



# ZAG

ZOO, AQUARIUM & GARDEN  
BUYERS GROUP

## March Newsletter

March, 1st 2026

# Letter from the President

## Collaboration...

### My Word for 2026!

At the beginning of the last several years, I've chosen a word that I feel embodies the work I will do and the focus I will have throughout the upcoming year. I've used this word to help guide decisions, coach staff, interact with visitors, work with vendors and partners, and challenge me in my professional life. After spending the last few years having to continuously pivot due to circumstances out of anyone's control, this year I am starting by declaring my commitment to communication, cooperation, and coordination to build stronger partnerships, lasting positive interactions, and mutually supportive teamwork under the umbrella of collaboration.



ZAG is a community of great leaders, both as retail buyers and industry partners. We are all masters at building our businesses using the methods I previously mentioned. Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do to be successful.

Collaboration is how we create amazing displays, working with vendor partners to curate merchandise that tells intriguing stories. Collaboration is how we build amazing teams that work together to meet the needs of both our stores and our visitors. Collaboration is how we manage the everyday obstacles and create positive outcomes.



ZAG can help you collaborate for 2026 by connecting our Members and Sponsors, sharing successful product stories, communicating upcoming show events and opportunities, offering Member travel scholarships, encouraging one another, and more. Collaboration is how we achieve success!



BY: SHEILA WEWERS - ZAG BOARD PRESIDENT

# ANDMORE®

## ZAG Buyer Opportunities

ZAG buyer members, shop Atlanta Market or Las Vegas Market!

Stay a minimum of 3 nights and receive 2 nights complimentary hotel\*:

### ATLANTA MARKET ANDMORE®

**Atlanta Market  
at AmericasMart Atlanta  
Hosted with Atlanta Apparel**

[www.atlantamarket.com](http://www.atlantamarket.com)

Showrooms: Tues. Jun.9-Sun., Jun. 14,2026

Temporaries: Close Early at 2pm on Sat. Jun. 13

- ✓ Register to attend: <https://www.atlantamarket.com/attend/registration>
- ✓ Book a minimum of 3 nights hotel": <https://compass.onpeak.com/e/60AGMJL2026HIR/in/category/40699>
- ✓ Email your OnPeak confirmation to [buyers@andmore.com](mailto:buyers@andmore.com) no later than Fri., May 14; please note your buyer affiliation with ZAG for accurately applied nights.
- ✓ To cancel or make changes, please log in to your OnPeak reservation or call OnPeak at 800-241-6405.

### LAS VEGAS MARKET ANDMORE®

**Las Vegas Market at  
World Market Center**

[www.lasvegasmarket.com](http://www.lasvegasmarket.com)

Showrooms: Sun. Jul. 26- Thurs., Jul. 30, 2026

Temporaries: Close Early at 4pm on Wed. Jul. 29

- ✓ Register to attend: <https://www.lasvegasmarket.com/Market-Info/Registration-Details>
- ✓ Book a minimum of 3 nights hotel": <https://www.book.passkey.com/go/LVMJUL26TwoNightsComp>
- ✓ Email your Connections Housing confirmation to [Buyers@andmore.com](mailto:Buyers@andmore.com) no later than Fr., June 26; please note your buyer member affiliation with ZAG for accurately applied nights.
- ✓ To cancel or make changes, please click "modify or cancel reservation" on your Connections Housing confirmation email or call Connections Housing at 702-586-3546

\*Comp. nights applied Jun. 8-15 (Atlanta) or Jul. 25 – 31, 2026 (Las Vegas), either market (not both). One buyer per Member Company. Stores within 100-mile radius ineligible. Credit card required for reservation; hotel may charge first night room and tax, late cancel or no-show. Restrictions apply. Non-transferable. Offers may not be combined. Complete rules on request.



