



# THE CRASH

Newsletter for rhino professionals

September 2013

## Board of Directors Election Results and Updates

The Election Committee would like to extend their appreciation to all members that participated in our 2013 BOD election. There were four positions this year that included two vacancies by founding Board Members Lance Aubery and Randy Pairan. We would like to extend our congratulations to the following members that were elected this year to 3 year positions!

- ◆ Christine Bobko - Denver Zoo
- ◆ Jonnie Capiro - San Diego Zoo Safari Park
- ◆ Ray Hren - Milwaukee County Zoo
- ◆ Lara Metrione - SEZARC , South - East Zoo Alliance for Reproduction and Conservation

With these new elections our board has had to process an announcement that comes with both happy and sad emotions. Our founding President Adam Felts has decided to step down from the position of President due to his new position Assistant Curator of Columbus Zoo's new African Region! The Board would like to extend our deepest appreciation and gratitude to Adam for the incredible devotion he has given to the IRKA from our inception to this present day. In accordance with our by laws, Jane Kennedy will now fulfill the position of President, and Adam will continue to be a presence on our board in the position of Vice President. Jane Kennedy has been an integral member of the IRKA since it's inception, and with her incredible energy and devotion, our organization will continue to move forward in advancing the IRKA agenda for rhino professionals!

### Inside this issue:

<i>Election Results and Updates</i>	1-2
<i>Retiring BOD's</i>	3
<i>AI in GOH at Buffalo Zoo : Joe Hauser</i>	4-5
<i>Rhino Buddies Correspondence World Rhino Day</i>	6-8
<i>New and Renewing Members</i>	9
<i>Institutional Supporters</i>	10-11

## Introducing our newest Board Members:

### RAY HREN

The IRKA has evolved over the years, and has become a great resource for the professional to gain knowledge and network with others. As a dedicated member of IRKA since it's inception, I am honored and privileged to be elected to the Board of Directors, and excited to work with other like minded individuals to help promote rhino husbandry and conservation.

# WELCOME!





**LARA METRIONE:**

I have been a professional member of IRKA since 2007. At that time, I was a research intern at White Oak, and I had the great fortune to work on the rhino section 3 days a week. Over the years, I have been honored to work with white, black, greater one-horned, and Sumatran rhinos. Many of my research projects have focused on captive white rhino social behavior and reproduction, and IRKA members have always been my primary audience. Overall, my research goal is to help ensure that our rhino populations are thriving by identifying social and environmental factors that are essential for reproductive health and success. I serve as a Behavior and Ecology Co-Advisor on the Rhino Research Council of the Rhino Advisory Group, and, when requested, I offer suggestions to the White Rhino SSP for rhino exchanges and breeding recommendations that provide the greatest probability for reproductive success. I am currently co-editing the

new, digital version of the Rhinoceros Husbandry Resource Manual. During 2012 and the first part of 2013, I worked on the IRKA Grants (now Fundraising) Committee. Moving forward in 2013, I will serve as the Fundraising Committee Chair, coordinating the efforts of our membership to raise funds for rhino conservation and research initiatives, and keeper education. As a member of the Board, I would like to help refine the structure of our organization's committees and develop well-defined financial goals and timelines that ultimately enable us to realize program objectives.



**JONNIE CAPIRO**

I'm so excited to be a part of the Board of Directors for the IRKA! I've been involved in this organization for awhile, volunteering in various capacities, and I'm grateful to have the opportunity to serve the members in a more professional capacity. As the social media liaison for the IRKA, I'm hoping to continue developing relationships with other like-minded organizations, while increasing the communication and connections among keepers between workshops. I'm also looking forward to other new and worthwhile projects as this organization grows. It's such a fun group to belong to and I encourage the new members to become involved; we're all excited that you have joined us!



## IRKA Retiring Board of Directors



**RANDY PAIRAN** graduated from the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's Animal Conservation Care Program in 1991, then began his career as a zookeeper. He has worked with a variety of species, but his first love has always been the rhinos and attended his first Rhino Keeper Workshop in 2001. Randy was promoted to Head Keeper of the Ungulate Department in 2003 and when discussions started about forming an organization devoted to this megavertebate, he wanted to be involved. So, in 2005, Randy was one of a handful of dedicated individuals who formed the Steering Committee to develop the International Rhino Keeper Association. This Steering Committee later evolved into the Founding Board of Directors. Randy has been an active participant in the Board of Directors, attended a number of Rhino Keeper Workshops, and was instrumental in the devel-

opment of the Keeper Professional Development Program. Randy has chaired this committee since its formation in 2006 until his term expired this year and its continued success can be attributed to his work to constantly improve the program so that the membership gets the most benefit from this unique experience. Randy's term expires this year and he has chosen not to seek re-election. His input and participation in Board of Directors discussions have ben invaluable and will be sorely missed. Thank you for dedicating so many years to the International Rhino Keeper Association Board of Directors.



