

# CURIODYSSEY news FOR THE CURIOUS



Nikki Finch-Morales, Megan Hankins and Jen Gale with three of CuriOdyssey's raptors

Photo credit: Kevin Shoban

## CuriOdyssey Animal Keepers Bring Compassion and Expertise to Our Animals

The first thing you notice about Nikki Finch-Morales is the way her eyes light up when she talks about CuriOdyssey's animals. Nikki has been the Director of Wildlife since 2001, and she has been working with CuriOdyssey's rescued native wildlife since 1996. Nikki and her team of animal keepers are committed to providing the highest quality of animal care possible to the 100 animals that call CuriOdyssey their home.

Nikki chose her career out of a deep love for animals and a desire to protect their health and welfare. She is especially proud of CuriOdyssey's accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums that requires adherence to the highest quality of animal care and rigorous inspections, a distinction that is unusual for a community wildlife center. Nikki loves building a trusted relationship with each animal through positive interactions.

CuriOdyssey's dedicated team of experts also includes conservation liason, Megan Hankins, who has been with CuriOdyssey since 2006.

Megan ensures CuriOdyssey's animals thrive, and she loves giving guests the chance to see animals up close so they gain a better appreciation of their local wildlife, encouraging them to become stewards of the environment. She manages CuriOdyssey's many conservation and research partnerships (page 5), and she really likes CuriOdyssey's unique role among zoos in celebrating local native wildlife.

Jen Gale, CuriOdyssey's lead keeper, joined the CuriOdyssey team in 2007, and she loves sharing the animals' individual personalities and stories with guests. She sees CuriOdyssey's animals as ambassadors for their wild counterparts, and teaches guests about the importance of each species in the ecosystem. Jen loves spending time with CuriOdyssey's animals, and all the friendships built with other keepers while doing the dirtiest and most difficult tasks imaginable. Jen and the rest of CuriOdyssey's highly trained and experienced animal care team rely on the expertise of Dr. Andrea Goodnight.



Dr. Andrea Goodnight treating a CuriOdyssey roadrunner

Dr. Goodnight enjoys giving our animals the best quality of life and care possible, and values our keepers' ability to train animals to receive care cooperatively, reducing the animal's stress.

She feels that, in a world increasingly disassociated with nature, CuriOdyssey's animals and keepers help provide a missing link to the natural world, inspiring the next generation to value conservation.

Dr. Goodnight and the CuriOdyssey animal keeper team express gratitude for donations that make this high standard of animal care possible, such as the 2017 Bothin grant that funded CuriOdyssey's on-site medical treatment facility. This facility enables Dr. Goodnight and CuriOdyssey keepers to perform health exams, dental cleanings and basic diagnostics on-site at CuriOdyssey, substantially decreasing the time an animal is under anesthesia and the risk of complications. CuriOdyssey is also deeply grateful to Terri Tienken for her generous support of the wildlife department including funding a surgery table and a nutrition study to better enhance the animals' diet.

Your donations fund the animals' food, heat, enrichment, and high quality of care that make our excellent animal programs possible.



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Filoli Mansion

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MINDS OF  
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# CuriOdyssey Gala – *The Nature of Patterns* supports the future of science learning



Lynne Esselstein, Connie Sevier, Linda Lanier



Erin Cowan, Sarah Padilla, Dinah-Maria Moyer, Julie Ann Dougery



Karl & Laura Hansen

Thank you to our wonderful supporters who made the eighth annual CuriOdyssey Gala a spectacular success! Over 250 guests enjoyed cocktails, dinner and an exciting live auction in the spectacular gardens of the historic Filoli Mansion in Woodside. Gala guests raised funds in support of CuriOdyssey's wildlife, science education and community outreach programs that touch over 180,000 people each year. Proceeds from this annual event help CuriOdyssey provide free science workshops and field trips to underserved students, afterschool science at the Mid-Peninsula Boys & Girls Club, and access to CuriOdyssey's science and wildlife programs. These programs help give more children the superpower of science so they can ask questions, think critically and take intelligent action.

