



## ***Silver Anvil Winner***

# **Zoological Society Of San Diego Turns 75 and Agency Creates Year-Long Celebration**

### ***Situation***

The San Diego Zoo wanted to make the most of its 75th birthday. The initial concept was to build traffic and celebrate the birthday throughout the year with several landmark events. Zoo staff was burdened with the daily deluge of media calls so needed outside creative and strategic support to fully realize the potential of each event. Tom Gable, then at his previous firm, The Gable Group, developed a strategic plan to expand existing anniversary activities and create new ones. The Zoo receives continuous media coverage on its own. Thus, the goal was to go beyond publicity, and create high-profile promotions which would increase visitor traffic and, secondly, garner media attention.

### ***The Plan***

The agency strategy: create promotions to attract visitors throughout the year and provide strong visual opportunities for the media. Each project was evaluated for its media coverage potential and the opportunity to work with radio on viable listener promotions. In addition to on-site events, the agency team created a city-wide program, "You Belong In The Zoo Days," which would provide discounts for residents of each community and traveling educational programs to local malls and libraries. The concept was to also increase print coverage in local community papers, which often overlook the Zoo. The agency worked with the Zoo PR staff to design and implement radio promotions, create press releases and media advisories, pitch national publications (both general and scientific), solicit sponsorships, create visitor activities, develop new press kit materials and design and produce collateral pieces for the San Diego Zoo.

### ***The Results***

Zoo attendance for the year was up over 10 percent, at a time when other Southern California attractions were suffering declines of as much as 25 percent. The program was honored in contests throughout the United States, including receiving a Silver Anvil, the highest award given nationally by the Public Relations Society of America.