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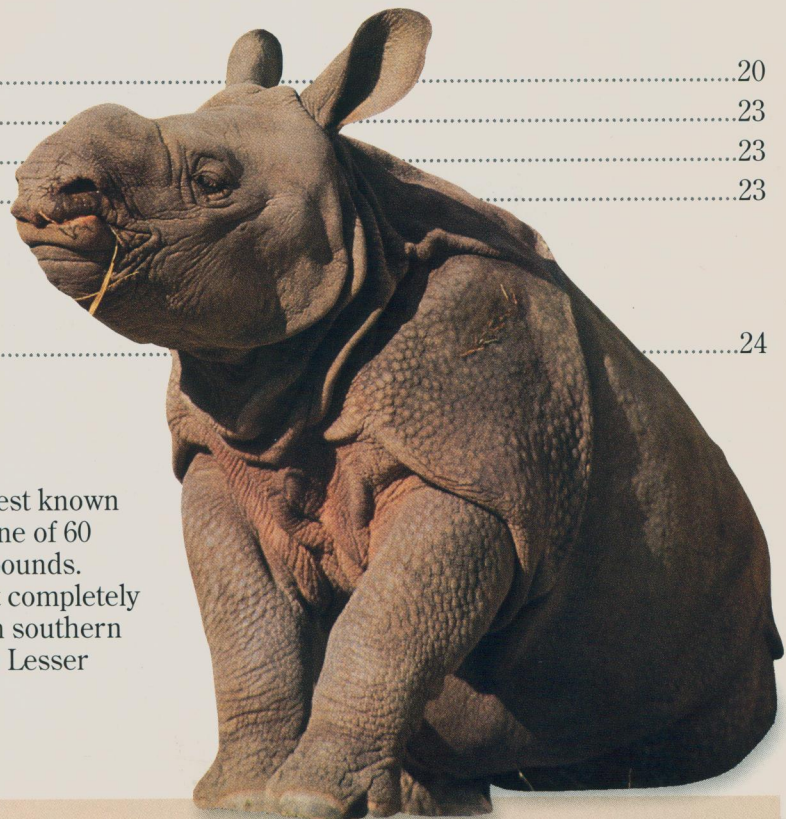
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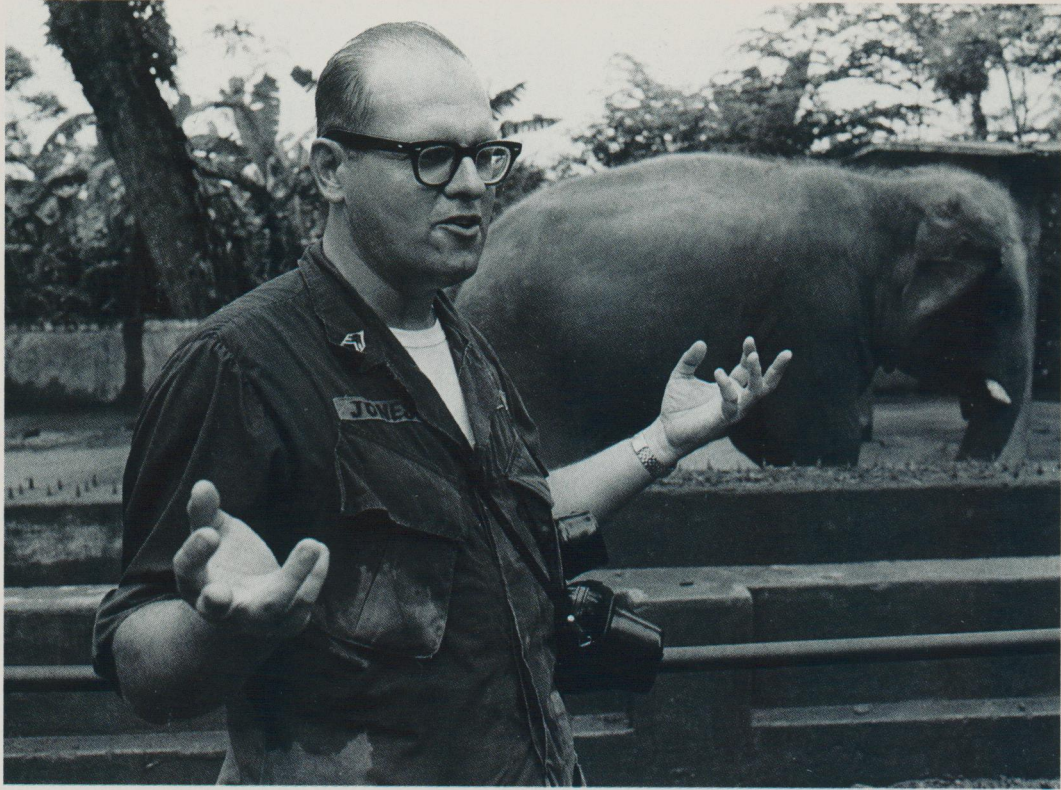


