



2020 Calendar

Now through
January 8, 2020
**Yankee Candle
Sale**

(See article for details.)

January 25, 2020
ACE Meeting
TechLab, 9:30 AM

Spring 2020
**HoneyBaked Ham
gift card sale**
Details TBD

October 19, 2020
Gorilla Golf
The Oaks Golf Course
Covington, GA

October, 2020
**Gingerbread for
Redheads**
**Haunted Gingerbread
Houses**
Date and details TBD

*Happy
New Year!*

2020 ACE Board Announced

Voting for new board members was an important part of the November 16, 2019, General Meeting. Five people were unanimously voted to be Board Members 2020-2021. They are Jane Barron, Barbara Cebula, Lori Kirkland, Donna Mayer Todd, and Gene Todd.

We are sorry that Shelley DeWeese will be going off the board. Due to now living in Tennessee and her work schedule, she had to make this

decision, but she has decided to continue working on Gorilla Golf raffles, which she has done so well.

Also, we are sorry that Joshua Baker has found it necessary to step down from the board. His current work schedule is keeping him busy, but he will remain active on several committees of ACE.

Congratulations to the 2020 Board of seven people - Jane Barron, Barbara Cebula, Lori Kirkland, Leslie Martin, Susan Smith, Donna Mayer Todd and Gene Todd. Please contact them with any questions about ACE that you might have.

ACE will have its first meeting of 2020 on January 25 in TechLab at Zoo Atlanta. We will begin the meeting at 9:30 AM and finish in time for the Volunteer Appreciation Lunch for zoo volunteers at noon. We have several ideas to talk over, plus we want to set our 2020 Calendar of

Events. Everyone is invited to this meeting.



GA Gives Day Was Great for ACE

by Donna Mayer Todd

Congratulations and Thank You to all who emailed, texted, posted, tweeted or told a friend about GA Gives 2019 and Ape Conservation Effort. We exceeded the awareness and donation totals of past GA Gives events! Thank you also to all who made donations to ACE. You contributed to a grand total of \$2,235.00 in donations - this from 17 unique donors.

This year, for the first time, we were able to employ a matching funds grant thanks to a long time, dedicated ACE member. Really. Thank You to that member, who wishes to remain Anonymous. We appreciated the very generous donation which, I believe, and according to all the expert information we received, helped to encourage

donations and, perhaps, larger amounts.

All donors should have received an immediate and email generated from the GA Gives platform thanking you for your support, and another from ACE. If you did not get one, please let me know.

You know this will be valuable in the effort to save the Great Apes. We will decide which on-the-ground non profit should receive the money raised in our January meeting. I hope you will come to the meeting and be a part of that decision.

The success of GA Gives and its growth year to year come through the connections we "each" make and the story we tell about ACE and why we support it. We had 3 donations from non-members, names we did not recognize and the number is up from last year too. Who knows? They may decide to return and support ACE in other ways or tell a friend of theirs, spreading the awareness further.



Gingerbreads for Redheads

Plans for our first Gingerbreads of Redheads hit a few challenges, so we began

to consider several options for this event. With creativity as a guide, we have adopted the idea that our first annual Gingerbreads for Redheads will be modified for an October timeframe. We will decorate "haunted gingerbread houses!"

We believe this idea is unique and will be popular for several reasons. (1)The event will be held during a good weather time of the year. (2)The event can be promoted as a Halloween activity during October, instead of during the busier holiday season. (3)Children can wear their Halloween costumes to decorate their gingerbread houses. (4)Holding the event at Halloween ties in nicely to promote responsible shopping of candy and palm oil. (5)We can use recyclable gingerbread-looking house kits, which can be enjoyed during Halloween and then washed and decorated for the next holidays, thus promoting recycling.

We will have an informative poster about the Palm Oil Crisis to alert and educate people when shopping for their holiday gifts. This poster will be used at several ACE events.

Doesn't this sound like fun? We hope it will appeal to a wide audience and become a fun and educational event. If you

want to join the Gingerbreads for Redheads committee, please contact Vivienne Ferguson or Jane Barron.

Think "haunted gingerbread houses!"

Since we were unable to hold this fundraiser for orangutans as planned for this year, there was a vote at the November 16, 2019 General Meeting to donate \$3,000 from general funds to be sent to BOS (Bornean Orangutan Society). These funds will help support a non-profit group that is working to save orangutans in Borneo.

