

2017 AAZK's Bowling For Rhinos  
"A Partnership in Conservation"  
*Presented by Carol McCallum*  
*Bowling for Rhinos Program Manager*

**Introduction: A New Chapter for Bowling for Rhinos**

In 2017 we began a new chapter in the Bowling for Rhinos story. With the retirement of long time BFR Program Manager Patty Pearthree in 2016, a new AAZK committee was formed. The Bowling for Rhinos committee consists of six members dedicated and driven to work hard to keep BFR successfully moving forward. Each member has taken over a specific responsibility to ensure that BFR continues to grow and that each year we see increased participation from our membership. Of course, we also strive to see an increase in funds raised each year. We are here to serve and assist you in making your events successful. Questions and comments are always welcome.

Carol McCallum is the BFR Program Manager. She has been a keeper for over 15 years of everything from frogs to big cats. Currently, the Conservation Education Coordinator at Jenkinson's Aquarium in New Jersey, she is also assistant supervisor of their herp collection and owl keeper. A lifelong passion for wildlife and the environment keeps her busy. Carol is involved with many conservation organizations and initiatives such as Polar Bears International, NNOCCI, AZA's Aquarium Conservation Partnership, EPA's Trash Free Waters, Frog Watch, AZA SAFE program and AAZK's Conservation Committee. Called a crazy cat lady by her friends, she also works with Joa's Arc, a special needs animal rescue. She is currently Mom to 5 kitties, two of which are special needs, and one cranky bearded dragon.

Kym Janke is the BFR Program Vice Manager. Kym is the lead keeper in Animal Connections - Children's Zoo at the San Diego Zoo. She has been involved in AAZK and BFR for over 10 years and also volunteers for the Cheetah Conservation Fund. She is happily married and has two four legged kids, Skyla (cat) and Sierra (dog), but can often be found with a foster dog from a great local rescue organization. When not caring for animals she enjoys travelling and spending time outdoors. Camping and hiking are some of her favorite activities.

Lisa Haggadone is your Event Coordinator. She is responsible for communicating with AAZK chapters to get important information such as BFR contact information and event dates. Born and raised in Brookfield, WI, Lisa has always had a love for animals. She graduated from Coastal Carolina University with a Marine Science Degree and a Biology Minor. She has worked with animals for over 9 years, however working with hoofstock was where her obsession for rhinos began. She began working for Natural Encounters, Inc. in 2014 with the Winged Encounters show in Orlando and in February 2017 became a certified professional bird trainer. She became an active member of AAZK in 2016 and was excited to get more involved in the organization after attending her first conference. In her free time she enjoys reading, running, relaxing at the beach, trying new restaurants and spending time with her cats. She is also a member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE).

Kate Clemens is our Communications Liaison. She is responsible for sending out BFR announcements and reminders through AAZK's social media as well as emails. Throughout her life Kate has always had a growing passion for animals. That passion inspired her to pursue a degree in Animal Science focusing on Human and Animal Interactions from the Ohio State University. She continued to gain experience in all aspects of the animal industry from domestic to livestock. Her career path eventually led her to a life in exotic animal care and conservation. Kate's current position at the Birmingham Zoo includes focusing on rhino conservation. Kate also serves as a board member for the Rhino Man organization. Due to Kate's experience in animal care, and understanding of the poaching crisis, she strives to make a connection between people and rhinos. She believes that the more people care, the more we can accomplish together.

Kevin Shelton is the Conservation Coordinator. He is liaison to our BFR conservation partners - LEWA, International Rhino Foundation (IRF) and Action for Cheetahs (ACK). Kevin spent 16 years in the zoo and aquarium field until becoming a consulting ecologist 12 years ago. He now works performing wildlife surveys, wetland restoration, and habitat evaluations. Kevin has been an AAZK member for nearly 30 years and was very active while a zookeeper serving on the Board of Directors for 6 years and as President for 2 years in addition to various chapter positions. He also served as an accreditation inspector for AZA. Kevin has been supporting BFR activities for 25 years and is happy to be a part of the BFR Committee. He has been to Lewa 8 times, leading trips there to support their efforts. He has been married for 11 years and has a 7-year-old son. They enjoy playing board games, camping, fishing, and travel (especially to Lewa).