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COVER

The green iguana *Iguana iguana* is perhaps the best known of the more than 3,000 lizard species and is also one of 60 lizards classified as large—it can reach about 20 pounds. An excellent swimmer, the green iguana is almost completely herbivorous. In the wild, their range extends from southern Mexico to northern South America, as well as the Lesser Antilles. San Diego Zoo photo.



Vietnam's Saigon Zoo in September of 1969 was the setting for an informal lecture Marvin delivered to U.S. Army personnel. He later became a member of the Army's Speakers Program.

A FIRST-CLASS SERGEANT OF THE ZOO

by Michael McKeever

For the first seven years of his employment, the San Diego Zoo wasn't sure what to call Marvin Jones. True, the work he was doing was invaluable. He was keeping complete records on the births, deaths, and life histories of nearly 5,000 Zoo and Wild Animal Park animals. And, he was incorporating that data into ISIS (International Species Inventory System), a computerized data bank sup-

ported by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums. Its records include the collections of major zoos all over the world.

But he wasn't really a curator or keeper or veterinarian. Yet he had to have some sort of title, even if only for the payroll records. Finally, Marvin had a suggestion. A keeper of records, he pointed out, is called a registrar. So, in January 1981, Marvin



St. Louis Zoo



Memorabilia from Marvin's international travels.

Marvin Jones, in May 1967, with the late Marlin Perkins, then director of the St. Louis Zoo and the original host of the "Wild Kingdom" television program (above).

A familiar sight for years to Zoological Society staff and official guests was that of registrar Marvin Jones pouring over animal records in his office. Marvin retired this past December.



San Diego Zoo

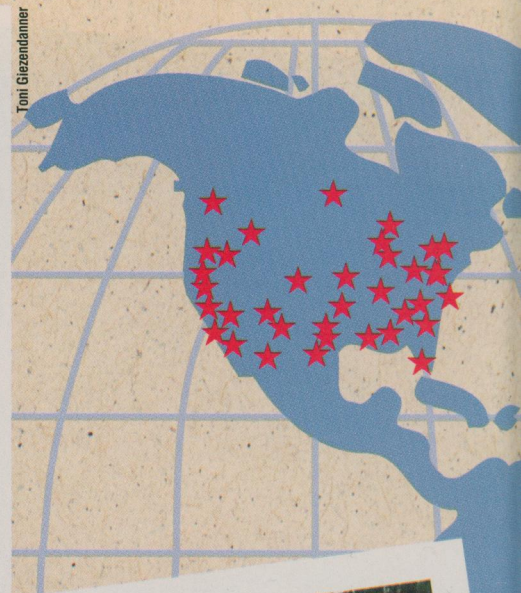
Jones at last received a title, and became the Zoological Society of San Diego's registrar—a job he had been doing since 1974. He was, at the time, only the third registrar employed by an American zoo. Today, there are 60 United States zoo registrars.

It was not the first zoological path Marvin helped blaze. When he began his groundbreaking work on animal longevity, there were few others in the field. When he was asked to speak before the Czechoslovakian Academy of Science International Symposium in 1959, few other U.S. citizens had been so honored. (He was unable to attend, so Dr. Erna Mohr of the University of Hamburg presented Marvin's paper on "The Przewalski's Horse in American Zoos.")