Response from Richard Zimmerman, Executive Director - Orangutan Outreach

Just a quick confirmation to let you know the check arrived! Thank you again! The \$3,000 will be included in our January transfer to BOSF.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and New Years! Looking forward to a fantastic 2020 for the orangutans!

Best wishes and happy holidays to everyone on your end... Rich {:(1}





Fundraising Update

by Susan Smith

The Fall **Yankee Candle** campaign has raised \$360 for ACE so far this year. This campaign will end on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, so there is still time for one more purchase. To help support ACE, go to the website

www.yankeecandlefundraising.com or the Yankee Candle mobile app Yankee Candle Fundraising. **Don't forget to add our Group Number 990066937.**

Your order will be shipped directly to you.

Our Fall **HoneyBaked Ham gift card** sale brought in \$190. Cards are ordered through an online site and electronic or plastic cards can be requested. The online site is closed now, but it will re-open in late February or early March for our Spring campaign. A link and sales dates will be communicated to you at a later.

ACE participated again in the **Holiday Bazaar** held after the December volunteer MEGA update

at Zoo Atlanta. Volunteers are always excited to see what we have for sale, especially if it includes ornaments decorated by the gorillas and orangutans from Zoo Atlanta. Those ornaments, along with other items such as fabric and straw shaped animals, recyclable grocery totes, and paper bead jewelry were snapped up by the volunteers. ACE made \$757 during the two-hour sale.



by Susan Smith

2019 Gorilla Golf Same Game, New Place

The 9th annual Gorilla Golf Tournament was held on October 28th at the Oaks Course in Covington, Georgia. This was a new course to challenge the golfers but an advantage for getting to the airport for our out-of-town players. All of the golfers had very positive feedback about the new course and its location, and the club did an excellent job hosting our event.



photo by Gene Todd
"Golfers in the Mist"

The morning did start off appropriately for this event - instead of "gorillas in the mist" it was "golfers in the mist" - as a heavy misty, fog enveloped the area. The golfers enjoyed their continental breakfast and checking out their gift bag goodies as we watched the fog dissipate. By the time most of the golfers reached their tee, it turned out to be a clear, cool fall day

When all the golfers had finished their play, they were treated to lunch and settled in for the presentation of awards and the raffle, which is always a hit.



photo by Jodi Carrigan
Some great raffle prizes

Awards were presented for First, Second and Third place, Longest Drive and of course Closet to the Gorilla:

1st Place
Ross Brandt and Paul Grimley



photo by Gene Todd
Ross Brandt and Paul Grimley

2nd Place
Ken Carrigan and Ryan Carrigan



photo by Gene Todd
Ryan and Ken Carrigan

3rd Place
Joe Volman and Mike Zeldes



photo by Gene Todd
Joe Volman and Mike Zeldes

Longest Drive
Josh Meyerchick



photo by Gene Todd
Josh Meyerchick

Closest to Gorilla
Ryan Carrigan



photo by Gene Todd
Ryan Carrigan

Tara Stoinski, President and CEO/Chief Scientific Officer of Dian Fossey Gorilla fund International (DFGFI), thanked each of the participants and volunteers for another successful tournament.



photo by Gene Todd
Tara Stoinski

She updated the group on the status of gorillas as well as information on the new research/education facilities being constructed. She also recognized several of the golfers who had participated in this tournament for many years.



photo by Jodi Carrigan
DFGFI banner

DFGFI, recipient of the funds raised, received a check for \$12,397.00 making our total donation from nine Gorilla Golf events over \$128,000. With that good news, we are set for 2020 with the 10th annual Gorilla Golf scheduled for October 19, 2020. *See 2020 Gorilla Golf flyer attached.*



photo by Jodi Carrigan
2019 Gorilla Golf golfers



**ACE Members
Are
Interesting
People**

Our interesting members highlighted in this issue are Joshua Baker and Lori Kirkland.



photo by Joshua Baker
Lori and Josh

Lori's view

I had known about ACE ephemerally since about 2013 working within the primate department first as an intern and then as a long-term seasonal keeper. But it wasn't until I spoke with one of my many patrons at the coffee shop I worked at that started my current passionate quest to really try and make a difference in the world of ape conservation.

This gentleman was an artist and owned the tattoo parlor in our small town. He had mentioned that he had always wanted to take a painting done by an ape and paint what he "saw" within. I replied that I could probably make this happen.--.which I did. Fast forward a few weeks later when he brought me a beautifully framed work

-- side-by-side paintings of his vision. I was floored by its artistry. This became the catalyst for a different approach to Apes in the Arts. I approached the Vice President and Fundraising chair, and the ideas was approved! (Mind that I still wasn't a member of ACE.) I then helped ACE in the realization and execution of the 2015 Apes in the Arts. This event ignited and encouraged my passion to try and make a difference in the animal world. I became an ACE member that year and have worked on the board tirelessly ever since.