**LANCE AUBERY** has spent the last 38 years caring for animals, especially rhinoceros. He helped write the original Rhino Husbandry Manual for the AZA and recently helped with its rewrite. Since 1999 Lance has been actively supporting the Rhino Keeper Workshops and is proud to be a founding member of the Board of Directors. His unwavering support now shifts to helping the next generation of rhino keepers succeed him in the conservation of this endangered species.

Lance was recently recognized by the Board of Directors with 2 special gifts. One is a picture of him with the first rhinos to be shipped to New Zealand in 1986. He escorted 3 southern white rhinos by sea and then stayed for a 6 month keeper exchange sharing his knowledge. The other is a lithograph of 2 of the Safari Park's rhinoceros; Nthombi who had 8 calves of her own, and Holly a rhino calf she adopted who transferred to the Park on breeding loan.

Even though Lance has stepped down he has not stepped out. He will continue to support the IRKA with all of his efforts, recognizing the important work our organization continues to do. His expertise is just a call or email away. Thank you Lance for your lifetime dedication to rhinoceros and we look forward to your future contributions!



THANK YOU RANDY AND LANCE

## Artificial Insemination in a Greater One Horned Rhino

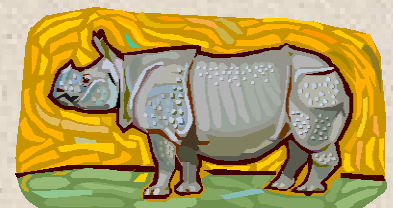
By: Joe Hauser, Buffalo Zoo



I would like to start, by congratulating the Montgomery Zoo and the Center of Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife (CREW) for a successful birth of a Greater- One Horned (GOH) rhino, from Artificial Insemination (AI). Both facilities put a lot of hard work into this procedure to help preserve this endangered species. It is no easy task to prepare for the AI, and both facilities deserve a great deal of credit for what they have accomplished. The Buffalo Zoo recently undertook its own AI procedure with Tashi, a 16 year old GOH rhino, so hopefully, we will have the same success around June 2014! On February 25, 2013, the Buffalo Zoo and Dr. Monica Stoops from CREW performed AI on Tashi. There was a lot that led up to her AI and why CREW and the Buffalo Zoo decided that it was the best route for Tashi and the future of the rhino program.

This will be Tashi's third pregnancy. Through natural breeding with Henry, Tashi gave birth to Asha (who is now in the Toronto Zoo) in September 2005 and Clover (who is now at the African Lion Safari) in March 2008. In October 2012, George, a 4 year old GOH male rhino, moved from the Bronx Zoo to the Buffalo Zoo. Eventually, George will be the Buffalo Zoo's breeding bull, but it will take approximately 4-6 years for him to be fully mature. During the time between Henry passing away in July 2011 and George's arrival in October 2012, Dr. Monica Stoops worked with the Buffalo Zoo to track Tashi's cycles. This task was very challenging because GOH female rhinos do not display the estrus behavior without a male present. We sent Tashi's urine samples to Monica so that we could accurately track her hormones. When Henry was present, Tashi was on a consistent 38 day cycle. Without a male rhino present, Tashi's cycle was not consistent and ranged from 35-65 days.

