



The **SSP** Paper

ISSUE 3
Spring, 2023

As a reminder, all of our offices will be closed on Good Friday, 04/07/23 in observance of the Easter Holiday!

A Unique Conservation Story



Learn more about one of North America's most endangered species [READ MORE PG. 3 & 4](#)

Employee Recognition

Mikey



[READ MORE PG. 2](#)

Upcoming SSP Attended events

April

- Mid-South AALAS
- LAMA/ ATA Meeting
- QUAD Symposium
- NA3r's Symposium
- DVB Meeting

May

- CALAS/ASCAL Symposium
- MNYB AALAS Awards Banquet
- ASAP's 25th Anniversary Celebration

June

- MSMR Enrichment Symposium
- LAWTE Meeting
- WBAALAS Educational Trade Fair
- NRMB AALAS



Notes From Shepherd

A letter from SSP to Researchers & Animal Care Givers...

Production Capacity Increase at SSP

Other Industry Updates

[READ MORE PG. 5 - 7](#)



Employee Recognition Mikey



Name: *Mikey Granstaff*

Years at Shepherd: *5 years* (But worked for the Shepherd family in other family business for 12 years before it was sold)

Mikey is our lead Forklift Operator and Shipper. Nearly every raw material that enters the Shepherd production facility is handled by him. He inspects all inbound materials and safely stores them in a systematic, well-organized manner within the warehouse. He prepares and arranges finished products for shipping to our customers and loads all out-bound trucks. In short, Mikey is the first person to handle and inspect raw materials as they come in, and he is the last person to see our products before our customers receive them. Mikey is a crucial component to our **Excellence In The Cage** initiative. We are thankful to have such a dedicated & talented employee.

Interesting Facts

What is one interesting fact about yourself?

*"I have lived and worked my entire life in **Watertown, Tennessee**. I have only lived in two houses – the one I grew up in on the west side of town and the one I own now on the east side of town."*

What are your hobbies outside of work?

"I love old cars! I am a Mopar guy. I have a 1970 Plymouth Barracuda and a Plymouth Satellite. I work on them and enjoy going to car shows. I also collect die cast car models that I have all over my house. Besides cars, I like wood working and making furniture."

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

"That's easy, I would go to Gatlinburg, Tennessee. My family is from there and my grandparents are buried there. I love to drive and walk up in the hills and woods around Gatlinburg. It is a beautiful, peaceful place."

What is your favorite sports team?

"I do not follow traditional sports teams. I love watching any sport that is on wheels. Chase Elliott is my favorite NASCAR team."

What makes Shepherd such a great place to work?

"I work for a good family, and working I here, I feel like I am part of the family."



A Unique Conservation Story

The Black-Footed Ferret



Biologists at the captive breeding facilities for the Black-footed ferret specify **ALPHA-dri**[®] from Shepherd Specialty Papers. Why, because the recovery of the Black-footed ferret, one of the most endangered animals in North America, depends upon the success of this program.

Native Americans were the first humans to know about the existence of the Black-Footed Ferret. Many tribes considered the ferret to be sacred. Throughout history, the black-footed ferret has been known to be elusive. So much so that there was controversy over whether or not they actually existed.

The Black-Footed ferrets main food source was the prairie dog. But when European settlement began across North America, the landscape of the prairie land was plowed and prairie dog eradication began. As the main food source began to diminish, so did the black-footed ferret population.

Biologists captured the remaining *nine ferrets* in hopes of starting a captive breeding program. When the program was unsuccessful, the black footed ferret was considered extinct in 1979.

Nearly 3 years later, 1981 in a small town called Meeteese, Wyoming, a ranch dog by the name of Shep, brought a dead ferret home to his owners. The owners brought the carcass to a local taxidermist called the wildlife authorities and they identified it as the **Black-Footed Ferret**. The wildlife authorities surveyed the area and found a small population of Ferrets. Thus, the Black-Footed Ferret Recovery Program was born.

Since 1991 federal and state agencies, in cooperation with private landowners, non-profit organizations, Native American tribes, and the North American Zoo community have been actively reintroducing ferrets back into the wild.

Continue Reading..



A Unique Conservation Story

The Black-Footed Ferret



(When they tell you it's time to go home)

The fate of the Black-Footed Ferret was not solely in the hands of captive breeding. A team of wildlife professionals were successful in breeding black-footed ferrets in captivity and formulating a captive breeding program for them.