Sevierville, TN | November 3-5, 2026  
Pigeon Forge, TN | November 4-7, 2026

## 2026 SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

To get more information about any of the items below, visit [IGES.US](https://iges.us)

### Exclusive Pavilions at Sevierville



Sustainable



Made in America



Toy + On Trend



Campground

### Onsite Perks



Win daily at the Swag Station



Enter daily to win a cash prize!



On-Site Shopping Tours at both locations

### ZAG Lounge + Annual Meeting Luncheon - hosted by IGES

Join your fellow ZAG members as we celebrate Opening Day at Pigeon Forge with a delicious lunch hosted by IGES. In addition, there will be an exclusive ZAG Lounge that will be open to ZAG Members every day of the show in Pigeon Forge, Meeting Room N3.

#### Luncheon Details

Date: Wednesday, November 4, 2026

Time: 12:30pm

Location: Meeting Room N3, LeConte Center at Pigeon Forge

Scan the QR code to receive an email reminder when registration opens for the 2026 show or visit [iges.us/reg-reminder](https://iges.us/reg-reminder)

If you have any IGES buyer related questions please contact:  
Lynn Schulte | Attendee Relations Manager  
(678) 982-5107, [Lynn.Schulte@emeraldtx.com](mailto:Lynn.Schulte@emeraldtx.com)





October 6-9, 2026

Las Vegas Convention Center | Upper South Hall

## 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EVENT!

The nation's largest resort & souvenir event is celebrating 20 years! We're planning birthday surprises and giveaways you won't want to miss! Pack your bags and make sure these ZAG member events and perks are added to your schedule:

**Tuesday, October 6 at 5pm: ZAG Mixer**

Join your fellow ZAG members & sponsors for drinks and appetizers.

**Thursday, October 8 at 8am: Networking Breakfast**

Take part in this exclusive networking event for association members to meet NEW exhibitors!



**Meet your new ZAG contact, Shawnese!**

Reach out to Key Account Manager, Shawnese Cleveland with any questions at [shawnese.cleveland@clarionevents.com](mailto:shawnese.cleveland@clarionevents.com) (253) 999-5684



**REGISTRATION OPENS IN APRIL**

Visit [lvsouvenirshow.com/ZAG](https://lvsouvenirshow.com/ZAG) to learn more



# THE MOUNTAINS ARE CALLING!

The Smoky Mountain Gift Show returns November 4-7, 2026 **DON'T MISS THESE EVENTS IN GATLINBURG**

SUNDAY 11/1	MONDAY 11/2	TUESDAY 11/3	WEDNESDAY 11/4	THURSDAY 11/5	FRIDAY 11/6	SATURDAY 11/7
Pack your bags! 	Travel time 	Travel time 	<b>9am</b> Smoky Mountain Gift Show Opens!  <b>11am</b> Made in America Tour*  <b>6pm</b> ZAG Mixer	<b>11am</b> Made in America Tour*  <b>12pm</b> ZAG Member Luncheon	<b>8am</b> Breakfast & Seminar  <b>11am</b> Zootique Tour*	<b>9am</b> Last day of the show!

**\*\*Tours will be led by ZAG Board Member, April Terranella!**

**PLUS MORE!**

- LUNCH COUPONS offered to all ZAG Members - just pick them up in our Show Office
- FREE PARKING for all buyers - with your buyer badge or email confirmation. Conveniently located across the street from the convention center



**Meet your new ZAG contact, Nicole!**

Reach out to Attendee Program Manager, Nicole Saunders with any questions at [nicole.saunders@clarionevents.com](mailto:nicole.saunders@clarionevents.com) (203) 484-8052