When Monica and I knew that the male rhino moving to the Buffalo Zoo was young and therefore needed time to mature before breeding, AI instantly became a strong option. Tashi has already proven to be a fertile female and great mother. AI would allow Tashi to breed before George is mature for breeding, while also serving to keep her as a healthy breeding female. It didn't take long for the Buffalo Zoo management to give us the approval to proceed with planning the AI procedure. Upon George's arrival, Tashi instantly began showing estrus behavior, which made the jobs of Monica and myself much easier. We continued to collect urine from Tashi daily and sent it to CREW. That way, we could match her hormone results with her behavior. With AI, there is a much



We had to train Tashi for the procedure, to occur at any time of the day or night. To do so, we did between 2 to 3 sessions a day with her in the chute, all at different times. The Buffalo Zoo got a new hydraulic gate put in the rhino chute just a couple months prior to the AI, so I started by getting her used to being restrained with the hydraulic gate. Then we desensitized her to the rectal and vaginal stimulation. We slowly increased the time in the chute, getting ready for about a 30-45 minute procedure. I have to thank Wendy Shaffstall and Randy Pairan at the Cincinnati Zoo for all their advice during the training period. They both gave great advice and were assets leading up to the AI. Monica and I agreed to do the AI procedure when Tashi was going to ovulate in mid-January 2013. Of course, Tashi wanted to re-write the record books and have the shortest recorded cycle for a GOH rhino, at 30 days. Both Monica and I thought this was just behavioral estrus and not true estrus, but after analyzing her urine results, we learned it really was Tashi's true estrus. We then planned on doing the procedure her next cycle, in February 2013. This was still a very short cycle at 34 days. Monica used sperm from Jimmy, a rhino that lived at the Cincinnati Zoo, but never bred. The sperm was collected and frozen in CREW's cyro-bio bank in 2004!

Tashi began showing estrus behavior around 3:00PM on February 24th. She slowed down with her behavior around noon the next day. We decided to begin the procedure at 3:00PM on February 25th, 24 hours after she began the estrus behavior. Monica performed the AI very smoothly, and did a rectal ultrasound to make sure the sperm was placed in the uterus. Less than a month later, her progesterone stayed high, and we knew she was pregnant. We continue to collect urine from Tashi to periodically send to CREW to make sure everything is going well. Tashi is also trained for both transrectal and trans-abdominal ultrasounds, so we can track the progress of the growing fetus.

I can't thank Dr. Monica Stoops, CREW, and the rhino staff at the Cincinnati Zoo enough for all of the research and work they have done over the years to make all of this possible. They have been the driving force behind Artificial Insemination with the GOH rhino. Monica was a great pleasure to work with during this process, and I have learned a great deal from her.

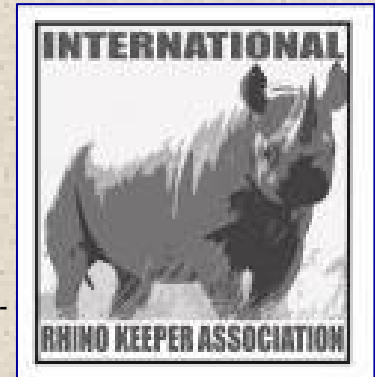
Keep your fingers crossed that Tashi has a healthy calf next June! Hopefully, this is yet another step in successful rhino conservation.



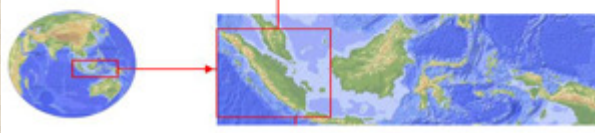
Photos courtesy of Jason Pootolal, African Lion Safari

## 2014 IRKA Calendar

The International Rhino Keeper Association has produced the 2014 Rhino Conservation Calendar with pictures submitted by rhino supporters from around the world! The sale of the 2014 Rhino Conservation Calendar will assist the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS) on Sumatra, a captive breeding program for the species. At the Sumatran Rhino Crisis Summit, this past March in Singapore, the governments of Indonesia and Malaysia agreed for the first time to collaborate on saving the Critically Endangered Sumatran rhino. The last of the wild populations of the Sumatran rhino, now amount to fewer than 100 rhinos in total. Experts, who gathered at the Summit, proposed a two-year emergency action plan as an immediate follow-up to the event. The funds raised from the sale of the 2014 Rhino Conservation Calendar will go towards the resources needed to improve rhino surveys, security and monitoring of the Sumatran rhinos.



The 2014 Rhino Conservation Calendar will be on SALE for \$22 September 1st-22nd, to celebrate & bring awareness to World Rhino Day, September 22nd, 2013. After September 22nd, the calendars will be \$26. In 2013, we sold out 500 calendars in 3 months', so order your 2014 copy SOON! **Purchase your copy on the IRKA website!**



Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary



## “Rhino Buddies”

### Sponsor an IRKA Professional Membership for an International Rhino Keeper!

For \$25 a year, you can sponsor a Rhino Keeper from around the World whom may not have the means to pay for their own IRKA Membership. If you sponsor a Rhino Keeper, you will be connected to the Rhino Keeper you are sponsoring via email so you can keep in touch, share ideas, learn about other countries and cultures, and in particular, learn about each other's rhinos!

