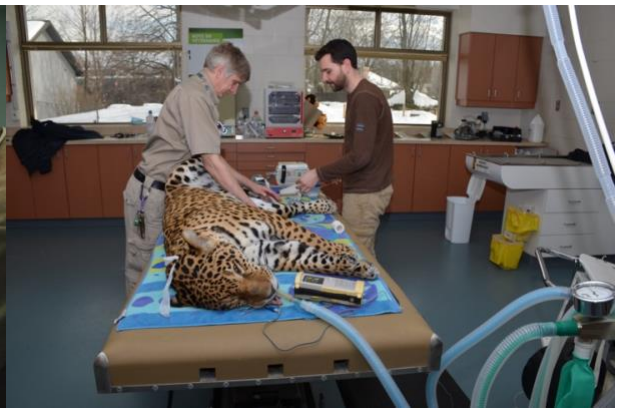
Rock Boily of The Granby Zoo Recognized for Outstanding 38-Year Service

“Some people venture off the beaten path to create new opportunities, adapting their route to overcome challenges and charting a course for the future… [he is] one of these exceptional individuals.” This is what The Granby Zoo writes of their former veterinary technician, Rock Boily (retired). CAZA is pleased to recognize Boily for his outstanding contribution to the Zoo over the past 38 years.

Throughout his career, Rock worked with more than 10 veterinarians. In the last decade, he contributed to the training and development of nine resident veterinarians, 19 zoo interns, seven veterinary technicians, 30 veterinary trainees and numerous animal health technician interns. He was an expert at guiding his trainees, inspiring them with his motivation and commitment.

When Rock began his work with The Granby Zoo, Veterinary Technology was still in its infancy stages. He evolved alongside the profession—often proving himself to be ahead of his time. He developed expertise in dispensing medical treatments and improved the texture, taste, and recipes of oral medicines to facilitate better absorption rate. Through his creativity and resourcefulness, he developed tools and methods that continue to serve several generations of animal caregivers within the organization.

In addition, Rock’s environmental consciousness helped him give new life to objects and materials used at the Zoo to reduce their ecological footprint. Resilient, Boily is remembered for his ability to hold awkward positions for long periods without flinching. Kneeling on the concrete to restrain an alligator or holding the mouth of a sedated lion, Rock persevered no matter what.

Boily’s extensive skills made him a treasured partner to the many veterinarians he has worked with over the years. His reliability, dedication, skill, and diligence helped Rock earn his place in the Zoo’s veterinary hospital. His colleague, Karl Fournier (Director of Animal Care), writes: “Whatever the time, the moment, or the emergency, Rock has always been flexible and

accommodating, in support of his colleagues and in providing the necessary cares for the animals… We can't count the number of times his meals were taken at irregular times or when his workdays started earlier… or ended later!"

Boily took his well-earned retirement in September 2021, though not without mixed emotions from his colleagues. Referred to as "a true pillar of his department" and a walking "encyclopedia," Rock also regularly brightened the days of his department with his famous cookies and compassionate nature. More than professional of the year, Rock is a key figure in the history of The Granby Zoo— "one of those exceptional people who'll leave a mark on the profession, the institution, and the community."

Boily was the recipient of CAZA's 2021 Zoo and Aquarium Professional award.