

Foreword

Anheuser-Busch takes great pride in its long history of dedication to environmental protection and biological conservation. For over a century, Anheuser-Busch has been a corporate leader in innovative approaches to environmental issues. This tradition has been carried-on by Anheuser-Busch subsidiaries, Busch Gardens, and SeaWorld, which have been committed to animal care, wildlife conservation, education, and research on all seven continents and in the Arctic for over four decades. Those institutions help protect threatened habitats worldwide, launch national awareness campaigns, and support important research through collaborations with international conservation organizations, including the Nature Conservancy, the Center for Marine Conservation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute. Moreover, their innovative approach to exhibit design, groundbreaking veterinary techniques, endangered species breeding successes, and animal rescue and rehabilitation programs has paved the way for others in the field.

SeaWorld has a rich history of aiding ill, injured, and orphaned animals. No other organization rescues, rehabilitates, and releases more marine animals than SeaWorld. Indeed, from 1994 through 1998, more than 3000 animals, including seals, sea lions, dolphins, whales, sea turtles, and sea birds have benefited from the expertise of the parks' dedicated team of veterinarians, animal care specialists, and marine biologists.

The rescue, rehabilitation, and release of JJ, a gray whale, added an exciting chapter to Anheuser-Busch's conservation legacy. The history

of SeaWorld of California's successful efforts to revive, rehabilitate, and return to the wild a neonatal gray whale that stranded on a beach near Marina Del Rey, California in January 1997 is recounted in this monograph. This collection of articles includes not only the logistical details of her rescue and subsequent care and release, but also a wealth of scientific knowledge gained by studying JJ during her 15 months of care at SeaWorld of California in San Diego. During that period, marine mammalogists and other researchers were given unprecedented opportunities to learn about numerous aspects of gray whale physiology, behavior, and development, including heart function, sleep patterns, feeding behavior, genetics, and many others. This knowledge will help researchers better understand these magnificent animals and improve the prospects for their conservation in the wild.

Rescuing JJ and returning her to the wild was a tremendously rewarding experience for all involved. The magnitude of effort and passion of all involved in this adventure, from the rescue at Marina del Rey in Los Angeles in January 1997 to release on 31 March 1998, was nothing short of awesomely massive. Anheuser-Busch is proud of its role in this effort. Moreover, all those who participated in this historic event should remain honored to have associated with such professionalism and shared in its success. We are pleased to have a role in the presentation of this compendium on the remarkable efforts to save and study this gray whale, simply known forever to many as, JJ.

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