

Alan Mootnick – a Man for many Seasons

ALAN MOOTNICK - A LOSS TO PRIMATES AND CONSERVATION

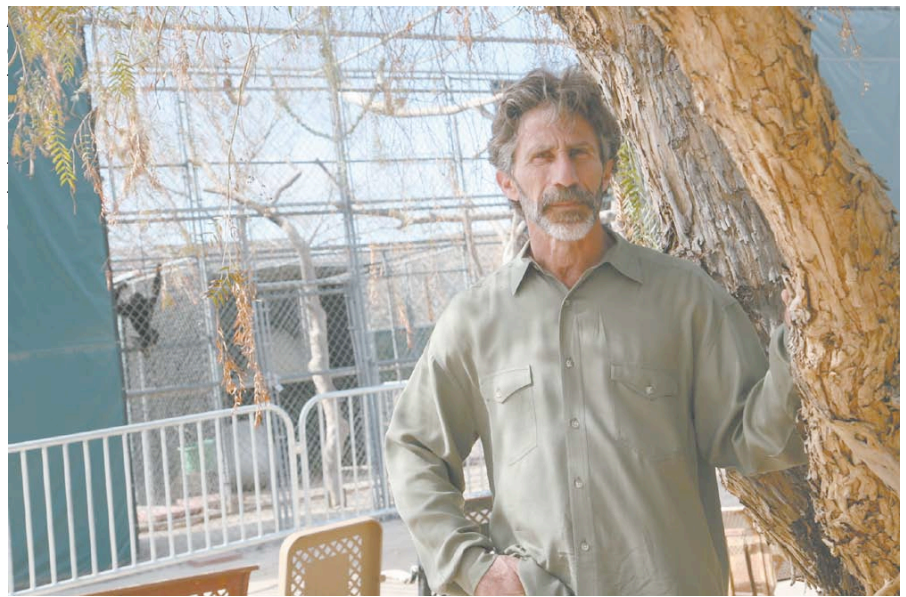
Alan Mootnick passed away 4 November 2011 at what seems a very young age these days, that is 60 years old. Alan was no "60" in the way we think of that age, e.g., as being on the way to the next life, he was a person that could have easily lived another 60 years without any loss of vitality and enthusiasm.

Not that Alan was an angel ... he irritated me to death -- many times -- and we were on the verge of blows more than once. He was soooo eccentric and determined, but maybe that is the sign of genius also as no one can fault his intellect.

During a PHVA workshop for Hoolock Gibbon that we (Zoo Outreach Organisation / South Asian Primate Network) organized in Dhaka, Bangladesh, I had the dubious pleasure of facilitating the captive working group with Alan and later of running a small training with him. After the training I was supposed to accompany him on a few days tour of Bangladesh and I dreaded it ... I thought one of us would not survive. Anyway I bit the bullet and decided that the tour would be his and all about him...whatever he wanted. I made an effort. I kept asking him questions about himself and all went very well ... the man just needed attention. In that process I came to understand how very complicated and versatile was Alan Mootnick.

For one thing, I never realized that he was a body builder. He told me all about it after referring to it in passing. It seemed so out of context ... I never imagined. I made a point of asking him to take off his outer shirt and there before me was a guy who belonged on muscle beach. He was an advanced case ... he worked out for hours a day when he had free time. Amazing.

I also came to know that he collected AND restored old cars -- himself. He was also a skilled building contractor, accustomed to moving heavy building materials and all that comes with construction.



Alan Mootnick at his Gibbon Conservation Center, California

Gibbon Conservation Centre...just like Alan's organization. Alan wrote to Dilip several times, I believe, and begged him to change the name since Alan had founded his organization first. Dilip refused to change. Even I got into the act as I thought it was a small matter for Dilip since his organization kept a whole variety of animals ... it was more of a welfare centre. Dilip handily refused me as well so the name remained the same till now.

I hope the Trustees of the American Gibbon Conservation Centre will consider changing the name to something like the Alan Mootnick Gibbon Conservation Centre, so that finally there will be a unique name honouring Alan for his very unique centre. Then he can truly rest in peace !

Sally Walker

WORLD LOSES LEADING APE CONSERVATIONIST

**Alan Richard Mootnick, 1951-2011
A Savior of Endangered Apes**

Alan Richard Mootnick-one of the world's foremost specialists and conservationists of gibbons-passed away on Friday, November 4, 2011, from complications following heart surgery. He was 60 years old.

Mootnick founded the non-profit Gibbon Conservation Center (GCC) in

What started as a childhood fascination with gibbons developed into an important sanctuary, housing the largest gathering of endangered apes in the Western Hemisphere. Completely self-taught in primatology, Mootnick was one of a team responsible for the identification and naming of the highly endangered Hoolock Gibbon.

He published more than 30 articles in peer-reviewed journals and offered advice to zoos, government agencies, veterinary universities, and gibbon rescue centers throughout the world. He was the studbook keeper for five species and Husbandry Advisor for the Gibbon Species Survival Plan.

Mootnick and his work touched countless individuals and institutions. Hundreds of school children and students visit the Gibbon Conservation Center yearly, and the general public enjoys the annual "Breakfast With the Gibbons" fundraiser. Known for an eccentric style-gray-spotted beard, constant suspenders, and dry sense of humor-Mootnick was a person not easily forgotten. Strangers would approach him on the street, recognizing him from a long-ago school trip to the Gibbon Conservation Center.

A Los Angeles native, Mootnick is survived by his sister Ronnie Weinberger, nephews Paul and Steve

Weinberger, aunt Jean Galanti, cousins Geri-Ann Galanti, and William and Kenneth Benbassat, and 44 gibbons currently residing at the Gibbon Conservation Center.

