NEWS RELEASE
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The Santa Barbara Zoo Announces the Addition of Five New Board Members

The Santa Barbara Zoo is pleased to welcome five new members to its Board of Directors: Brian Kerstiens, Derek Shue, Eileen Dill, Ginni Dreier, and Jesse Perez.

(February 27, 2020) Santa Barbara, CA - The Santa Barbara Zoo is pleased to welcome five new members to its Board of Directors: Eileen Dill, Ginni Dreier, Brian Kerstiens, Jesse Perez and Derek Shue. The Zoo’s Board works to support the organization’s mission and dedication to the preservation, conservation, and enhancement of the natural world and its living treasures through education, research, and recreation.

Brian Kerstiens is a private wealth analyst with City National Bank’s Private Banking team in Montecito. He is responsible for providing investment portfolio analytics and financial planning to high-net-worth individuals, families, and professionals. Brian has over 12 years of professional experience in the financial services industry and earned his bachelor of science in business administration and MBA in financial planning from California Lutheran University. He is a Certified Financial Planner, holds the Certified Trust and Financial Advisor (CTFA) certification, and is a licensed securities representative.

As an active community member, Brian volunteers at numerous nonprofit events each year and is a member of United Way of Santa Barbara County’s Young Leaders Society. He will Chair the Santa Barbara Zoo’s Community Relations Committee this year. Brian has wonderful memories of spending time at the Zoo while growing up in Santa Barbara. He and his wife, Thalia, and their young son, James, are continuing this family tradition and are Santa Barbara Zoo members.

Derek Shue is Executive Vice President and Partner at Giffin & Crane General Contractors. The son and grandson of builders, he has worked at all levels of construction, and quickly proved himself to be a leader in the construction industry. In his leadership role with Giffin & Crane, Derek lends his problem-solving skills and creativity to lead teams building custom homes in our beautiful Santa Barbara community. Creating and fostering an environment of teamwork and
working with others for a common goal motivates him in both his professional and volunteer efforts.

A native of the Monterey Peninsula, Derek has lived in Santa Barbara for more than 13 years. He is a member of the Facilities Committee at the Santa Barbara Bowl and will serve as Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee at the Santa Barbara Zoo this year. Outside of work, Derek enjoys live music with his wife, Ashleigh, and spoiling their pup, Jake. He also enjoys running the trails and riding his motorcycle through the Santa Barbara foothills.

Eileen Dill is the owner of Eileen Dill Design, a design business that she has owned for two decades. She currently focuses on private clients. Married for 26 years, Eileen and her husband Brent have one adult son, Alexander, who recently graduated from Westmont. They moved from San Luis Obispo to Montecito five years ago and have enjoyed making this community their home. The Zoo and the animals have been a big part of her family’s life for years. They have been Premier Foster Feeders since 2013, most recently sponsoring Bangori (Western lowland gorilla). Eileen volunteers and supports The Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation, most recently chairing their event. She is also a member of Santa Barbara Polo and Racquet Club and tennis is her passion.

Ginni Dreier first became involved with the Santa Barbara Zoo in 2001, when she sponsored the Zoo’s male African lion, named Chadwick in her husband Chad’s honor. Since then, the Dreier family has generously supported every major capital campaign and Zoofari Ball along with sponsoring and naming many of the Zoo’s most iconic animals. Ginni and Chad were recognized as Zoofari Ball XXII: Flights of Fancy Honorary Chairs in 2006. Ginni previously served on the Zoo Board from 2003 to 2008 and again from 2010 to 2015. A Santa Barbara resident since 2000, Ginni is a generous philanthropist, volunteering her time and contributing to numerous organizations including the Santa Barbara Police Activities League, Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation, and Girls Inc. She is a fierce advocate for children, education, and the arts. She can often be found creating in her glass studio, playing bridge with her friends, or enjoying the city of Santa Barbara. She loves the beach, the sun, and spending time with her children and grandchildren.

Jesse Perez grew up in the Bay Area before he and his family picked up and moved to Santa Barbara in 1999. He graduated from San Marcos High School before attending the University of California at Santa Barbara. Jesse received a Bachelor’s degree in Business Economics from UCSB and has a Masters in Taxation degree from Golden Gate University. He currently is a tax manager with Damitz, Brooks, Nightingale, Turner & Morrisset and has been with the firm for over ten years. He is a licensed Certified Public Accountant and is a member of the California Society of Certified Public Accountants and American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

His outside interests include golf, baseball, and of course spending time at the Zoo. Jesse has served on the Zoo Finance Committee since 2016. Jesse and his wife, Jenna, are kept very
busy with their two young children, Myla and Carter, and enjoy spending their family time together at the beautiful Santa Barbara Zoo.

The 2020 Santa Barbara Zoo Board of Directors now includes George Leis, Chair; Amy Pryor, Vice Chair; Joanne Funari, Treasurer; Robyn Parker, Secretary; Erika D. Beck, PhD; Vincent Caballero; Elizabeth Challen, DVM; Daniel Cohen; Eileen Dill; Ginni Dreier; Yvette Birch Giller; David Graff, Esq.; Michael Hurst; Stuart Jenkins; Kelly Jensen; Brian Kerstiens; Brian Kopeikin, MD; Elizabeth MacPhee; Jesse Perez; Derek Shue; Clark Stirling, Esq.; and Crystal Wyatt.

To learn more about how to support the Santa Barbara Zoo please visit https://www.sbzoo.org/support/ or contact Elaine Mah Best, Vice President of Advancement & Marketing, at EMahBest@sbzoo.org or by calling (805) 679-8450.

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About The Santa Barbara Zoo

The Santa Barbara Zoo is open daily from 10 AM to 5 PM; general admission is $19.95 for adults, $11.95 for children 2-12, and free for children under 2. Parking is $11. The Santa Barbara Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). AZA zoos are dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great visitor experience, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation and is the public’s link to helping animals in their native habitats. Visit www.sbzoo.org.