality to Encourage Natural Behavior

5:45 to 6:15 p.m. Check-in outside at main gate.
6:00 p.m. Dining area open for seating selection.
6:00 to 6:30 p.m. Cocktails and animal ambassadors.
6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Dinner and program.

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Head Ocelot Report

Happy New Year Fellow Ocelots!

Thank you to the Ocelots for contributing so much to our Grants Program. We don't have a final total quite yet, but I can say we did qualify for the entire matching grant from the Zoo Foundation. The grants committee is doing a great job making the difficult decisions of choosing which grants to fund. Stay tuned.

Your steering committee has been working hard this past fall and winter on our 2020 plans. We have an exciting line up of speakers and events coming up. We will return to TreeTops (at the Zoo), and try Sabertooth Grill (at Elephant Odyssey at the Zoo), in addition to Hunte Amphitheater (at the Safari Park), and hopefully, the party tent at the Zoo will be ready for us in December.

New ideas for fundraising have come from members who answered the Ocelot survey in the affirmative of their willingness to help. Other volunteer members will be offering ideas about what the Ocelots will look like in the future. Stay tuned for new ideas and new opportunities.

Did you know there are only 2 platypuses outside of Australia? And they are at the Safari Park! At April's dinner, we will learn about these odd creatures, and on May 16 we get to see them at a Special Event at the Safari Park. Save the dates!

Reminder: We have changed our email address to sdzgocelots@gmail.com
# Mark Your Calendars

You won’t want to miss a single Ocelots event this year!

**Apr 9:** Jacob Shanks—Platypuses. Hunte Pavilion, Safari Park. Pet Photo Contest

**May 16:** Special Event—Platypuses. Walkabout Australia, Safari Park

**Jun 11:** Todd Speis—Snow Leopards. Sabertooth Grill, Zoo

**Aug 13:** Amanda Lussier—Bighorn Sheep, Treetops, Zoo. Zoo and Wild animal Photo Contest

**Sep 12:** Special Event—Living Coast Discovery Center Chula Vista

**Oct 8:** Steve Metzler—Black Rhino Relocation. Hunte Pavilion, Safari Park

**Dec 10:** Joop Kuhn—African Penguins. ZPA??, Zoo

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Please note that these dates, venues, speakers, and topics are tentative and are subject to change. There is construction scheduled for the Children’s Zoo and our access to the Zoo Party Area (ZPA) may be affected. Our speakers are staff members of SDZG and their schedules may change necessitating a change in our programs.

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# Zoo and Park Happenings

**Mar 20—May 10:** Butterfly Jungle

**Mar 28—Apr 12:** Zoo Spring Events

**May 23—Aug 16:** Summer Safari

**Jun 3, 4:** Mad Night, Safari Park

**Jun 18:** Wild Night Out, Zoo

**Jun 20:** R.I.T.Z., Zoo

**Jun 21—Sep 7:** Night Time Zoo

**Sep 26:** Food & Wine Celebration

**Oct 9-11, 16-18, 22-25:** HalGloween

**Nov 21—Jan 3:** Wild Holidays, Park-

**Dec 10:** Wild Night Out, Zoo

**Dec 11—Jan 3:** Jungle Bells, Zoo

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# Contribute to the Oceletter!

We invite you to submit articles and photographs for the Oceletter.

All content should be submitted electronically to the Oceletter Editor, Paul Brooks, at pbrooksphotos@hotmail.com.

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# Contact Us

The best way to reach a member of the Steering Committee is to use the following e-mail address: sdzgocelots@gmail.com

This e-mail account is monitored frequently, and questions can be routed to the member of the Steering Committee who should handle them.

The following people can be reached directly:

- Kim Bidermann—Head Ocelot (619) 233-7600 kim@bidermann.com
- Theresa Low—Grants/Logo Wear (858) 391-8616 lowtm@earthlink.net
- Paul Brooks—Oceletter Editor (619) 889-9051 pbrooksphotos@hotmail.com
A REVIEW OF OUR LAST DINNER MEETING

Trainers Jessica and Kim greeted the members in attendance with two animal ambassadors. Female red kangaroos like ambassador Ruby are grey in color, and are known as blue flyers by native Australians. Tonka, the golden eagle, drew much appreciation from the crowd.