AND... she just couldn't leave us! Patty Pearthree is the Trip Coordinator. She is responsible for communicating with all the trip winners and making arrangements for those trips. Patty is a Michigan State, Santa Fe Teaching Zoo & Indiana University Graduate. She was a Senior Keeper in the forest biome at the Indianapolis Zoo for 10 years before becoming a full time parent. With both boys now in college, Patty continues as a professional pet sitter but after 15 years is seeking a more full time position. Patty now voluntarily leads zoo group safaris to Kenya to show others how their BFR dollars are put to work in the field. This year she lead her 32nd group to Lewa.

### **Why do we bowl for rhinos?**

The black rhino is on AAZK's logo. That obligates us to help save them and all rhino species from extinction. In 1990 Bowling for Rhinos became national AAZK's signature fundraiser. Through our collective efforts we have helped secure a future for not only rhinos but their habitats and all the animals that share those habitats. Commitment is key to forming and strengthening the partnerships we make with conservation organizations, and to the saving these animals.

### **Our Accomplishments**

The most successful conservation programs involve long-term commitment. That type of commitment is ongoing with our conservation partners : Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (LWC), International Rhino Foundation (IRF), and Action for Cheetahs (ACK). The AAZK Bowling for Rhinos (BFR) fundraiser has raised over \$6.6 million since 1990 through the hard work and dedication of AAZK chapters and other volunteers. 2016 proved to be yet another record breaking year with just over \$600,000 raised. AAZK had 110 chapters in 2016 - 78 had BFR events and 8 made donations separate from an event. The funds from 2017 are just starting to come in. So far this year BFR events have raised almost \$29,000. 100% of funds

raised through BFR events go directly to conservation programs. Our two primary rhino conservation partners, Lewa and IRF each receive a 45% share of the total funds raised. Action for Cheetahs receives 8%. The final 2% is set aside to fund the BFR Conservation Resource Grant.

### **Our Conservation Partners**

Anna Merz went to Kenya seeking a serene retirement but became so appalled by the slaughter of black rhinos that she helped start a reserve with Ian Craig and his family to protect them. What started out in the 1980's as a 5,000 acre rhino sanctuary on the Craig family cattle ranch has now become one of Kenya's most successful private wildlife conservancies and a model for community based conservation worldwide. The Lewa Wildlife Conservancy is now over 72,000 acres and as of January 2017, is home to 83 black rhino and 74 white rhino. That is approximately 15% of Kenya's entire rhino population. Lewa is also home to yet another critically endangered species, the Grevy zebra. The approximately 300 Grevy zebra living on Lewa represent a significant proportion of the remaining global population. Lewa is home to the Big Five as well as other commonly occurring species such as the giraffe, ostrich, impala and over 400 bird species. Having now partnered with other private lands, conservancies and surrounding communities Lewa's conservation initiative is working and is globally recognized.

In 1993, in response to the escalating crisis facing all five rhino species, the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) was founded. The IRF is involved in programs both in the wild and in captivity, both of which IRF believes are critical for the survival of rhinos. Sumatran and Javan rhinos are likely the world's most critically endangered land mammals. AAZK's Bowling for Rhinos program has helped to conserve these two Indonesian species since 1996. Javan rhinos now number about 60 animals and Sumatran rhinos number no more than 100 in four sites in Indonesia. Sumatran rhinos have had a decline of more than 70% of their population over the last 20 years – but not in the areas in which AAZK supports their conservation. AAZK's BFR supports the Indonesian Rhino Protection Units, the backbone of protecting both species. AAZK's hard work to raise funds through Bowling for Rhinos ensures that AAZK plays a critical role in the long-term survival and recovery of Indonesian rhino populations. By the beginning of the 20th century, hunting and habitat loss had reduced the Greater one-horned or Indian rhino to fewer than 200 individuals in northern India and Nepal. Thanks to strict protection implemented by Indian authorities, the population has rebounded to more than 3,345 today. Despite these successes, however, Indian rhinos are still threatened by poaching, habitat loss and more. As 70% of the world's population of Indian rhino live in one park their numbers could be decimated by disease or a natural disaster. In 2010 and 2011, IRF received what was known as the AAZK Conservation Resource Grant. These funds provided radio collars for Greater one-horned, or Indian rhinos, that were being relocated as part of the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 Program. Launched in 2005, Indian Rhino Vision 2020 is an ambitious effort to have a wild population of Indian rhinos spread over seven protected areas in the Indian state of Assam by the year 2020 which will create a larger, safer and more stable population.

