

Susan Tellem Co-Founder of American Tortoise Rescue Named Turtle Survival Alliance Hero

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MALIBU, CALIFORNIA, US, July 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Susan Tellem, RN, BSN, co-founder of [American Tortoise Rescue](#), was named a [Turtle Survival Alliance](#) "Hero" on #WorldTurtleDay® 2022 . Every day of #TurtleMonth, from Earth Day through World Turtle Day® on May 23rd, TSA is highlighting the people who make possible their collaborative programs across the world for the preservation of threatened turtles and tortoises. Without these #TurtleHeroes, TSA could not achieve its vision of Zero Turtle Extinction. For their tireless efforts, TSA says thank you.



Bunkle is American Tortoise Rescue's Mascot and First Rescued Turtle in 1990s.

An animal lover since birth, Susan was a cat rescuer serving on a large Los Angeles cat sanctuary board of directors when she was in her early 20s. After graduating from college with a bachelor's in nursing. While working in healthcare, however, through a stroke of luck, she was offered a job in public relations and grew her company to the largest healthcare PR firm west of the Mississippi.

“

I am so grateful for this wonderful recognition for American Tortoise Rescue by TSA.”

Susan Tellem

In 1990, Susan and her husband, Marshall Thompson, were shopping at a pet store (they had dogs, cats, a rabbit, snakes, mice, birds and other pets) and saw two Russian tortoises. Knowing nothing about them, but fascinated, they purchased both and called them PeggySue. Susan and

Marshall started doing research and discovered that many people knew nothing about keeping turtles. They decided, with Susan's background in nursing and PR, they should launch an online knowledge base for people to get information about these wonderful creatures. American Tortoise Rescue (ATR) (tortoise.com) was born and has existed as the longest running national turtle and tortoise sanctuary. The nonprofit organization has rehomed more than 4,000 turtles and tortoises. An all-volunteer-based organization, ATR uses every penny contributed for the care and feeding of the more than 100 turtles and tortoises currently in their care.

In 2000, the pair created World Turtle Day® celebrated every year on May 23rd. Its purpose is to educate the world's peoples about why saving turtles and tortoises from extinction is critical. This observance is now "shellebrated" in virtually every country around the globe. More information is at www.worldturtleday.org.

Susan's experience with and love of turtles and tortoises and background in PR, she has worked on campaigns focused on encouraging humans not to remove these animals from the wild and to celebrate the existence of these beautiful creatures. She also helps and supports the many tortoise and turtle rescues now in the U.S. and around the world. For more than 20 years, Susan and her husband also have been working hard to ban the live food markets around the world where turtles are sold alive for food.

Sadly, a major fire destroyed her home and the sanctuary a few years ago. The turtles were evacuated and were safe. Because the turtle hospital was also lost, but now rebuilt, the pair have



Spinner was hurt and unable to eat. She has been hand fed for 20 years at the sanctuary



**WITHOUT YOUR HELP, TURTLES
WILL BE GONE WORLDWIDE
IN 50 YEARS.**



Turtles like this are disappearing around the world.

stopped rescuing healthy turtles and tortoises and only take in unadoptable animals with special needs. Susan also spends time helping people throughout the country find a way to rehome their animals so they do not end up at an animal shelter.

You can help Turtle Heroes other turtle conservationists continue their important work for the survival of turtles and tortoises by becoming a ATR donor at www.tortoise.com/give or a TSA donor at https://bit.ly/TSA_TurtleMonthDonation.

Susan Tellem
American Tortoise Rescue
+1 310-613-3504

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