Kathy Morrison greeted members in attendance and introduced the new members. She also shared the sad news of the passing of long-time Ocelots member Nancy K. Murray.

Ollie Ryder shared a review of the work done by the Frozen Zoo by showing us a photo from 1981 with the freezer labeled “20th Century Ark,” and a letter he received from Dr. Kurt Benirschke. He showed a photo of several of the animals for which the Frozen Zoo had sequenced DNA, and the gaur, for which frozen material had first been used in cloning. Started in 1975, when it was managed by Arlene Kumamoto and Dr. Benirschke, the facility is now managed by Marlys Houck as Director of Biodiversity Banking. Her duties include aligning curation of biomaterial collections such as reproductive cells, tissue cultures, and seeds.

Kim Bidermann, Past Head Ocelot, presented a card and gift for outgoing Steering Committee members Jan Billington and Bill Kolb (Bill was not in attendance this evening). She will be taking on the duties of Head Ocelot once again. The Ocelots have changed the email address to: sdzgocelots@gmail.com.

At this time fund-raising for the 2019 Grants is now closed. But at the dinner Theresa Low shared a photo of a hot holding box that Zoo catering received as a 2018 grant. She also shared a moving story that illustrated how one of the 2019 grant requests was inspired by working closely with the community in Kenya to support conservation as well as human needs. Richard was a pre-teen who herded his family cattle on land adjacent to Nairobi National Park. He hated lions, as they were a threat to his family’s livelihood. After noticing that lions were often scared off by people walking with flashlights, he designed solar battery powered lights that flickered intermittently around the boma at night. After success with his predator deterrent design, Richard went on to attend a TED conference and is now attending university. Our SDZG leopard conservation group in Kenya hopes to provide predator deterrent lighting around community bomas, and plans on setting up camera traps to document the effectiveness of the system.

Cont. on next page
Featured speaker Barbara Durrant, PhD, the Henshaw Chair and Director of Reproductive Sciences at SDZG Institute for Conservation Research, provided a Northern White Rhino update. Her overview highlighted the artificial insemination studies and events at the Nikita Kahn Rhino Rescue Center.

Over the last 41 years SDZG has had 181 rhino births: 98 southern white rhinos with three due, 69 greater one-horned rhinos with two due, and 14 black rhinos. In 2014 the Rhino Rescue Center was built to address the plight of the essentially extinct northern white rhino, spurred by the sentiment by past CEO of SDZG Doug Myers who said, “If not us, who? If not now, when?”

Dr. Ollie Ryder’s team first determined that northern white rhinos (NWR) and southern white rhinos (SWR) are sub-species, which means that they are closely related. So in November 2015 six female SWR were moved from separate reserves in South Africa to the newly-built Nikita Kahn Rhino Rescue Center (RRC). They safely arrived on a Thursday, and the next day the rhino Victoria showed how easily one of the enclosure cables could break and went walkabout, to be found just a mile away. These six young females were to be potential surrogates for NWR embryos as part of a project in conservation in partnership with the Vienna Zoo using cellular technology. The ultimate goal of the project is to produce a genetically varied wild population using both natural and constructed gametes, utilizing Dr. Ryder’s research and the material preserved cryogenically in the Frozen Zoo.

The first step in the process to rescue the NWR was to determine if the females at the RRC were capable of successful pregnancy. Hormone monitoring through training was initiated and proven fairly effective within six months of their arrival to the Safari Park. In working on the hormone profiles it was determined that one of the other 5 rhinos, Wallis, had a regular cycle, but Nikita. Livia, Helene, and Amani were “flat liners.” Ultrasounds showed egg growth in a follicle but no ovulation. Baselines were established with international collaborators on information and through the local trans-rectal ultrasounds on our rhinos in a non-compressed chute, illustrating the value of their operant conditioning training.
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In the meantime, 38 to 53 people at a time were involved in semen collection from the male rhino in one of the field bomas. SDZG vet protocol calls for immobilization with intubation as the safest method for this process, and with a mobile lab the samples could be evaluated in the field. Using a cryopreservation (freezing) method perfected for artificial insemination in horses, Edward was the first SWR to be born from frozen sperm AI in the United States. Utilizing intracytoplasmic sperm injection it takes a single sperm and egg to produce an embryo, which allows for conservative use of limited genetic material available.

