

DOCENT COUNCIL

July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

Docent Executive Committee

President Chris Shuttlesworth
Vice President Sandra Shure
Secretary Ann Clemenza
Treasurer Jane Searight
At Large: Mary Sutton, Krista Barnard, Dexter Lowry

Docent Committees:

Docent Recruitment Sandra Shure
Special Events (Ardene Anderson)
Continuing Education Ann Clemenza
Equipment Mary Sutton
Joint Zoo/Board of Directors Representative Dexter Lowry
Docent Training Class (Julia Heidmann), Sandra Shure
Docent Notebook (Julia Heidmann), Krista Barnard
Status (Georgeanne Wedergren)
Docentinel & Communications(Terry Jelley) & Chris Shuttlesworth
Fund Raising Mary Sutton
Nomination Committee

() = non-elected members of Docent Council serving on the Committees



DOCENT COUNCIL HISTORY

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Docent Council is to provide educational services in conjunction with the San Francisco Zoological Society's Education Department. Since its founding in 1968, dedicated volunteer docents have provided guided tours and answered visitor questions for over 200,000 children and adults.

Qualifications

To qualify as a docent, one must enjoy working with the public, have an interest in animals and wildlife conservation and be both willing and able to walk for several hours. Training classes meet one day a week for ten weeks with members of the Docent Council, zoo staff and qualified professionals as instructors. Trainees become thoroughly acquainted with the zoo and its many species. After graduation, new docents are expected to fulfill a minimum commitment of three educational activities per month or a total of six hours per month.

Activities

In addition to providing free guided tours of the zoo, docents conduct a very popular pre-school program and other children's classes. These classes involve field activities, possible glimpses of zoo life behind the scenes and up-to-date information about zoo animals.

Docents also help in many other areas around the zoo, including volunteer work in other zoo projects, animal observations and research, publishing a bimonthly newsletter (the ***Docentinel***), and any other area where they can be of help to the zoo.

Continuing Education

A Continuing Education Committee organizes special field trips to other zoos, animal centers, etc. as part of continuing education for docents. Advanced seminars on topics ranging from conservation to Australian animals are also arranged each year. Informal brown bag lunches are held with staff and keepers on subjects in which docents may be interested, or new exhibits, and which will help them with tours and stations.

History

In the spring of 1973, the ZooMobile outreach program was begun. Since then, through the efforts of many dedicated docents, ZooMobile has expanded into an animal facility of its own (the Animal Resource Center or ARC). Grade-appropriate lessons, based on the California Science standards teach children and adults about wildlife appreciation and conservation.

In December 1980, a double-wide trailer (approximately 1,600 square feet) to be used as Education Department office and classroom space was funded by a grant from the S.H. Cowell Foundation. Purchase of equipment and furnishings was made possible by a contribution from the Levi Strauss Horne Office Community Involvement Team and the Levi Strauss Foundation. This classroom space made possible the first weekend training class in January 1981 resulting in the implementation of a weekend interpretation program.

In June of 2001, the Education Department moved into the 11,000 square foot new Connie & Bob Lurie Education Center, with two classrooms, offices, lounge, library, reading room, conference room, and Great Hall.

All of our current activities are ongoing, and now growing educational services. With such a dedicated group of trained volunteers, great things are happening. On top of all that, the docents do have fun!

(Rev. 10/01)