At this same time I started to really research why apes specifically needed to be saved. The more information I found, the more I wanted to help outside of being a keeper or husbandry aide volunteer at the zoo. Along with this research came questions on what could I do in my personal life that could help in saving the habitats that these magnificent animals live in. I started to make more environmentally friendly and conscious choices like repairing the electronic devices instead of buying the latest and greatest, refusing to purchase any product that had unsustainable palm oil as an ingredient, switching to environmentally safe

house and skin products, greatly reducing my single use plastic consumption, and then slowly and carefully speaking about these changes and how much they are necessary to the people in my inner circle.

This has now become a way of life for Josh and myself -- even as the news of the world comes into our house of "climate crisis," more and more animals going on the IUCN list as critically endangered, diseases and fires running rampant in third world countries due to capitalism consumption from the more developed countries. We always ask each other, "What can WE do to help?" Could or will our actions move the conservation dial out of the world?

I truly believe we can all raise a voice for the voiceless and really make a difference in saving these animals and change the culture of the world!

Josh's view

The sun shone warm on my back, skies clear and blue, coffee thick and hot in my cup. I exchanged jibes and jokes with my brother-in-law Robert while we enjoyed the rare morning we didn't have to be off somewhere installing the latest gizmo

for Marriott Corporation in thousand-odd hotel rooms. I don't know what motivated her gallantry, but my favorite barista walked up in that moment and handed us a couple of flyers. She was a brunette in her thirties, and for the past six months her rainbow eye make-up, tinkling laughter, and "ahem" yoga pants had rapt my attention whenever I visited this particular coffee shop.

In my hand the flyer showed a silhouette of a gorilla wearing a newsboy cap standing next to a flag that would normally be stuck in a golf hole.

I looked up into her smiling face and quizzically said, "What's this?" "Gorilla golf." she replied grinning, bouncing on the balls of her feet. "Golf and gorillas sounds like when you and I golf," Robert said as he nudged me with a wink.

The ensuing conversation led to an exchange of contact information, and over the consequent months of email and phone conversations, the "Brunette Yoga Pants" became Lori Kirkland. Lori Kirkland quickly became my wife and my education regarding the plight of the Great Ape species as well as our planet began in earnest.

I had previously been a bicycle riding, vegetable eating, recycling, grow-my-own-food, small-carbon footprint type dude living in California and Hawaii. So I was ripe for the proverbial picking, but moving to Georgia (welcome to driving everywhere) and becoming a business owner (time and convenience trumping everything else), I had fallen out of the positive habits I had built up over the preceding years.

As Lori and I got to know each other and spent time working with ACE, our desire to shrink our respective carbon-footprints and impact our planet grew larger and larger. Together we were more efficient, could buy food in bulk, began to eat less and less meat, and really started to dig into what a "normal" person can do to lessen their carbon footprint. Normal of course meaning the average television trained consumer. The type who buys plastic Ziploc bags to use once for a sandwich made from the lowest quality ingredients: pesticide ridden GMO refined white flour, peanut butter filled with dirty palm oil, and his-fructose corn syrup, dyed jelly spread.

We figured out that tiny changes add up, much to my innate-nihilistic chagrin. I came to find that if I KNEW the right answer and chose to

continue to languish in ignorance and inaction, then I was no better than those that perpetrate the evil in the first place. I had to get better or live a squawking hypocrite. Ugh.

I chose better.

For me the plight of the Great Apes is allegorical to the plight facing our own species. The destruction of habitat, overuse of natural resources and general exploitation are happening to BOTH humans AND the Great Apes. We are inured to the violence and destruction because we are like goldfish - unable to see the water we are swimming in.

Being part of Ape Conservation Effort has helped me to SEE. See the importance of biodiversity, see the systemic problems that can only be solved by taking a multi-dimensional approach to issues and to really put my money where my mouth is when it comes to TAKING ACTION.

The single use plastic bag, carrying my single use bottle of water, and single use plastic bag of chips isn't worth the compounded cost to future generations, Great Apes and all species. Now that I'm aware I can TAKE ACTION and figure out how to change that one thing in your life

for the better of everything.

You might be surprised where that action takes you.