Efforts reintroduce captive bred black-footed ferrets into the wild, have been successful. Preconditioning is an important precursor to the reintroduction process. They are placed in pens outdoors where they have natural burrowing systems and have the opportunity to encounter live prairie dogs.

The most opportune time to get them fully into the wild is when they are about 120 days old because they are ready to naturally disperse from their family group. Before being released, they are vaccinated against canine distemper virus and plague.

Currently, there are 30 black-footed ferret reintroduction sites. They have been released in Wyoming, South Dakota, Montana, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Kansas, New Mexico, Canada, and Mexico.

Current numbers in the wild are encouraging but more reintroduction sites are needed to recover the species.

Below is a QR code to donate to the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife (WAFWA). To be sure it gets to the Ferret Foundation, choose **WGI Black-Footed Ferret Project Work** in the **“Initiative to Donate Field”**



All the information above can be found at www.blackfootedferret.org

Company Updates

ALPHA-dri® Production Capacity Increase

Our customers' satisfaction is a fundamental component in the way that we operate, and we remain dedicated to providing Excellence through our products and customer service every day. This past year, the overall industry usage of ALPHA-dri® skyrocketed. Thank you for that!

Due to this increase, we have planned and adapted our business for this growth. We have added additional production staff, and we are in the process of building additional production machinery. These actions assure that we are able to meet our current customers' bedding needs as well as the current industry-wide ALPHA-dri® growth trend.

We are cognizant of the supply chain issues that have impacted numerous industries across the globe. We have addressed these challenges through our supplier partnerships and our expanded production capacity. We are poised to meet all our customers' needs as well as future customers as they join our goal of providing Excellence in the Cage. We are thrilled about all the new opportunities that will come from this project and look forward to the enhanced science and animal welfare improvements for the animals housed on ALPHA-dri®. We can't wait to see what the future holds for the research industry.

Cheers to a bright future ahead!



Joel Shepherd



In case you missed it...

Breeding research mice responsibly is not as easy as it sounds. Every day, animal lives are wasted and biomedical discovery is compromised because colony management has simply become too complex for human beings to do well. So...we should STOP DOING IT!

There are tools available right now that make our critical research with rodents less wasteful, more productive...

Listen here!

(Click the image below to listen to the latest GetReal! episode)





A letter from Shepherd to Animal Care Givers & Researchers

In Honor of Biomedical Research Awareness Day



Dear Researcher and Animal Care Giver,

We at Shepherd are especially thankful for all the work that you do and the awesome care of all the animals in research. Your hard work, dedication, and care you provide these animals, does not go unnoticed. There is and continues to be medical advancements for millions of humans and animals around the world and that is because of you.

Our employees are dedicated to teaching the public about how animal research helps us understand the complex questions of disease progression and biological uncertainty. These animals have dedicated their lives to animal research, and you are the one that gets to spread the good news on behalf of them and for that, we thank you.



Your Friends at Shepherd





The More You Know..

Prohibition against the use of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances in apparel and outdoor apparel for severe wet conditions

Environmental Conservation (ENV) CHAPTER 43-B, ARTICLE 37, TITLE 1

[Read More](#)

What is ethical animal research? A scientist and veterinarian explain

Published: November 23rd, 2022 8:19 am EST.

[Read More](#)

Talking things out: How institutional transparency could improve animal research

Published: August 28th, 2022 8:33 am EDT.

[Read More](#)

Veterinarian: Animals remain key to drug safety

By: Coco Lederhouse Published: March 21st, 2023

[Read More](#)

Are you or someone you know stuck on The Hamster Wheel Of Science*?

If Mice genetics are 80% identical to humans and PFAS chemicals are harmful to humans, we can conclude that PFAS chemicals might be harmful to mice that are living with them inside their cages.

Would you be stress-free if you had to walk around on pointy rock-like particles your entire life?

Shouldn't we be doing science differently if we are really going to be helping patients* ?

LEARN MORE

BE THE CHANGE.
& make it excellence.

How can a mechanic understand what is wrong with a broken car engine, if they don't know what a normal working car engine is supposed to look or sound like*?

How can we understand normal mouse behavior if the control group is unknowingly being dosed?

*Cindy Buckmaster, *The Hamster Wheel Of Science*, Season 2 Episode 17, GetReal!, June 29 2022, <https://www.getreal.naiaonline.org/episodes>