Funeral services held at Groman Eden Mortuary, 11500 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills, on Tuesday, November 8, 2011, at 10am. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Gibbon Conservation Center, www.gibboncenter.org/contribute/contribute.html

FOUNDER / DIRECTOR OF GCC LEAVES PRECIOUS LEGACY

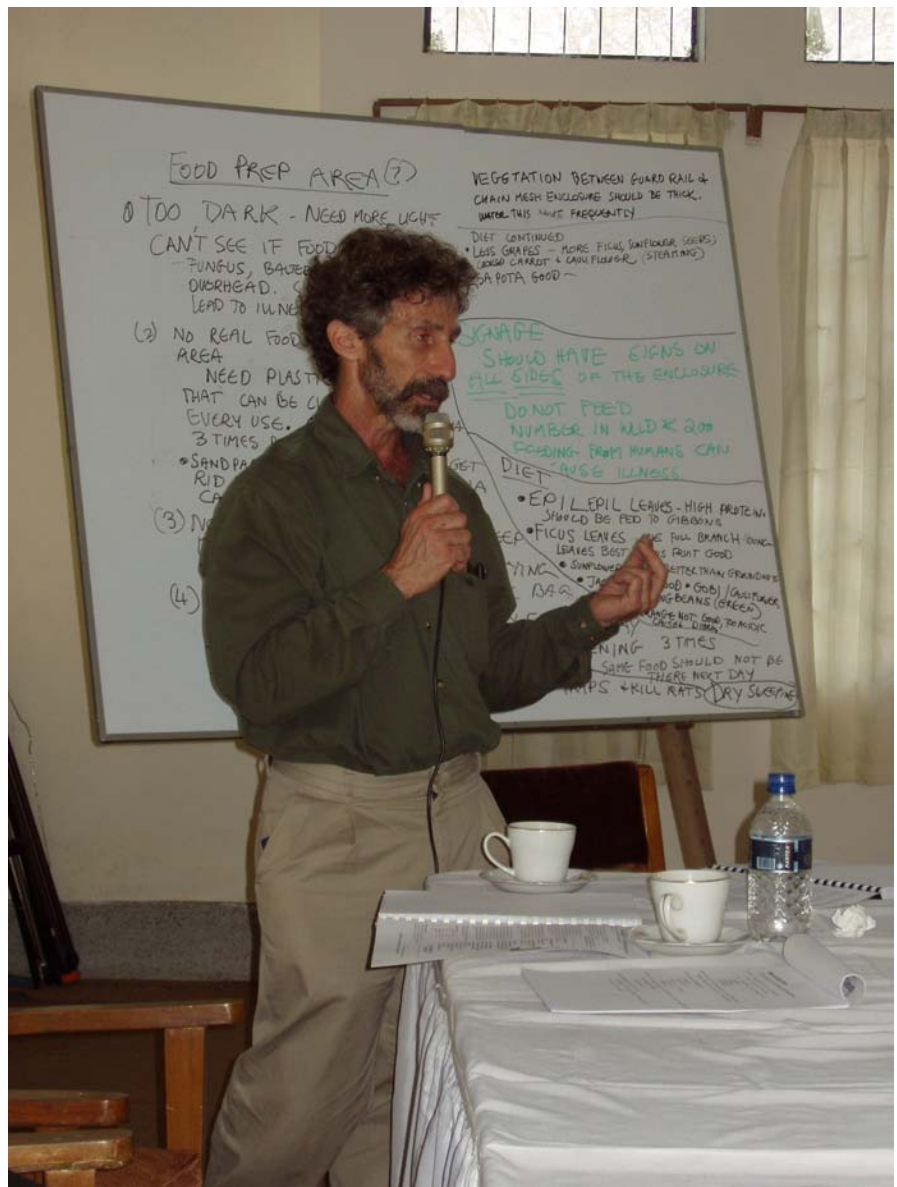
Founder and Director of the Gibbon Conservation Center in Santa Clarita California, Alan Mootnick died Friday after complications from heart surgery. A self-taught primatologist, Alan started the center in 1976 to prevent the extinction of gibbons.

He became one of the world's foremost gibbon specialists. Currently, 44 gibbons live at the center. Thousands of school children through the years have been introduced to gibbons and their conservation at Gibbon Conservation Center.

"This is a huge shock to all of us, yet the gibbons will remain well cared for and the tours will continue," board member Lauren Arenson said.

The center is operated by three employees and a number of volunteers who care for the animals and conduct tours, Arenson said.

Consistently working 12 and 15 hour days 7 days a week, for many years supporting the Gibbon Conservation Center through being a "Jack of all trades" contractor, continually pushing for excellence in gibbon care, Alan dedicated his life to the singular purpose of conserving and caring for gibbons.



Alan teaching at the ZOO/Dhaka Zoo Hoolock Gibbon training course, held following the Population and Habitat and Viability Assessment of Hoolock Gibbon

Gibbon Conservation Center

Mission: The Gibbon Conservation Center was founded in 1976 in southern California by Alan Mootnick.

It is the only facility in the world devoted exclusively to gibbons, an increasingly rare ape. We work for the endangered gibbon's benefit through conservation, propagation an study, and by teaching people about them. GCC houses nearly 40 gibbons.

GCC specializes in behavioral studies on gibbons collected by students, scientists and volunteers working at the Center. GCC also offers advice, free of charge, to zoos, government agencies and gibbon rescue centers through the world.

A portion of donations received by GCC is given to projects devoted to the conservation of wild gibbon populations, especially those in Java, India, Kalimantan, China and Vietnam.

Website: www.gibboncenter.org