Action for Cheetahs in Kenya's (ACK) mission is to promote the conservation of cheetahs through research, awareness and community participation. The cheetahs historic range has been reduced by about 89%. The future of the cheetah is threatened by land fragmentation, loss of critical habitat, loss of prey species and conflict with people. Cheetahs encounter conflict with farmers when the loss of their natural prey compels them to kill livestock. Farmers often kill the cheetah in retaliation. Habitat loss presents a

major threat to cheetahs. As human populations grow they infringe on the open grasslands that cheetahs need by building new communities, roads and agricultural needs. In 2009, AAZK BFR started supporting Action for Cheetah's efforts.

### **Sponsor Support**

Bowling for Rhinos supports these deserving organizations but BFR has committed sponsors as well. In 2004 the Blue Rhino gas company became the national sponsor for Bowling for Rhinos. The company is extremely conservation minded and uses the white rhino as their logo. They have supported BFR with approximately \$135,000 to date. They maintain a Save the Rhino page on their website as well. Zarraffas Coffee of Australia became a sponsor in 2013 having supported BFR with approximately \$86,500 in contributions so far. They have held BFR events in Australia over the years as well.

We wish to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to both companies for their continued support and look forward to continuing to save rhinos together.

### **It's Not Just Bowling Anymore!**

Bowling remains the number one fundraising event for BFR but over the years chapters have become very creative. New events have included family friendly, adult only and even "no attendance necessary" fundraisers. Picnics, animal art auctions, coin collections, curling, sailing, dancing, trivia nights, wine tastings, rummage sales, candle and candy bar sales, 5k walk/runs, and more! So many ways to raise money for BFR! Of course, if your chapter cannot hold a BFR event you can still help by making a donation. Back in 1990, 35 chapters raised \$138,000. Today over 80 chapters participate and we have surpassed the \$600,000 mark. That is an amazing accomplishment but we must keep moving forward towards the next goal of \$750,000 annually with 100% participation from all AAZK chapters.

### **BFR Event Guidelines**

Once you have decided to hold an event you must have your event sanctioned by AAZK. There is a \$25 registration fee (payable to AAZK) to receive a sanction from AAZK to hold a BFR event. Once your fee is received you will be emailed a BFR Event Kit which contains all the guidelines and forms required to hold a BFR event. The \$25 fee covers a portion of the administrative costs so that 100% of all donations can go directly to rhino conservation. Please do use the "DONATION" button on the AAZK website to forward the registration fee or event monies. If needed, chapters can call the AAZK office to pay the fee by credit card at (520) 298-9688 or contact [ed.hansen@aazk.org](mailto:ed.hansen@aazk.org). Please forward all BFR registration fees (payable to AAZK) and BFR event monies (payable to AAZK/BFR) to:

AAZK-BFR

8476 E. Speedway Blvd.

Suite 204

Tucson, Arizona 85710-1728



### **Trips to Lewa and Indonesia!**

AAZK, in conjunction with Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (LWC) and the International Rhino Foundation (IRF), continues to support the Bowling for Rhinos conservation program by coordinating overseas trips to LWC sanctuaries in Africa and IRF sanctuaries in Indonesia each year. Trip winners are the **top four** fundraisers of an annual Bowling for Rhinos event as identified by each chapter on their BFR financial statement. To be eligible to win the trips BFR event funds and financial statement must be turned into AAZK by the September 1st deadline. The **top two fundraisers** get the choice of a trip destination - Africa or Indonesia. The third trip winner then chooses from the remaining two destinations. The fourth trip winner will be awarded the remaining destination. Trip winners to each destination need to travel together. For Africa, travel is typically scheduled for February or March of the following year. For Indonesia, travel is typically scheduled between May and July of the following year.

### **The Anna Merz Champion Award (AMC Award)**

There is one more way to win a trip! The purpose of this award is to randomly select an individual AAZK member whose passion and drive for the AAZK signature conservation project, Bowling for Rhinos, reflect the values of the late Lewa Co-founder and Rhino Champion, Anna Merz. This individual may have mastered "the power of one" - where the ideas, passion, and drive of one person can reach out to others and inspire them to save a species from extinction. This individual, who will be nominated by their chapter, may be the highest fundraiser within the Chapter's BFR event, an individual who coordinates a Bowling for Rhinos event year after year, or be an ever-present, reliable AAZK Chapter member always ready to volunteer and fundraise.