**REGISTRATION OPENS IN MAY\***

Visit [smokymtngiftshow.com/ZAG](http://smokymtngiftshow.com/ZAG) to learn more

*\*Stay tuned for more event announcements coming soon!*



# ZAG BOARD MEETING



# ZAG Member Article

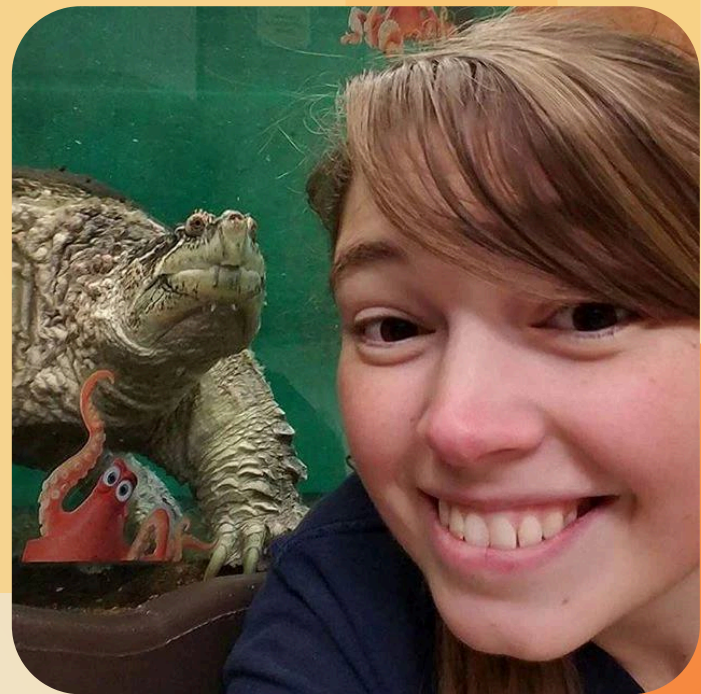
## New Year-New Merch!

Retail is where the magic continues after the guest leaves your institution —and you are a huge part of that story. Every product on our shelves is more than merchandise; it's a chance to make a lasting connection, spark curiosity, share conservation messages, and help guests take a piece of their experience home. When staff are excited about retail, that energy is contagious and your guests feel it, engagement goes up, and every interaction becomes another opportunity to inspire wonder and learning.

And the best part? New merch is on the way. Fresh designs, on-trend items, and products that connect directly to our animals, habitats, and conservation work are rolling in. This is your chance to explore what's new, find your favorites, and help guests discover something they'll truly love. New merchandise means new stories to tell, and an opportunity to get your staff excited to dive in and make retail a highlight of the zoo and aquarium experience!

What's new in your gift shop, and how will you use it to inspire curiosity, conservation, and connection?

BY: SAM HALLIGAN - ZAG BOARD MEMBER



# ZAG Member Article

## What is Dynamic Pricing?

What is Dynamic Pricing – a flexible pricing strategy where you can adjust prices in real-time based on market demand, supply levels, competitor pricing and customer behavior. Ultimately this strategy maximizes revenue by charging higher prices during peak demand and lower prices during slow periods.

How does this strategy work in retail, and how do you set up your store to employ this strategy? A great example for dynamic pricing is a key item plush program. Most 12” plush is priced between \$24 and \$28 at full price retail. If you run a “2 for \$40” promotion on high traffic weekends or Spring Break, as these guests may be more inclined to increase their ticket by purchasing two pieces. Conversely, on slower off-season weeks or school days with mostly school groups, it might be more prudent to have a short-term promotional event at \$19.99. To flex this pricing – you need to be prepared:

1. Promotional signage ready to go
2. Tickets should be linked to UPC code on item (allows for a more seamless scanning)
3. Store team should be aware of changing strategy to more easily communicate to guests
4. Location in store – does a strong promotional event need new or more prominent placement in the store



Another example of dynamic pricing would be the application to clearance. When traffic is high, or the traffic in your store is mostly dedicated park members, a simple clearance sign might do the trick to moving some units. However, if it is a slower weekend, inclement weather, or school groups, popping the clearance to +30% off could be the trick. A simple analysis of guest content can dramatically improve the effectiveness of clearance and overall promotional merchandise.