The rhino female requires standing sedation for the AI process. Due to the long and complex cervix in white rhinos an extra-long insemination catheter (27 inches) had to be developed. It took three staff to complete the insemination process, utilizing sperm from male Maoto. Edward was born July 28 weighing 148 pounds, which is at the top of the normal range for newborns. On November 21 the second baby SWR born through AI, this time using chilled sperm, was born. The baby, Future, was a healthy 132 pounds.

There is still a lot of work to reach that goal of bringing the northern white rhino back from virtual extinction. Production of in-vitro embryos needs to be developed, followed by embryo transfer of SWR to SWR, and then NWR to SWR. The team is working with UCSD to develop a robotic drive for embryo transplant. It could be used for other rhino species, as well as totally different animal species. An important element of the success of rhino conservation is to find and secure safe wild habitat, and educate the public to decrease the use of rhino horn. While this type of education has been successful in such nations as China, other nations, specifically Vietnam, still consume much of the poached material.

The evening ended with drawing the winners of the Zootique opportunity drawings and Visit-A-Job experience.

Congratulations to the lucky Ocelots who won big at the December dinner!

Fun & Games Basket
Tabby Reed

#EndExtinction
Hand-drawn Tie
John Belfiore

Ocelot Doego Necklace
Katie Kingston

Framed Guapo Phot and Paw Print
Joan Ridgely

2019 Visit-A-Job experience goes to … Kim Bidermann
The 2019 “grants season” has officially ended and I’m excited to share what we accomplished.

- In 2019, 397 grant requests totaling just over $618,000 were received. *(New for 2019: requests were prioritized at the supervisor level before being submitted.)*
- In 2018, 469 grant requests totaling just over $691,000 were received.
- In 2017, 406 grant requests totaling just over $555,000 were received.
- In 2016, 337 grant requests totaling just over $431,000 were received.

With many thanks to you, Ocelots raised over $101,000 for the Grants Program in 2019! This amount was combined with the Development Department’s generous 2 to 1 match and unexpended 2018 grant awards for a total grant award of over $307,000. For the second consecutive year, Ocelots awarded 50% of the grant requests across each of the three campuses, a more balanced distribution to the Institute for Conservation Research (ICR), the Safari Park and the Zoo.

How does this positively impact San Diego Zoo Global (SDZG)?

- Animal welfare with enrichment items, medical devices, behavioral observation equipment, exhibit enhancement and maintenance, and weight scales.
- Plant care with tools for maximizing “home-grown” nutrition for our animal collection, guest education and enjoyment of the beautiful grounds and exhibits.
- Conservation science here in San Diego county and around the globe in the field, lab, classroom, and community.

In 2019 we were also able to provide grant awards to some areas of SDZG that had not previously benefitted from the Ocelots Grants Program. A few of these new awards include a jaguar field study in the Peruvian Amazon, Park gorillas, and penguin, sharks and fish at the Zoo. I look forward to sharing “Grants in Action” updates from the SDZG staff with you.

Thank you for your passion for conservation and dedication to Ocelots.
Zootique

We are changing things up for you in 2020! Be sure to stop by the Zootique tables at the dinners to see what’s new.

Here is a preview of what you can expect at the February dinner:

Opportunity drawings:

- **Bear Lovers Basket** – darling handmade purse, small wood carved bear perched on an interesting rock, bear plush from Montana, and chocolate too

- **The Three Bears Jewelry** – a trio of silver bear-themed earrings, two pairs designed by Karen Power, and a hanging jewelry organizer that is just right

- **Orchid Décor** - burl wood bowl with a silk orchid and a dazzling jeweled frog

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**Introducing the Sweet Tooth Shop**

Grab your cookie cash and shop for take home sweet treats to satisfy your sweet tooth cravings! A limited quantity of baked goods will be available for purchase for **$5.00**. These homemade, tempting and delicious goodies will make a perfect Valentine’s Day treat for you or someone special. We hope you drop by for a visit!
Zootique, Cont.