CuriOdyssey's beloved animal ambassadors delighted guests and reminded us of CuriOdyssey's value in connecting people with the natural world and inspiring them to be good stewards of the environment. Live auction items included a multi-course dinner created by Chef Gary Danko, a CuriOdyssey sponsored "Keeper for a Day" experience for kids and a trip to Los Angeles to attend the Emmys. An elegant pendant and jeweled earrings were donated by Kerns Fine Jewelry for the gala raffle. During the Fund-A-Need portion of the evening, our guests generously donated over \$146,000 to underwrite free and low-cost programs for over 14,000 children in underserved communities.

CuriOdyssey is grateful to all our donors and supporters who attended and made this event successful and memorable. The generosity of Gala guests, sponsors and in-kind donors made this Gala our most successful event ever. Thank you for helping us provide a serious science playground for all children in our community.





Gerri Wong, Ajanta Horan, Tara Samuels



Jen Gale, Solo the great horned owl, Mark & Suzanne Fletcher



Lydia Bergman, Danielle Simon, Nicole Salama



Paul & Christina Diercks, Matt & Mia Alioto, Kevin & Hyun Joo Laws



2017 Gala Auxiliary - Cindy Sohn, Patrice Wilbur, Lara Krpata, Rita Walia, Teri Kil, Mary Ann Hasenstab, Amy Fenton, Nicole Salama, Gerri Wong

## Thank You to Our Gala Donors!

Many thanks to our gala donors for their generous support. Funds raised during the gala will help CuriOdyssey bring the superpower of science to more kids in our community, particularly those that are underserved. We appreciate your generous support!

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# Be a Hero for Our Animals

CuriOdyssey is not just a children's science and wildlife center. It is also a home for animals like Caro, Solo, Gunner, and Dylan who can't survive on their own. Once badly injured and neglected, these animals became too familiar with human caregivers during rehabilitation to be safely released into the wild.



**GUNNER**

Gunner is a rambunctious river otter who thinks he is a dog. He was found abandoned by his mother in a pond in Washington. He lived in a family's home and was raised with dogs for the first three months of his life. He arrived at CuriOdyssey when he was eight months old, and spends his days playing and chewing on his toys.



**CARO**

Caro was found warming himself to stay alive on the side of a road in Texas at five weeks old. He was taken to a rehab center to treat stage four pneumonia, then found a new home at CuriOdyssey. He is easy-going, gentle, and loves to chase and pounce as a hunter.



**DYLAN**

Dylan was found on the side of a road in Los Angeles in a coma. He had West Nile Virus and a fractured leg. During his recovery, he needed to be fed from a syringe and slept 23 hours a day. He came to CuriOdyssey when he was seven months old. He is calm, sensitive to noise, and loves all kinds of berries.



**SOLO**

Solo was found starving in a field in the East Bay missing half of her left wing. She came to CuriOdyssey in 1995 and has been an animal ambassador for 22 years. She has met thousands of kids and many families know her by name. Solo is expressive, headstrong, and enjoys being sprinkled with the hose.

These animals and others now happily live and play at CuriOdyssey and are a vital part of our mission to provide a premier science education to all children. Your donation will make a difference in the lives of all of our animals and help us continue teaching the next generation to think like scientists, to respect the natural world, and above all else, to be curious.



# CuriOdyssey Conservation Projects



This was a great year for conservation work at CuriOdyssey! CuriOdyssey's conservation programs focus on issues that impact San Mateo County and, more broadly, the native California animals that reside here. We accomplish this through a variety of projects, including habitat restoration, research, citizen science projects, and captive breeding.

## HABITAT RESTORATION AND RESEARCH

Bay Area saltmarshes are threatened by the presence of invasive plants, such as LIRA, that outcompete native plants like pickleweed. CuriOdyssey leads volunteer projects to remove LIRA in the marsh at Coyote Point. CuriOdyssey also conducts original science research that will help inform LIRA removal management practices throughout the bay.

## AZA SAFE PROGRAM

As an accredited Association of Zoos and Aquarium facility, CuriOdyssey participates in the AZA's SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) program. Each year new species are unveiled with a concentrated effort by zoos and aquariums in the U.S. to preserve and protect those species in the wild as well as in Captivity. CuriOdyssey's western pond turtle was one of the first species unveiled in 2015.

