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A NEWSLETTER FOR MICKE GROVE ZOO VOLUNTEERS

The Wild Times

Micke Grove Zoo is Celebrating Volunteers

Join us for an evening of celebration.
Say “*thank you*” to the wonderful volunteers and staff who make Micke Grove Zoo great ... and bid “farewell” to the lorikeets.

Friday, October 1st
5:30 p.m. Hors d’oeuvres reception
6:00 p.m. Recognition program
RSVP to the Zoo Office at
209 331-2010
or info@mgzoo.com



Helping guests enjoy Lorikeets! is just one of the many ways Volunteers have made a difference at Micke Grove Zoo.

Thank You, Volunteers

Welcome to our new Micke Grove Zoo Volunteers and thank you to all whose gifts of time and talent assist the Zoo staff.

Response to our call for volunteers has been gratifying. Over 60 new recruits completed training over the past six months. *Your help* is vital as Micke Grove Zoo continues to provide quality exhibits and engaging programs for close to 140,000

visitors each year. MGZ volunteer assistance is essential for providing educational services and enriching guest experiences.

Volunteers have enabled us to offer family learning opportunities at our new interpretive modules. Enjoying lorikeets would not have been possible without the valuable help provided by *Lorikeet Attendants*. *Keeper Aides* continue to provide vital assistance to MGZ’s small, dedi-

cated keeper staff as they maintain quality exhibits and strive to ensure safe zoo operations for guests, employees and the animals under their care.

Thank you to all for your generosity of time and energy that benefits Micke Grove Zoo, its visitors and the community we serve.

Ken

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*Those who can, do.
Those who can do
more, volunteer.*



Annamarie, always an educator, is shifting her emphasis

Meet Annamarie Alteri

Hello! My name is Annamarie Alteri, and I have joined the MGZ Education Department just this month. I have spent the last year working at Micke Grove Zoo in animal care, and one of my key duties in education is to get the animals in the Hunter Building out into the Zoo for educational presentations. This is something I plan to do with your help!

Starting right away, we will be accelerating animal handling training so that more of you will have an opportunity to introduce our education animals to the public. Our goal is to teach visitors about these animals, and to have fun while doing it!

In addition to working on animal presentations, I will be working, along with Diane, on updating and improving the educational modules. We want to be sure that each of you goes out into the zoo armed with the information you need to do the best job you can of educating the public. In some cases, where appropriate, we may also choose to pair a live animal with a module.

I have already met some of you, and look forward to getting to know each one of you!

Annamarie

Zoo events create special memories for families ... and plenty of opportunity for volunteer involvement.

SPECIAL EVENTS

GET INVOLVED & SPREAD THE WORD

In the coming months, we will be hosting two popular events held each year at Micke Grove Zoo.

Saturday, October 30th, **Howl-O-Ween at the Zoo** will be held from 10:00am to 3:00pm. All children wearing a costume will received free admission to the Zoo for the day and will be able to participate in a costume parade. Each child will also receive a treat bag and will be able to visit trick or treat stations throughout the grounds. Halloween-themed games and crafts will provided.

This is one of the busiest days of the year at the Zoo and your help would be appreciated.

ZooLights is an annual holiday celebration that will be held the first three Friday and Saturday evenings in December. With the entire Zoo decorated in lights, the evenings



MGZ Docent Barbara Fernandes and husband George enjoying the Ice Cream Safari.

include refreshments, games and children's crafts and musical entertainment. Each family has the opportunity to have a picture taken with Santa Claus.

If you can help with *Howl-O-Ween*, or with any of the six evenings of *ZooLights*, please let us know.

[There are special volunteer sign-up sheets for both of these events in the Hunter Education building.](#)

We would really appreciate your support!

A Word From Diane

Thanks to all of you who participated in the six-week training program and are now working in your chosen program area. I hope that you are enjoying your work.