COMING IN APRIL ….

Enhanced Zoo Experience!

What: San Diego Zoo Inside Look: SURPRISE Tour

Save the Date: **Saturday, May 30, 2020 from 10:00 am - 12:00 noon**

How: Both opportunity ticket sales and drawing will occur at the April dinner (winners do not need to be present to win)

Seven (7) lucky winners will enjoy the Zoo's Inside Look—Surprise 2-hour tour. You will visit locations throughout the Zoo to see animals up close and hear stories of animal care and conservation. This tour includes special experiences at two different animal exhibits, including off-exhibit areas! **Please note Zoo admission is separate and required.**

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Amazing Platypus Gourd Art by Kath Howarth, Ocelots Member

One-of-a-kind designs featuring a platypus swimming gracefully on one side and Aboriginal dot painting on the other. This art piece will make a delightful home décor item and will surely be a conversation starter. Please visit the Zootique table and look at the wonder gourd art being offered exclusively to Ocelots members. As always, thank you supporting the grants program, your generous donations fulfill wishes.

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**Pet Photo Contest** – see *details on next page*. 
Ocelots Pet Photo Contest

We will be holding our 5th annual pet photo contest at our April dinner. The photo contest is just for photos of pets! Just like our other Photo Contest, all proceeds go to the Grants Program.

Entry Instructions:

1. Photos must be prints of domestic animals or pets.
2. Photo prints should not be larger than 5 x 7 inches.
3. The entry fee is $10 per photo. There is no limit to the number of photos you can submit, and you do not have to be present at the dinner to enter.
4. Please PRINT YOUR NAME on the back of each photo.
5. Send your photos with payment no later than Wednesday, April 1, to: Marcia Schofield, P.O. Box 686, Solana Beach, CA 92075-0686. Checks should be made payable to ZSSD Ocelots.

Contest Rules:

1. Photos will be displayed between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. at our April 9 dinner.
2. Dinner attendees will receive two voting tickets and will vote for their top two choices.
3. A prize will be awarded to each of the top three photographers receiving the highest number of votes. No more than one prize will be awarded per photographer.
4. Submit any questions to sdzgocelots@gmail.com
GRANTS IN ACTION

Zoo Catering Staff: Heated Banquet Cart/Cabinet

Insulated food cabinets, also known as hot boxes, help keep food at safe serving temperatures during transport. For large or multiple catering events on the same day, the Catering Team needs multiple hot box units. There are many times they need to rent two or more hot boxes for adequate coverage. The price to rent a single hot box is $281.00. Renting the equipment continues to happen on a monthly basis and is a significant expense to the Retail Department. Ocelots funded a hot box for the Catering Team—lowering overall operating expenses and helping to ensure hot meals at catered events.

From Chef Carissa: Just wanted to send out a big THANK YOU to the Ocelots for our new Hot Box! We are extremely appreciative and it makes all the difference in the world. Thanks from the entire Culinary Team!

In the photo, the Culinary Team proudly show their new hot box and pointing out the “golden ticket” – a metallic gold sticker that states the item was made possible by the Ocelots.
Ocelots enjoy a special relationship with San Diego Zoo Global. While having fun at many educational dinners and other special events at the San Diego Zoo and Safari Park, Ocelots raise money to support the Ocelots Grants Program. Departments within the San Diego Zoo, Safari Park, and Institute for Conservation Research as well as conservation programs throughout SDZG are eligible to apply for these grants.

**About the Ocelots**

**Diego**

the ocelot, pictured above, was purchased for the San Diego Zoo by the Ocelots in 2005. Diego is a working member of the Education Department!

**Dafyd**

the ocelot, pictured above, lived at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park in an enclosure funded by the Ocelots in 2011.