Indonesian Wildfires Point Up Land-Clearing Tactics

by Feliz Soloman

The following article is reprinted from the Wall Street Journal, October 1, 2019

As Indonesia battles the worst wildfires since 2015, tens of thousands of people in its provinces have been sickened by toxic air. Flaming forests and the public-health emergency have renewed attention on a persistent problem with a global reach: slash-and-burn farming.

Each summer brings noxious clouds of smoke to Sumatra and Indonesian Borneo as fields are set ablaze to make way for the new planting season. Some years, like this one, high winds nudge the flames beyond the boundaries of the plantations, through parts of adjoining rainforests. The burning produces thick, hazardous smoke that spreads across

the region. The dry season this year lasted longer than usual, contributing to the scale of the fires.



photo: Wall Street Journal
Sebangau national park

Authorities in Indonesia have identified 16 national and international corporations and at least 323 individuals suspected of starting this year's fires to clear their land for a new round of crops, a crime punishable by up to 10 years in prison. Police have launched extensive investigations and sent at least two dozen cases to prosecutors so far, a police spokesman said. The fires are the most destructive since 2015, when large parts of the country were scorched and neighboring states blanketed with sickening smog.

Researchers found that breathing in toxic haze caused by the fires in 2015 led to about 100,000 premature deaths across Southeast Asia.

After that, President Joko Widodo was forced to make changes. He took steps to force a freeze on converting forest land into farmland and set up an agency to revitalize 8,000 square miles of degraded forests by 2020. Environmentalists say the

measures have had some effect but don't address one of the biggest problems: preventing the blazes on existing fields.

"The companies need to be punished, and the punishment needs to be tough," said Yuyun Harmono, an environmentalist at Walhi, a Jakarta-based nongovernmental organization. "We propose that the government revoke their permits, make them pay."

Indonesia isn't alone in its struggle. From the Brazilian Amazon to the East Africa nation of Madagascar, fires set deliberately to clear land emit large volumes of greenhouse gases and spark health emergencies. The problem has only intensified as more land has come under cultivation to feed growing populations and meet the global demand for palm oil and crops such as soybeans.

It especially haunts developing countries, where farmers often don't have or can't afford the machinery they need to clear farms. Where soil conditions are poor and fertilizers are expensive, burning is seen as a cheap way for locals to add nutrients to their land. The practice is so widespread that governments don't have the capacity to detect and track down on the burning.

In Indonesia, clearing land with fire is illegal. But every summer, thousands of fires are set on small farms and commercial plantations, including those growing oil palm, a key ingredient in consumer products such as shampoos and cosmetics. Farmlands have expanded rapidly to produce more for export world-wide.

Medical responders in Indonesia say they are trying to contain a public-health crisis. Tens of thousands of people have been diagnosed this year with respiratory illnesses across the six Indonesian provinces closest to the flames, according to the Health Ministry. A state of emergency was declared this summer in Riau, a province of central Sumatra.

In the neighboring province of Jambi, pollutant particles made the sky appear blood red, as if it were ablaze. To Mr. Harmono of the Walhi NGO, that was a sign his country was crossing an environmental red line.

The government and non-profits have set up what are known as safe houses where people can breathe from a tank for about 10 minutes, before returning to the noxious air. Residents said this year was especially bad.



Did you know?

Sandra settles into new home fit for orangutan with legal personhood

Wauchula, Fla. - A 33-year-old orangutan granted legal personhood by a judge in Argentina is settling into her new surroundings at the Center for Great Apes in central Florida.

Patti Ragan, director of the center in Wauchula, says Sandra is "very sweet and inquisitive" and adjusting to her new home. Born in Germany, she spent 25 years at the Buenos Aires Zoo before arriving in Florida on Tuesday.

"She was shy when she first arrived, but once she saw the swings, toys and grassy areas in her new home, she went out to explore," Ragan said. "This is the first time in over a decade that Sandra has had the opportunity to meet other orangutans,

and she will meet them when she chooses. It is a new freedom for her, and one we are grateful to provide."

Judge Elena Liberatori's landmark ruling in 2015 declared that Sandra is legally a nonhuman person, thus entitled to some legal rights enjoyed by people and better living conditions. The judge said she "wanted to tell society something new, that animals are sentient beings and that the first right they have is our obligation to respect them."

But without a clear alternative, Sandra remained at the antiquated zoo, which closed in 2016, until leaving for the U.S.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution, November 8, 2019

Rare Breeds

Rwanda's endangered gorillas are luring an increasingly upscale crowd -- eager to fulfill a bucket-list ambition

by Deborah Dunn

I'd been in Volcanoes National Park, a sliver of jungle in northern Rwanda, for all of 30 minutes, when a fur ball the size of an ottoman came barreling toward s.