## BAY AREA FROGWATCH

CuriOdyssey is home to the Bay Area FrogWatch chapter, a program by FrogWatch USA and adopted by the AZA with the aim of monitoring frog and toad populations. We started the sixth season of this citizen science project with a good turnout of new volunteers. The Bay Area chapter monitors our 6 local species that include the Pacific treefrog, red-legged frog and western toad.

## CONSERVATION RESEARCH AND PROJECTS

We also continued our partnership with several organizations that help the wild counterparts of animals we take care of at CuriOdyssey. These organizations include Felidae Conservation Fund's Bay Area Bobcat Study, Pond Turtle Ecology and Conservation Research, Ringtail Research Study, Urban Wildlife Research Project on Gray Foxes, and the River Otter Ecology Project. CuriOdyssey also initiated a new partnership this year with U.C. Berkeley's Urban Bee Lab to help local bee populations.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND CLEANUPS

CuriOdyssey is dedicated to making our facility more environmentally friendly. We aim to reduce consumption, recycle and compost, and source locally whenever possible. We also partner with Coyote Point Park rangers to organize multiple beach and park cleanups each year.

These conservation projects are examples of the many ways in which CuriOdyssey helps to connect people to the natural world. We are excited to continue and look forward to new projects in the coming year. Your donations help us continue this important work.

**Make a gift today:**  
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# Save the Date

(November 2017 – March 2018)

## EVENTS

### FIRST FRIDAY FAMILY NIGHTS

First Friday of every month, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Swing into the weekend with music, science, food and fun!



### ILLUMINODYSSEY

A Winter Light Experience for Kids

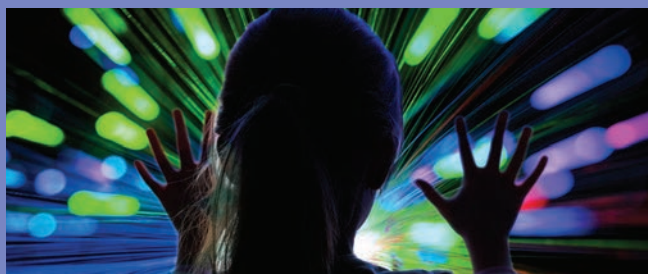
November 10, 2017 - January 7, 2018\*

Tuesdays - Sundays, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

November 10, December 1, January 5, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

\* Exhibition Closed December 9 - December 10

Electrify your child's imagination at our spectacular light exhibition.



### SWOOP! A CELEBRATION OF FLIGHT

February 9-11 and February 17-19, 2018

See drones race and raptors soar.

### SUPER FAMILIES SALUTE

March 25, 2018

Exclusive hours supporting kids with special needs and their families.

### GET IN TOUCH:

650-342-7755

[curiodyssey.org/give-now](http://curiodyssey.org/give-now)

[give@curiodyssey.org](mailto:give@curiodyssey.org)

1651 Coyote Point Drive  
San Mateo, CA 94401-1097



## EDUCATION

### Saturday S.T.E.A.M. Camps

- The "Force" is With You
- Science in Art

### Weekend Workshops

- CuriOdyssey Animal Enrichment
- LuminOdyssey
- Discovery Dissections
- Claymation
- 3, 2, 1 Liftoff
- Auto-Motion

CuriOdyssey's educational programs also include **Afterschool Programs, Science Explorers, and Winter and Spring Break Camps.**



## SCHOOLS AND GROUPS

Register your school or group for a visit and high-quality educational programs at

[curiodyssey.org/school-groups](http://curiodyssey.org/school-groups)

## ON-GOING PROGRAMS

Animals In Action - Tues-Fri: 11:00am;

Sat-Sun: 11am, 2pm and 3pm

Otter Feeding - Tues-Sun: 12:00 noon

Bobcat Feeding - Tues-Sun: 1:00pm

For more information on events, classes, and programs, please visit [CuriOdyssey.org](http://CuriOdyssey.org)



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