### **Nomination Procedure**

- Each qualified AAZK Chapter may nominate one (1) individual for the AMR Champion Award.
- Nominations open 1 January and close at midnight 1 August of each calendar year.
- Chapter nominations may be sent by electronic mail to the Conservation Committee at [Conservation@AAZK.org](mailto:Conservation@AAZK.org) or by US Mail to the AAZK Administrative Office.

### **Qualifications for the AMC Award**

- (1) The Chapter nominee shall be an AAZK member in good standing involved with Bowling for Rhinos for at least three (3) years.
- (2) The Chapter nominee shall be nominated by his or her peers who have witnessed their dedication to Bowling for Rhinos through the same AAZK Chapter, zoo, aquarium or related facility.
- (3) The nominee may not be a previous recipient of the Anna Merz Rhino Champion Award (formally – AAZK Honorary Trip) or have been awarded a previous BFR Lewa or IRF trip as one of the highest fundraisers.
- (4) The nominee shall not be Committee Chair or Vice Chair, Program Manager or Vice Manager, members of the AAZK Conservation Committee or a current member of the AAZK Board of Directors.

As this conference is taking place in August, the 2017 Top 4 fundraiser trip winners have not been determined. They will be announced at a later date.

### **2015 Indonesia Trip Winners**

Ann Knutson (San Diego) and Allycia Darst (Lincoln Park Zoo) traveled to Indonesia in July 2016.

### **2016 Trip Winners**

Damian Lechner (Los Angeles) and Jenny Tibbott (San Diego) were the Lewa trip winners. They traveled in March 2017.

Angie Snowie (Toronto) and Melissa Vindigni (North Carolina) were the Indonesian trip winners. They travel in July 2017.

### **Bowling for Rhinos Conservation Resource Grant**

**Application deadline is June 1st of each calendar year.**

This competitive grant is designed to fund projects focused on rhino conservation and research. The total funds available in a given year is dependent upon the funds raised by the BFR Program in the year prior to the award. This competitive grant is designed to fund projects focused on rhino conservation and research. Successful proposals will reflect AAZK values and meet award criteria in one of four categories:

#### **Category 1 – In-situ Rhino Conservation and Research-**

Short-term (less than one year), specific, field research projects on African or Asian rhino species conducted by an individual or organized group of individuals working under the auspices of a zoological facility, educational entity or AAZK Conservation Partner.

#### **Category 2 – In-situ Community, Educational or Medical Programs (Africa or Asia)-**

Community education, school support or medical programs developed or administrated by an individual working under the auspices of a zoological facility, educational entity or AAZK Conservation Partner restricted to the continents of Africa or Asia. Preference may be given to local programs established and/or administrated by LWC (Lewa Wildlife Conservancy), IRF (International Rhino Foundation) or ACK (Action for Cheetahs in Kenya) endorsed partners.

#### **Category 3 – In-situ Species Conservation-**

Short-term (less than one year), specific, field research projects on any species that shares the exact same ecosystem as: Asian, Java, Sumatran, and African Black or White rhino.

#### **Category 4 – Ex-situ Rhino Conservation and Research –**

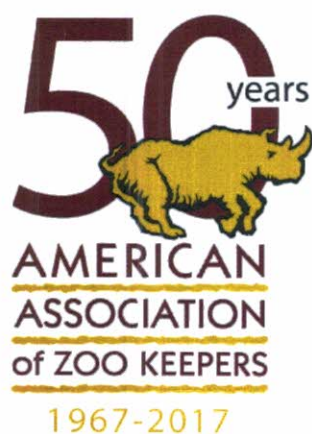
Short-term (less than one year), specific, zoological research projects on African or Asian rhino species conducted by an individual or organized group of individuals working under the auspices of a zoological facility, educational entity or AAZK Conservation Partner. Researcher(s) must be able to demonstrate evidence of partnership with a rhino conservation entity operating in Asia or Africa combined *with* a tangible benefit to an in-situ conservation project.

### **Eligibility**

Affiliation or partnership with AAZK is not required, but preference may be given to AAZK Members or Conservation Partners.

The BFR-CRG application and instructions can be found at [www.aazk.org/bowling-for-rhinos/bowling-for-rhinos-conservation-resource-fund-grant/](http://www.aazk.org/bowling-for-rhinos/bowling-for-rhinos-conservation-resource-fund-grant/)

# Proceedings of the 44th Annual National Conference of the American Association of Zoo Keepers, Inc.



**August 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Papers**

