

A Day in the Life of...

Sandra Galati, Events Coordinator



Sandra with Yon, Scod and Gatesy from Tripod

A Day in Sandra's Diary

There is no such thing as a typical day in my job. Every day, every week, brings different responsibilities and events that need to be organised. An interesting example might be coordinating an event such as the Tripod Christmas Show. It's not every day you get to meet one of your favourite bands and comedic acts.

For this concert, I picked Scod, Gatesy and Yon up from the airport and made sure they arrived safely at their hotel. Obviously, prior to their arrival, I liaised with them to ensure they had everything they needed for their performance at the Zoo. Sometimes performers have agents and I coordinate things with them instead.

On the day itself, most things are already in place, such as the delivery of equipment and arrival of the act. The internal staff have been briefed on their responsibilities for the evening and it's just a matter of getting everything off the ground and synchronised. Any event is a group exercise involving many different sections and everyone really pitches in to make the event successful.

We are very careful that we don't stress our animals by having the concerts. Sound checks are a way of making sure that the concert won't be too loud or go for too long and we check the way the sound carries to the fence line so we don't disturb nearby residences.

Checking and rechecking the weather conditions with the Bureau of Meteorology is very important too. We don't need a last minute surprise of rain to dampen spirits and sound equipment. Luckily, we have never had to cancel a concert in my six years of coordinating events here.

Finally, at around about 9pm, it's time to pack everything up. This has to be done and finished on the night because the Zoo has to run normally the next day – one of the challenges of the Zoo being open every day of the year.

Running around in the days leading up to a concert is worth it. At the end of the day, it's about raising funds for the Zoo and animal conservation and it's such a privilege to be able to present cultural activities in such a unique environment.

Have you been to a Perth Zoo concert? Did you dance with the Hooley Dooleys in January or laugh along with Tripod in December? Events Coordinator Sandra Galati was there too, working behind the scenes to ensure things ran smoothly.

Sandra has always been involved in what she calls 'events for a cause' or social marketing. Prior to working at the Zoo, she worked at the Red Cross humanitarian organisation coordinating events such as the D&D Ball, as well as Oxfam (previously known as Community Aid Abroad).

Event planning is a year-round process, with the need to gauge what is happening in entertainment in Perth.

"A really important part of my job is to see what other venues or organisers are doing and which performers are coming to Perth. Perth Zoo and its concerts need to remain accessible to a variety of people," Sandra explains.

"We were among the first to present events such as outdoor movies and twilight concerts. More recently we have been hiring out the Zoo grounds as a venue for artists such as the Beach Boys and Brian Ferry."

Summer is the busiest period for Sandra and the Marketing and Events team at Perth Zoo. As well as the increased number of visitors through the gates, many corporations hold their Christmas functions at Perth Zoo's conference and function centres. Summer events such as Peters Trumpet Happy Zoo Year and Kid's Night Out presented by Commonwealth Bank need to be planned well ahead, as do school holiday programs for the kids.

"I love my job but really it's the amazing venue and people we have here that really does make it the best events job in Perth.

"Even if I can only see five minutes of a show, looking out across the crowd and seeing everyone enjoying themselves is such a satisfying feeling.

"I'm privileged to be able to offer people a different way to enjoy the Zoo and introduce people to Perth Zoo and our animal conservation mission. I like having meaning and purpose behind my job and I think it gives everyone here an incentive to work that much harder."