If you are interested in Sponsoring a Rhino Keeper, please email Sara Wunder Steward at

[Sara.Wunder@BuschGardens.com](mailto:Sara.Wunder@BuschGardens.com) with your name, email address, institution, and species of rhino you care for.



\*Note: Please be aware that English may not be your sponsored Rhino Keeper's first language! If you do speak a language other than English, please let us know. Otherwise, please be understanding of the language barriers and remember- you are both share a passion for RHINOS!

## Correspondence

The IRKA would like to extend our congratulations to the following institutions:

### BIRTHS:

- ◆ Alabama Montgomery Zoo: GOH by artificial insemination, overseen by Dr. Monica Stoops
- ◆ Cotswold Wildlife Park: GOH
- ◆ Chester Zoo: 1st GOH at institution
- ◆ Bronx Zoo: 13th GOH at institution
- ◆ Werribee Open Range Zoo: Southern White Rhino
- ◆ Zoo Krefeld: Black rhino
- ◆ Zoo Atlanta: 1st Black rhino at institution
- ◆ Lincoln Park Zoo: E. Black rhino



### EVENTS:

- ◆ Columbus Zoo held a Bowling for Rhinos event!
- ◆ Laura at Save the Rhino.org held cyclist challenge that raised funds for rhinos!

## Fundraising Committee: 2013 World Rhino Day Idea List

World Rhino Day, September 22, is approaching fast! It is time for you to start organizing your activities for the big day. While the main goal is to raise awareness for rhino conservation, we would also like to raise some money for IRKA on World Rhino Day. Fundraisers will allow us to actually make rhino conservation happen and to promote continuing education for superior rhino husbandry.\* The following is a list of ideas to get you started!

For every \$100 raised by your event, IRKA will give 2 Rhino Rupees, each worth \$5, to be split among the event's organizers. For example, if your event raises \$500, you will receive 10 Rhino Rupees to share with your co-organizers (if you have any). Each organizer/co-organizer must provide photo evidence of your efforts (smile—these will go on the website!). Rhino Rupees can be used toward silent auction bids at the Rhino Keeper Workshops. Rhino Rupees are non-transferrable (only photo-documented organizers can have them), but they do not expire and can be used at any Rhino Keeper Workshop!

Via e-mail, social media, or word of mouth:

\*Get at least 10 people to donate to our WeGive.org project: Saving Private Rhino <http://wegive.org/look/project.asp?wgplD=1732>  
See the website (link above) for details. All proceeds go directly to IRKA.

\*Get at least 2 people to purchase belt buckles customized with their favorite animal from Barbie's Basement Jewellery

BBJ will then donate 30% of the sales to IRKA.

\*Get at least 7 new Associate members of IRKA

All membership funds obviously go to IRKA, and the new members will have the opportunity to learn about rhinos and our work all year long.

\*\*At your institution (please go through proper approval channels):

"Close Encounters"--\$50 to touch, feed, scrub-brush, and get a photo with the rhino

This could be its own limited-opportunity tour or as a \$10 add-on to pre-existing behind-the-scenes tours for the day.

\*\*Round-up for Rhinos at the entrance or gift shop

Zoo-goers can round up the cost of their purchase to the nearest whole dollar with the extra money going to IRKA.

\*\*\*Rhino-rrific donation box near the rhino exhibit, at the Zoo entrance, or in the gift shop

Decorations on the box could be rhino-themed.

\*\*\*Silent auction table near the rhino exhibit

Items might include rhino-made paintings, behind-the-scenes tours, endangered feces, etc.

Ask your zoo café to sponsor a special lunch

Patrons can choose to purchase a [burger] that costs \$2 more, with that money going to IRKA.

\*\*\*In your community:

Round-up for Rhinos at the grocery (or any) store or local pub

Customers can round up the cost of their purchase to the nearest whole dollar with the extra money going to IRKA.

\*\*\*Reading for Rhinos used book sale held at a local school or community center

\*\*\*Rhinos on the Rocks or Winos for Rhinos

For every drink on the rocks or glass of wine, your local pub donates \$1 to IRKA!