Then there was the time in 1982 when he was researching Père David's deer and had accessed French zoo records previously closed to all but French researchers. Marvin tracked down the truth behind a longstanding myth. In 1865, French missionary Père Armand David found the deer wandering China's Imperial Hunting Park near Peking. Intrigued, he supposedly sent several of the deer to Paris. When the animals

became extinct in China, the story went, the French herd saved the species. Actually, Marvin found, the missionary only sent hides to France. Instead, it was the German ambassador to Peking who shipped a few of the deer to the Berlin Zoo. And so, it was a German diplomat rather than a French missionary who ensured the species' survival.

Two decades ago, when Marvin began his work at the San Diego Zoo, besides not knowing what to call him, Zoo administrators also weren't certain that there was enough work to keep him busy. So, he was hired on a day-to-day basis at 20 dollars a day. It wasn't until January of 1981, when Marvin received his title, that he was formally added to the Zoo's full-time staff.



A recent visit to Germany in September of last year allowed Marvin a chance to visit old friends. Top: With Dr. Gotz Rumpler, director of the Munster Zoo, and his wife, Uta Hick-Rumpler, curator of primates at the Köln Zoo and editor of that zoo's magazine for more than 25 years. Center: At the entrance to the Berlin Zoo with (left) Dr. Hans Fradrich, current director of the Berlin Zoo, and (right) Prof. Dr. H.G. Klös, immediate past director. Right: In the library of Dr. Ulrich Schurer, director of the Wuppertal Zoo, examining a new book on elephants.



In the meantime, Marvin was hard at work on a variety of animal record-keeping projects, like keeping the studbook for orangutans. Studbooks are genealogical charts for a species and are used to track breeding. As late as the 1950s, there were only two endangered species studbooks, one for the European bison and a second for the Przewalski's horse. Today, it is a rapidly growing field, thanks to people like Marvin, who initiated studbooks for the pygmy hippopotamus and golden lion tamarin.

Marvin has also become renowned for his studies of animal longevity, particularly in zoos. The subject has intrigued him since boyhood. Since the 1960s, his papers on animal aging have been highlights of numerous national and international zoological conferences.

Colleagues regard him as a walking encyclopedia of zoo data. Name a specific animal and he quickly sketches a mental genealogical chart. Name a major zoo anywhere in the world (he's visited virtually all of them) and Marvin will list its exhibits, their locations; and their strengths and weaknesses.

World-class publications, zoos, and museums routinely seek Marvin's counsel. He has been consultant to the National Academy of Sciences, the Smithsonian Institution, and various encyclopedias. He is an Honorary Life Member of both the Ameri-

can Association of Zoo Keepers and the Zoological Society of San Diego. As well known in Europe as here, he is a Scientific Fellow of the Zoological Society of London.

For Marvin, life has been a fascinating journey that began on long-ago Sunday afternoons in the Philadelphia Zoo. As a small boy in 1930s Philadelphia, Marvin spent his happiest hours in that city's zoo. His father, who enjoyed sketching animals as a hobby, took Marvin along on weekend outings. While his father drew, Marvin explored.

When he was 13 years old, Marvin began keeping a detailed map of the zoo. He carefully recorded which animal occupied which cage and when and where they were moved. Zookeepers who had befriended the boy encouraged him to include animals from other zoos.

Marvin also began a lively correspondence with like-minded animal lovers. One of his correspondents was England's Duke of Bedford. The duke had a large hoofed mammal collection on his Woburn Abbey estate. He also had a request for Marvin.



During his long career, Marvin visited more than 350 zoos worldwide.



Toni Gierendammer

The duke wondered if Marvin could send him copies of *The Saturday Evening Post*. He enjoyed the journal but was unable to find it in England. Marvin duly sent the magazines. Soon after World War II ended, a package arrived from the duke. Inside, Marvin found a splendid set of shed Père David's deer antlers. The mud of Woburn Abbey was still clinging to them.