BY: ROSE DOMAS - ZAG BOARD MEMBER

# Valani Apparel & Moose + Goose



moose  
goose+

At Valani Apparel, our mission has always been to elevate fleece through exceptional softness, thoughtful construction, and garments that truly resonate with guests. We're proud to partner with destinations that value quality, comfort, and storytelling and it's that same commitment that guides everything we create.

With that in mind, we're excited to introduce you to our children's brand, Moose + Goose. Built on 30 years of manufacturing experience, Moose + Goose brings a playful, adventure-driven spirit to kids' apparel while maintaining the premium feel and reliability you expect from Valani. The line blends imaginative design with destination-ready quality, giving families pieces that feel joyful, memorable, and worth taking home. Together, Valani and Moose + Goose offer a cohesive, high-value assortment designed to elevate your retail experience and connect with guests of every age.



Style # 1460: Angel Fleece Infant Bear Ear Hoodie and Jogger Set in Black

## Something Wild Inc.



Handcrafted Upcycled Leather Sculptures for Zoo, Aquarium & Garden Retail  
Something Wild Inc. is a wholesale manufacturer of handcrafted upcycled leather animal sculptures, designed specifically for specialty retail environments including zoo gift shops, aquariums, botanical gardens, museum stores, and destination retailers.

Each sculpture is meticulously handcrafted by skilled artisans in India using upcycled leather byproducts. By transforming excess leather materials into detailed animal forms, Something Wild Inc. reduces material waste while preserving traditional craftsmanship techniques passed down through generations.

The collection includes:

- Larger statement sculptures ideal for visual merchandising displays and themed retail environments
- Smaller giftable pieces well suited for take-home purchases and curated assortments

These pieces are designed to complement wildlife-focused retail spaces, offering products that align naturally with conservation storytelling and educational environments.

Beyond the product itself, every wholesale order supports a small artisan community, helping sustain livelihoods and preserve traditional handcrafting practices. This commitment to responsible sourcing and craftsmanship resonates strongly with today's mission-driven institutions and environmentally conscious guests.

Something Wild Inc. partners directly with zoo, aquarium, and garden retailers to provide distinctive, high-perceived-value merchandise that enhances the retail experience while supporting sustainable production practices.

Wholesale orders are currently being accepted for upcoming seasonal deliveries. To learn more, request a catalog, or discuss retail opportunities, please contact:

Dash Bedi

Something Wild Inc.

407-913-7700

[dash@somethingwildinc.org](mailto:dash@somethingwildinc.org)

# Zambezi Treasures



ZAMBEZITREASURES  
AUTHENTIC QUALITY

ZambeziTreasures brings the best African carvings and crafts from Zimbabwe to your gift shop. We can provide quantities of exquisitely carved hippos, zebra, giraffe, elephants, even warthogs and African tortoises that are authentic and amazingly realistic, shipped directly to you.

Our customers say:

*"Love, love, love these hippos! They are beautiful and bring a lot of joy to my kitchen!"*

*"Adorable wooden salad tongs with giraffes on each--the perfect gift for my friend!"*

*"Great Communication, Fast Shipping, Exceptional Condition & Phenomenal Cause."*



# Grasshopper Mermaid



**Grasshopper's Mermaid is a woman-owned and operated company. Our products are proudly made in the USA and can be personalized with your zoo, museum or aquarium name—at no additional cost!**

**We also can create custom art for your specific location! Our indoor/outdoor stickers are printed using water-based inks by the most eco-friendly printer available. All stickers are UV coated, dishwasher safe, and boast a minimum outdoor lifespan of five years. Grasshopper's Mermaid creates one-of-a-kind artwork that is available on a variety of other souvenirs, including apparel, reusable canvas bags, postcards, keychains and magnets.**

**No matter what you choose, we are committed to giving back: 10% of every purchase is donated to conservation efforts.**



# ZAG SPONSORS AT ATLANTA MARKET





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