\*As a 501 (c) 3, transparency in our finances is essential. It is important during your fundraising efforts that you are clear that the money is going to a non-profit organization that promotes professional collaboration, development and practices to advance rhinoceros conservation worldwide. This means money will be used for all of those purposes, not just for in situ conservation efforts.





## New and Renewing Members to IRKA

Jason Pootoolal - Hoofstock Supervisor, African Lion Safari  
 Kelly Ann Brown - Registrar, Buffalo Zoo  
 Sara Wunder Steward - Busch Gardens Tampa, Sr. I Rhino keeper  
 Tim Junker - Houston Zoo, Hoofstock keeper  
 Michael Burns - Elephant/rhino keeper, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Maura Middleton - Elephant/rhino keeper, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Matt James - Elephant/rhino keeper, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Allison Nall - Elephant/rhino keeper, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Kate Ranos - Asia Keeper 3, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Kendra Stout - Africa Keeper 2, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Steve Crews - Africa Keeper 3, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Angela Belcher - Animal Care Manager, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Christopher Massaro - Animal Dept. Oper. Mgr, Lowry Park Zoo  
 Charles Moxley - Zoo keeper, Albuquerque Bio Park  
 Jamie Newsom  
 Dave Clawson - The Wilds  
 Stephanie Richmond - Zoo keeper, St. Louis Zoo  
 Rina R. Singley - Keeper, Oregon Zoo  
 Shawn Finnell - Senior Elephant Keeper, Oregon Zoo  
 Jeb Barsh - Hippo/Rhino keeper, Oregon Zoo  
 Gilbert Gomez - Keeper, Oregon Zoo  
 Dimas Dominguez - Keeper Oregon Zoo  
 Pam Starkey - Keeper, Oregon Zoo  
 Marcus Jason - Keeper, Oregon Zoo  
 Christine Stephan - Keeper, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Kathleen Timko - Animal Care Specialist, Busch Gardens Tampa  
 Wendy Lenhart  
 S. Wiseman  
 Tina Olling  
 Jim Fleshman - Director, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Manda Butler - Animal Care, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Terri Cox - Curator, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Johnny Binder - General Curator, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Margaret Rast - Mammal Keeper, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Kaitlin Rebello - Mammal Keeper, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Rachel Chappell - Mammal Keeper, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Shawn Styrcula - Zoo keeper, Cameron Park Zoo

Ian Ross - Zoo Keeper, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Krista Seeburger - Zoo Keeper, Cameron Park Zoo  
 Stephanie Willams - Gen. Curator, Virginia Safari Park  
 Kim Caldwell - SD Zoo Safari Park, Animal Trainer  
 Mickey Crocker  
 Carol Bresnay  
 Sabrina Misek - Zoo Keeper, Lincoln Park Zoo  
 Amanda Gregory - Austin Savanna  
 Edward Beyer  
 Matthew Hecht - Student  
 Linda Pastor  
 Jennifer Gruenewald  
 Denise Wagner  
 Jade Tuttle - Keeper 2, North Carolina Zoo  
 Megan Looper  
 Lisa Moore  
 Ingrid Hartney - Animal Keeper, Sanf Francisco Zoo  
 Susan Eberth

### Renewing institutions:

- Lowry Park Zoo
- Oregon Zoo
- Potter Park Zoo
- Cameron Park Zoo
- Austin Savanna



## Institutional Supporters

The Supporting Institutional Membership is for any conservation organization, or zoological institution which supports rhino conservation in accordance with the objectives and purpose of the IRKA. These memberships are available for \$100, \$500 and \$2000. Why should your zoo be interested in joining on this level? If your institution contributes on the \$500 level then all rhino keepers membership fees at your zoo are waived! It is important that as the IRKA grows that we continue to garner the support from all facilities that are responsible for the protection and management of all species of rhinoceros. We would like to extend our appreciation for this substantial support to the following institutions, and hopefully we can add your zoo to this growing list! If you have questions about institutional memberships or any other questions please contact us at

[internationalrhinokeeperassoc@gmail.com](mailto:internationalrhinokeeperassoc@gmail.com).

## Partners



## 2013 Sponsors at \$1400 and Above



2013 Sponsors at the \$250-\$500 level



UCLA Hematology Research Laboratory



2013 Sponsors at \$100 level