Most people who knew Marvin assumed he would make a career in zoology. But in 1951, a letter arrived from the United States Selective Service. The army had other plans for Marvin. Soon after, the now newly ranked Corporal Jones found himself stationed in Germany with the 36th Medical Battalion. To his delight, he was able to visit European zoos he had only read about. And army life agreed with Marvin. Twenty-one years later he retired as Sergeant First Class.

Throughout his military career, Marvin continued his zoological work. All, he proudly notes, on his own time and at his own

expense. The army was a little suspicious at first. It was the height of the Cold War. Why, his superiors wondered, was Marvin sending mail behind the Iron Curtain? Marvin explained that he was corresponding with Eastern European zoologists. In 1955, he visited the East Berlin Zoo, one of the few Americans allowed to do so. Marvin remembers that the Communists were suspicious as well: "I guess I didn't fit their stereotype of what they thought an American soldier should be."

The German zoos became a continuing interest for Marvin. He taught himself German so he could sift through German zoo records. In 1966, he translated the Frankfurt Zoo Guide from

The Zoo Registrars Group Becomes A Valuable Network

—In the early 1970s, zoos began to recognize the need for improved animal records to enhance the management of their animal collections. The role of the record keeper became increasingly important, which led to the development of the zoo registrar position.

As institutions began to cooperate in captive breeding, the International Species Information System (ISIS) was formed, with the financial assistance of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (AAZPA), to act as an information center for pooled data. ISIS developed computer software called the Animal Records Keeping System (ARKS), which became available for use in 1985. With major advances in computer technology and the increased use of ARKS in zoos, registrars became computer literate overnight.

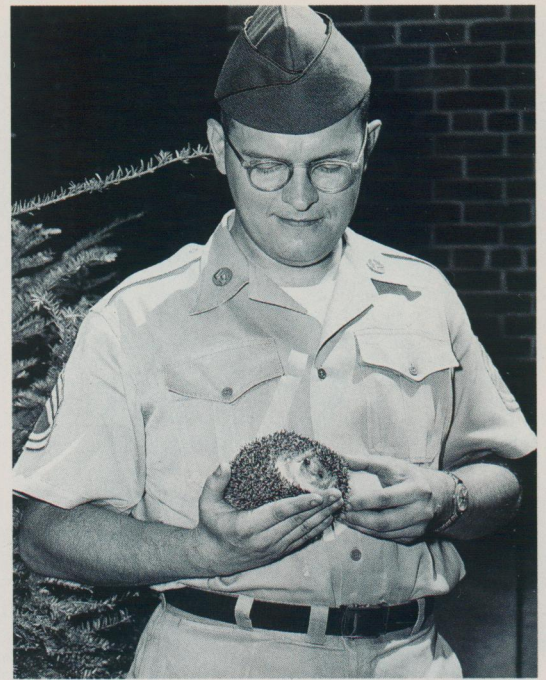
In 1984, eight registrars met at the AAZPA national conference in Miami, Florida. They talked about convening as a group to discuss their jobs, and the first workshop was held that same year at the Chicago Zoological Park, Brookfield, Illinois. The Zoo Registrars Group (ZRG) was officially formed at this meeting and included 10 of the 13 founding zoo professionals, with Marvin Jones among them.

Through initial discussions, it became apparent to members that their duties and positions varied from institution to institution, but record keeping was their common denominator. Other responsibilities may have included animal transactions and shipments, loans, permits, keeper training, and the development and administration of

animal collection policies. Many zoo registrars were also responsible for permits and licenses as required by wildlife agencies. The growing number of legislative acts regulating activities with wildlife made this aspect of the position particularly challenging. A variety of titles were used besides registrar, such as records specialist, zoologist, and curator. Regardless of the duties or position, this first workshop proved to be the bright beginning of an organized network of professional registrars. The ZRG would become the network for members to master the complex issues impacting their jobs.

The group has grown rapidly in the last few years as more zoos have recognized the need for this kind of position. The workshops have continued on an annual basis, and representatives from state and federal agencies are often invited to help interpret the regulations. In the spring of 1993, a record-keeping manual, *Animal Records-Keeping*, was completed and distributed to AAZPA institutions. The Zoo Registrars Group also works closely with ISIS for the continuing development of ARKS.

