

Heini Hediger Award for 2008 - Peter Dollinger

Introduction

One of the highlights of the WAZA Annual Conference is the conferring of the Heini Hediger Award which is done in the final session of WAZA on the last day, if there is an award to be proffered. The Award is not given every year but only when a nomination or nominations -- two awards shared between two deserving people have been conferred in 1996 for Ulysses S. Seal and George Rabb.

The Heini Hediger Award is so named after the famous Director of Zurich Zoo of the same name. Many current luminaries of the zoo field were acolytes of Heini Hediger, such as Christien Schmidt and Alex Rubel. In many ways most of the recipients of the Heini Hediger Award were his students. Heidigers excellent books, such as *Man and Animal in the Zoo*, and others provided a philosophical as well as technical approach to the zoo. If there was ever a man who took the zoo seriously as an academic, conservation and research institution it was Heini Hediger. Anyone who is a novice in the zoo field, even those who do not plan on making zoos their career, should read *Man and Animal in the Zoo*. It is an education about zoos covering all aspects. Heidigers impact on the zoo profession was immense. That is why the highest award the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens IUDZG, now World Association of Zoos and Aquariums WAZA can give is named after Heini Hediger.

The Award was created in 1996. Since that time the Award has been conferred nine times. WAZA Council has a process for nomination and decision making which was revised in 2005. The Guidelines are interesting to those who are interested in WAZA and they are presented below.

Guidelines for Heini Hediger Award

In 1996, at the 50th Annual Meeting of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, then known as IUDZG, guidelines were created which should be followed when recommending someone for the highest award which the organisation can give, the Heini Hediger Award. These guidelines were updated in 2005 and are presented below.

- *Unless in extremely unusual cases, only one award may be given in any calendar year.*
- *The awardee will have demonstrated a high level of commitment to the zoological garden and/or aquarium profession.*
- *Such commitment must be able to be demonstrated in the various areas of involvement within the profession.*

Such areas may include conservation programs, both *ex-situ* and *in-situ*; education; scientific research; veterinary medicine, animal husbandry and recreation leading to improvements in these areas.

Method of Nomination

Any full members may nominate a person for the Award. Nominations must be in writing or in electronic format and must be in English. Such nominations must

be submitted not less than one month before the mid-year meeting of the WAZA Council. The nomination must include a *curriculum vitae* of the person being nominated and supporting documentation as appropriate. Such documentation may include references and details of persons of whom Council may seek information. All matters must be kept strictly confidential.

The President will ensure that the information is made available to all Council Members in sufficient time to allow them to consider the matter.

At the mid-year Council Meeting, Council will discuss the matter and will decide upon the appropriate course of action. Council may decide that the candidate is worthy of the award, may decide not to confer the award or may defer the decision to seek further information. In all matters, the Council decision is final and no correspondence will be entered in to.

The decision to confer the award will require a two-thirds majority of those Council Members present and will be determined by secret ballot. In the event of there being more than one nominee, Council will undertake an agreed method of deciding between the two candidates.

Once it has been decided that an award will be given, arrangements should be made to ensure that it is awarded at the next annual meeting of the WAZA. The name of the awardee is to be kept confidential until the actual presentation is undertaken by the President at the Annual Meeting. At this time, an appropriate citation will be read by the President and the Awardee will be given the opportunity to make an appropriate response.

The award may be conferred posthumously, on which occasions it would be appropriate for a member of family or close friend or colleague to accept the Award and make an appropriate response. Council and the Executive Director will call for nominations on a regular basis and try to ensure a good representation from all parts of our constituency. Adopted at the WAZA Administrative Session of 6 October 2005 – 60th Annual Meeting, held at New York City, 2005

PREVIOUS WINNERS of Heini Hediger Award

Dr George Rabb 1995 - Denver
Dr. Ulysses Seal 1995 - Denver
Jeremy Mallinson 1998 - Nagoya
Dr. William Conway 1999 - Pretoria
Prof. Roger Wheeler 2001 - Perth
Sally Walker 2004 - Taipei
Prof. Dr. Gunther Nogge 2006 - Leipzig*
Willie Labuschagne 2007 - Budapest
Dr. Peter Dollinger 2008 - Adelaide

*Award ceremony 2008 at Christian Schmidt Symposium in Frankfurt