



NEWS RELEASE

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“ZOOS LINE IS IT ANYWAY?” IMPROV-MEETS-SCIENCE AT ZOO’S NEW COMEDY EVENING ON SATURDAY, MAY 16

- TED-like Talks by Animal Experts Inspire Spontaneous Skits by Impro Theatre (“Jane Austen Unscripted”)
- Judges Include Local Celebrities including KEYT Weatherman Alan Rose
- No Host Bar, DJ, Couches, & Hilarity in Discovery Pavilion’s “Lizard Lounge”
- Tickets \$8; Doors Open at 7 p.m., Show at 7:30 p.m., Post Show Mingle

Santa Barbara, CA, May 4, 2015 – Are the antics of anteaters amusing? Can California condors be comical? And what’s so funny about a monkey’s uncle? “Zoos Line Is It Anyway?,” a new event at the Santa Barbara Zoo, is a mash-up of science with improv comedy in a club-like setting including no host bar, DJ spinning tunes, leather couches, and audience participation. “Zoos Line Is It Anyway?” is Saturday, May 16 at the “Lizard Lounge” in the Zoo’s Discovery Pavilion, with doors opening at 7 p.m. and the show beginning at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$8 at the door.

“TED Talks inspired us to innovate and try new ways to share fascinating scientific information about our animals,” says Dean Noble, the show’s co-producer and emcee. “It’s a Reese’s peanut butter cup of science wrapped in improvisational comedy. We hope our audience leaves feeling good after laughing for 90 minutes, and also mulls over the amazing info they heard.”

“We’re trying to reach new audiences – people who might not ordinarily go to a lecture on biology,” says Hannah Kirstner, Education Coordinator, who programs the Zoo’s educational offerings. “As a matter of fact, we ‘crowd-sourced’ the show’s title on the Zoo’s Facebook page.”

The format is much like the TV show “Whose Line Is It Anyway” in which comedians take cues from suggestions from the audience. At the Zoo event, three local animal experts are each paired with a comedian from LA’s Impro Theatre. The experts give a brief TED-style talk, which is the jumping off point for the improv. Audience participation is encouraged. Judges, including local television weatherman Alan Rose, give points to each team. Other judges to be announced.

“What exactly will happen? We’re not sure,” says Noble, who is also the Zoo’s Marketing Director and has a background in improv comedy. “It’s a highly-interactive-live-science-inspired-performance-art-comedy-show, full of surprises. The Impro Theater pros will go ape and monkey around, but no one gets thrown to the lions. We hope.”

The Animal Experts

Two Zoo staff members are joined by a local biologist on the science side of “Zoos Line...” Dr. Julie Barnes, the Zoo’s veterinarian, is a native of Australia who has also been a field vet in Antarctica and worked at an Australian animal sanctuary. Dr. Estelle Sandhaus recently received her PhD for research into California condors, specifically chick-rearing in the nearby Sespe Condor Sanctuary. Sara Weinstein is a graduate student in Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology at UC Santa Barbara whose focus of study is on parasites.

The Improvisers

Acclaimed long-form improvisers, Jo McGinley, Stephen Kearin and Brian Lohmann of Impro



Theatre will be teamed up with the scientists for “Zoos Line...”.

Impro recently sold-out two nights at Santa Barbara’s New Vic with “Jane Austen Unscripted,” just one of several “Unscripted” experiences they offer, which include “Shakespeare Unscripted,” “Twilight Zone Unscripted,” and “LA Noir Unscripted.” The Los Angeles-based troupe has performed standing-room only shows at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Chicago’s Athenaeum, the Melbourne Fringe (Australia), and throughout Southern California. The company was founded in 1988; Dan O’Connor is the Artistic Director.

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*Known as one of the world’s most beautiful zoos, the **Santa Barbara Zoo** is located on 30 acres of botanic gardens and is home to nearly 500 individual animals in open, naturalistic habitats. It is accredited by the [Association of Zoos & Aquariums](#) (AZA), representing the highest level of animal care, and participates in AZA endangered species programs for Asian elephant, California condor, Channel Island fox, and Western lowland gorilla, among others. A private nonprofit corporation, the Santa Barbara Zoo depends on community support, not tax dollars, for operations and improvements.*

The Zoo is open daily from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; general admission is \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors aged 65+, \$10 for children 2-12, and children under 2 are free. Parking is \$6.

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