The zoo registrar position is evolving to become recognized as a member of the animal management team. Representing a diverse group of zoo professionals, the Zoo Registrars Group promotes its membership as a valuable resource to the animal management community. With a solid foundation built over the past nine years, the ZRG and its network are capably positioned to respond to future needs and changes. —Raylynn Faren Bellamy, ZRG Chair, St. Louis Zoological Park.



A 1959 photo of Marvin at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. (above), was part of an army press release announcing his invitation to speak before the Czechoslovakian Academy of Science International Symposium.

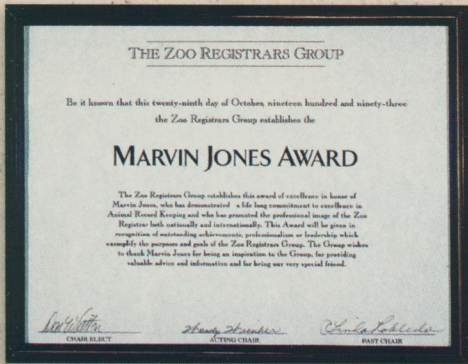
At the Tama Zoo in Japan, 1969 (below, right).

German into English. In 1968, he delivered a paper on "The German Zookeeper" to the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums.

The soldier-scholar was soon being noticed by zoological professionals. Clayton Freiheit, director of the Denver Zoo, recently remembered when he first heard of Marvin. "It was the 1950s and I was visiting Dr. William Mann, director of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. We were in his apartment when he asked, 'Are you familiar with Sergeant Jones?' When I said I wasn't, he showed me the most incredible typewritten document on European zoos. I was very impressed, both by the quality of Marvin's work and his interest. I finally met him in 1961 at the zoo in Buffalo, New York, where I was curator. I got to know him better later, when we were traveling in Europe. He's probably better known there than here!"

Two decades in the army saw Marvin serve at various United States posts as well as two European tours, South Korea, and Vietnam. While in Korea, he began exploring Asian zoos. ZOO NOOZ readers first met him in the September 1961 issue when he reported on "Some Zoos of Japan."

Then, in 1968, he reported for duty as Chief Legal Clerk, 4th Infantry Division, Pleiku, Vietnam. Typi-



In appreciation for a lifetime of animal record keeping, the national Zoo Registrars Group recently established the Marvin Jones Award for excellence in the field. Marvin also received the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums' Outstanding Service Award for 1993.

Marvin took this self-portrait in Germany a few years after entering the army. To his delight, he was now able to visit a number of German zoos he had previously only read about.



Marvin Jones



cally, he traveled to Saigon and toured its century-old zoo. He shared his findings with ZOO NOOZ readers in August 1970 ("Saigon Zoo in the Heart of a War-Torn City").

Back from Vietnam, Marvin heard about the Army Speakers Program. The army was looking for returning soldiers to travel the United States, speaking to civic groups about the war in Vietnam. Explaining that "I like to talk," he applied and was accepted. A handout from the Army Information Office went into detail on

Marvin's Vietnam service. Almost as an afterthought, it added that "Sergeant Jones is an expert in the zoological gardens field . . . following his talk he will be open to questions."

Often those questions were about the war's effect on Vietnam's wildlife. And then the discussion would inevitably turn to the world's zoos. Marvin was, as one army press release put it, "A First-Class Sergeant of the Zoo!"

Finally, in 1972, Marvin hung up his dress uniform for good and moved to San Diego in 1974. In December 1993, Marvin retired from the San Diego Zoo. But, only officially. In reality, he's still very much a part of zoo life.

He intends to spend his days working on long-planned books, including one on modern zoo trends. And, there are his "foot lockers," crammed with a half-century of zoological correspondence. Every letter has been carefully saved, waiting to be included in another book. At other times Marvin can be found back at the Zoo, pouring over records. Or, answering letters from friends old and new.

Many of those letters will undoubtedly be invitations to visit. In zoos across the United States and around the world, Marvin is always a welcome guest. As William Braker, director of Chicago's Shedd Aquarium, recently put it, "Here's to you, Sergeant Jones, you still rate a salute!"



Photo courtesy of Marvin Jones