

Charlotte Leong D.V.M. for Sulphur Creek Nature Center

The staff of Sulphur Creek would like to nominate Charlotte Leong D.V. M. for the HARD Board of Directors Individual Award for 2014. With over 2,600 donated hours, Dr. Leong has been an amazing volunteer for HARD since 1989. She has been instrumental in helping with the care for our resident mammals as required by law.

Sulphur Creek is overseen and permitted by several different state and federal agencies including the U.S. Department of Agriculture which requires an annual exam on each and every resident mammal. These animals include not only the native wildlife used as ambassadors in educational programs, but the domestic ones that are kept for the Lending Library and nature classes designed for toddlers and preschoolers. Dr. Leong oversees and performs all of the exams on our coyotes, foxes, opossums, skunks, gophers, bats, rats, mice, guinea pigs, hamsters, and chinchillas. In all, she sees about 40 animals each year.

Her services for exams include a full physical: ears, eyes, nose, heart rate, weight, fecal, and nail trimming in addition to providing vaccinations if needed. Her attention to detail and the way she is able to control each critter during these exams is truly amazing. Watching Charlotte scruff a hamster to check its teeth, examine a chinchilla's eye with an ophthalmoscope checking for cataracts or palpating the body of a skunk for any abnormality, gives one a whole new appreciation of a thorough physical. Most comical though is seeing her listen to the heart of a Lending Library mouse in where the pad of stethoscope is larger than the mouse.



For her physicals on the larger animals such as the coyotes and foxes, a sedative is used. These exams will often last two to three hours each as she needs to be present for the entire duration of the sedative, including the time involved for the

drug to wear off and for the animal to regain the ability to stand and be alert. These exams are also much more thorough and include getting a temperature, along with obtaining blood and urine samples for lab tests. The care that she puts into each exam is really remarkable.

Dr. Leong also assists with year round, on-site continued care for some of the residents with persistent issues. This last year she made several house calls just to check on one of our aging foxes with diabetes. She offered her professional services, medications and specialized food, all at no cost. Dr. Leong has helped to keep HARD in great standing with all the agencies that require permits for exhibiting and using both wild and domestic mammals, not only in her care, but with the mounds of paperwork needed for each and every mammal.

The skills and services provided to the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District by Dr. Charlotte Leong at Sulphur Creek has been an amazing gift. For 25 years she has offered her veterinary skills and services free of charge to the district, saving us tens of thousands of dollars. (She even continued this service when she moved to the East Coast for a few years) Value: 40 animals per year at \$50 per exam times 25 years: \$50,000. – Not including the cost of vaccinations, lab tests, and the specialized food she has provided.

We are truly grateful for all the care Charlotte has provided to the animals at Sulphur Creek and we are deeply honored and proud to make this nomination.