To be fair, I was on his turf. I had been spying on the fur ball's family -- nine mountain gorillas, including the roughly 400-pound patriarch, a massive silverback with a towering forehead and meaty hands twice the width of mine. The apes were scattered around a tangle of tree branches and bamboo stalks rooted on a mud-packed slope, while I'd been lurking about 30 feet away with six other tourists. We all wore shades of fresh-off-the-shelf khaki, with cameras-phones or zoom lenses at the ready. A young couple from Mexico City had Go-Pro video cameras strapped to their wrists.

I was crouched next to a tree -- eager to avoid annoying the silverback -- when King Kong Junior rushed me, crashing out of a stand of bamboo. He tried to yank me away by the sleeve. Just as swiftly, Placide Nkurunziza, one of our group's two guides, grabbed by other sleeve and gently grunted (primate-speak for "scram") at the little guy, who promptly released me and sprinted back down the hill to find more willing playmates. I'd paid \$1,500 to spend an hour with the gorillas. The near kidnapping was a bonus.

At last official count, 604 mountain gorillas -- more than half of those left on the planet -- live in the

Virunga Mountains, of which Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park occupies a fraction. Neighboring national parks in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo share the Virunga territory, along with the rare apes. But Rwanda, far more ambitiously than the other two countries, has turned the gorilla sightings into a luxury commodity, complete with extremely high-end lodges.

In an effort to protect the meager number of endangered mountain gorillas, park officials allow just 96 tourists a day to see them -- divided into group of eight, plus guides, trackers and optional porters -- and restrict the human-ape rendezvous to an hour. In 2017 the cost of the trekking permit doubled, from \$750 a person a day to \$1,500. "We weren't sure how our clients would react when the price went up," said Linda Friedman, owner of Maryland-based Custom Safaris, who arranged my trip. "But they didn't blink." The number of international visitors to Rwanda rose to 1.7 million last year, up from 1.3 million in 2015. "People think, I've always wanted to do this. I'm not putting it off until I'm 65," said Ms. Friedman.

These days, with the arrival of increasingly luxe accommodations, the country draws the kind of

well-heeled, gin-and-tonic swilling visitors who have long been a fixture on the Serengeti or the Okavango Delta. A pioneer on the accommodations scene, Virunga Lodge opened in 2004, perched on a mountaintop with panoramic views of the volcanoes and two crater lakes. After the treks, guests tend to get massages at the lodge's spa, then assemble around the stone fireplace for cocktails before dinner. Much more recently, three of Africa's poshest hotel brands -- Wilderness Safaris, Singita and One & Only - - opened outposts just outside Volcanoes National Park. Each offers a small number of rooms at a sizable price tag. Rates at the 8-suite Singita Kwitonda Lodge, which debuted in August, run \$3,300 to \$6,600 a night for two, including all meals but excluding the permit for gorilla treks.

Tara Stoninski, the president of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, one of the leading conservation nonprofits in the country, commends Rwanda's high-end, low-impact approach. "It was a strategic decision by the Rwanda government to lessen the pressure on the gorillas," she said, referring to the gorilla permit's price hike, "but also have a chance to increase revenue." And the model appears to be

working. The gorilla population is doing well," said Prosper Uwingeli, the chief warden for Volcanoes National Park, citing the birth of some 30 infants this year. Mr. Uwingeli points out that 10% of the park's tourism revenue pays for local schools and health clinics, among other community projects, as a way to curry local support and protect the gorilla habitat -- farmers and 400-pound wild animals don't always make the friendliest neighbors.

The above are excerpts from a lengthy article appearing in The Wall Street Journal, Saturday/Sunday, November 9-10, 2019.



2020 ACE Board

Board Members:

Jane Barron
Barbara Cebula
Lori Kirkland
Leslie Martin
Susan Smith
Donna Mayer Todd
Gene Todd

Primary contact:

info@apeconservationeffort.org

Fundraising events:

fundraising@apeconservationeffort.org

APE CONSERVATION EFFORT

10th Annual

GORILLA GOLF TOURNAMENT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19TH, 2020

REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 9:15 A.M. • SHOT GUN START AT 10:00 A.M.

THE OAKS GOLF COURSE

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For more information and registration visit www.apeconservationeffort.org

Call 404-427-4998 or e-mail gorillagolf@apeconservationeffort.org