ZAP volunteers and MGZ Docents now

have the monthly calendar sign-ups hanging on the kitchen wall in the Hunter Building. Please select a minimum of two shifts (10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.) per month prior to the beginning of each month. The calendar will then be e-mailed to each of you.

If you are unable to work a shift, please contact me at 331-2138 or at zooed@sjpgov.org with a detailed message, including your full name, phone

number, e-mail address, date you are unable to work and alternate date you can work. I will confirm the new date with you.

Keeper Aides and Lorikeet volunteers can sign up with Kelly in the MGZ Office.

Diane

63 Volunteers Complete Training

Revitalizing the ranks of Micke Grove Zoo volunteers began with recruitment and training last March. In two six-week sessions, 63 individuals completed this year's training programs and are now serving the Zoo in several capacities.

Providing learning experiences, assisting with animal care and exhibit maintenance, staffing special events and monitoring the seasonal lorikeet exhibit are among the many ways that volunteers contribute to a *great little Zoo*.

Without volunteers much of what Micke Grove Zoo is able to accomplish would not be possible. With their valuable help, Zoo staff is able to ensure that the guest experience is enriching, leaving

visitors with a better understanding of wildlife and of today's conservation challenges and opportunities.

With growth in Micke Grove Zoo programs, and with typical turnover in the ranks of all staff, new volunteers are always in demand.



One of the two MGZ Volunteer classes graduating this year

For those with a fascination for nature and wildlife, who enjoy sharing their interest and knowledge with others or who want to assist in the care of zoo animals, please consider joining the *Micke Grove Zoo Team*.

Volunteer Training 2011

When: Six weeks - beginning Saturday, January 22, 2011

Where: Alice S. Hunter Building - Micke Grove Zoo

For information: www.mgzoo.com or 209 331-2010

ZAP Volunteers— Learning While Teaching

Zoo Ambassador Program, or ZAP, provides an opportunity for young teens to get involved with Micke Grove Zoo by bringing the Zoo's conservation education messages to others.

For those ranging from 12 to 16 years of age who are interested in animals, the ZAP program provides an opportunity to develop that interest while playing a vital role in providing information for

Zoo guests. ZAP volunteers also take part in the care of small animals used in programming.

What a great opportunity to learn by doing!

"Volunteers are not paid -- not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless."



ZAP Volunteers Rachel Straight and Sean Epperson armed with knowledge and biofacts

MGZ Docents—Rebuilding the Team



In 1980 Micke Grove Zoo graduated its first class of volunteer MGZ Docents. For well over 25 years this dedicated group established and delivered programs that became a strong element in the educational fabric of our community.

Over the past several months, we have enjoyed a resurgence in adult volunteers interested in learning more about wildlife and in sharing their knowledge and skills.

Never before has the need for environmental education been more significant. As more of everyone's time is spent in urban settings and interacting with electronic media, environmental literacy has suffered.

Zoos bring people closer to nature. And those working in zoos can strengthen individual understanding of our environment ... in its complexity, vulnerability and resilience.

Docents are among those who enrich our lives by promoting understanding and appreciation of wildlife and wild places. For this we thank them and look forward to continued growth in the ranks of these very special MGZ volunteers.



Micke Grove Zoo
11793 N Micke Grove Rd
Lodi, CA 95240-9499

Phone: 209 331-2010
Fax: 209 331-7271
E-mail: info@mgzoo.com

*Promoting the stewardship
of nature ...*

www.mgzoo.com

Volunteer Highlights

By the numbers ...

4193 + = Total Zoo Volunteer Hours 2009-10

\$33,544+ = Dollar value (at minimum wage)

Volunteer Programs:

- Keeper Aides
- Docents
- ZAP Teens
- Lorikeet Attendants
- Zoo Birthday Party Assistants
- Special Events Volunteers
- C3O2 Program with Tokay High School
- Scout projects
- Community service projects

... and many, many more



One of 2010's two MGZ Volunteer Training classes



Leah, Caleb and Shiloh Pfeifer have been longstanding MGZ volunteers, assisting with program animal care and interpretation.