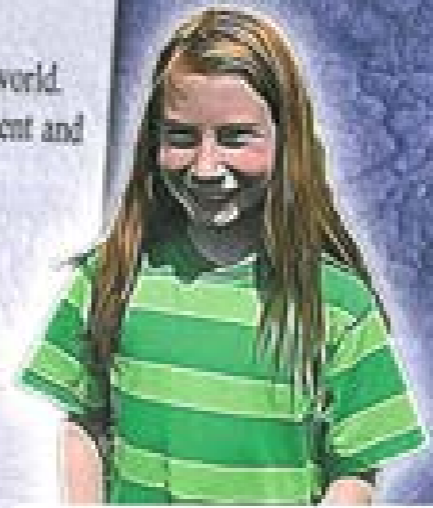


about the author

Dave Johnson is a pachyderm zookeeper in Denver, Colorado, USA. He has been passionately working with animals since he was fifteen years old.

In 2010, Dave began leading trips over to Nepal to spread his enthusiasm and love of wildlife. He wrote a children's book called "The Elephants of Denver" to raise money for Nepal conservation efforts.

That book introduced our heroine, Sissy Sally Sassafras, to the world. Now, Sissy and Dave are going global to protect the environment and the endangered animals they both love.

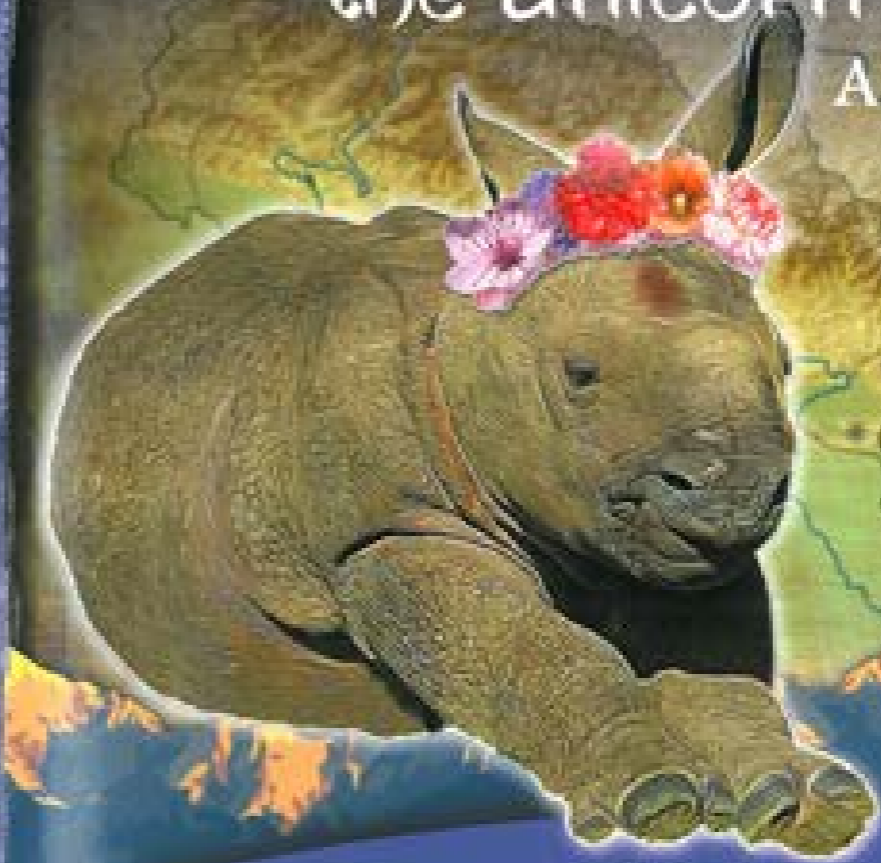


www.facebook.com/Narayani: The Unicorn of Nepal

Narayani

the unicorn of nepal

A Rhino Tale



NEPAL

Kathmandu

Chitwan

By Dave Johnson

Proceeds Benefit Rocky Mountain AAZK and Nepal Conservation

Narayani

the unicorn of nepal

A Rhino Tale

By Dave Johnson

David Johnson

Graphics and layout by *Cay Lucero*

April - 2014

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Printed in the United States of America

dedication

This book is dedicated to the many wonderful family members on our Team Nepalorado conservation crew. Since 2010, our team has been traveling from Colorado to Nepal spreading our contagious enthusiasm. Our work is about passion and community, and making the world a better place for all living creatures. This group of concerned friends exemplifies our motto of truly being a fusion of cultures in the name of conservation.



rhino footprint

She was born in the wonderful land of Nepal,
where mountains climb high and grasses grow tall.

Her name was Narayani, a young princess to be,
from grand Chitwan Park, where all can roam free.

The morning was alive with birds chirping loudly
and the mother rhino stood above her so proudly.

Sarus cranes danced and otters turned flips
and elephants had langurs hang from their hips.

Peacocks did trumpet and tigers did roar
as the princess stepped out to the great river shore.

Sarita



Narayani





Princess
Narayani

fishing Cat



They knew she was special, a jungle gift with one horn.
She was royalty amongst them, a great grey unicorn.

They wanted to cheer and they wanted to see
the Greater One-horned Rhino of such royalty.

The queen Mother Sarita then spoke out to the crowd,
"This is Narayani," and they all took a bow.

"Her story will unite Nepal with the World,
and bring us the love of one special girl."

The fishing cats were happy to quickly adorn
a new crown of flowers to the bump of her horn.

Otter



The tale had been told for the last century
of the sweet rhino princess, born to keep them all free.

Passed on to all creatures and sung out to their young,
the verses would echo from each forest tongue.

"Narayani the princess, a rhino so wise,
folded armour for skin and gentle black eyes.

One single horn pointed up to the sun,
and bumps of love covering all of her bum.

An angel she'll bring us in bold stripes of green,
together they'll make a world-saving team!"

Sarus Crane

langur





Kamal

She grew up in the park with many forest friends.
They were happy to witness how her story begins.

The young elephant bull was her best friend of all.
He was wise and so funny and was known as Kamal.

They swam and they played in tall elephant grass,
and he would answer all questions the princess did ask.

"What's that? Who's he? Where are we going?
Why are we gray? How are we growing?"

Kamal would just laugh and answer all that he could,
to prepare Narayani in the ways that he should.

Ranjan



She had lots to learn in those first early days,
about being a rhino and Nepal's jungle ways.

Kamal would show her every place she could roam,
together they explored the Terai they called home.

She also met young clouded leopard twins,
and they showed her where the vast man land begins.

Ranjan and Rajesh were shy, secretive kitties,
who took her to look at the great human cities.

"This is Sauraha, a land of wide streets,
where the creatures all wander about on two feet!"

Rajesh



Ram



She learned from the hornbills about tasty fruits,
and the big black gaur showed her tender grass shoots.

Her mother showed her safe places to cross,
through the forest and rivers so she'd never be lost.

The Bengal tiger named Ram paid a visit one day.
She listened so closely to what he did say.

"You will go to spend time in the great land of men.
They are often quite scary, but to you will be friends.

This is your life path, be strong, show no fear.
Give them the passion that will keep us all here."

The summer came quickly and brought lots of rain.
While monsoons nurture life, they also bring pain.

The river was raging and all was so dark,
when the princess began a brave swim through the park.

She was looking for Mom but could not see or hear,
due to the storm growing ever so near.

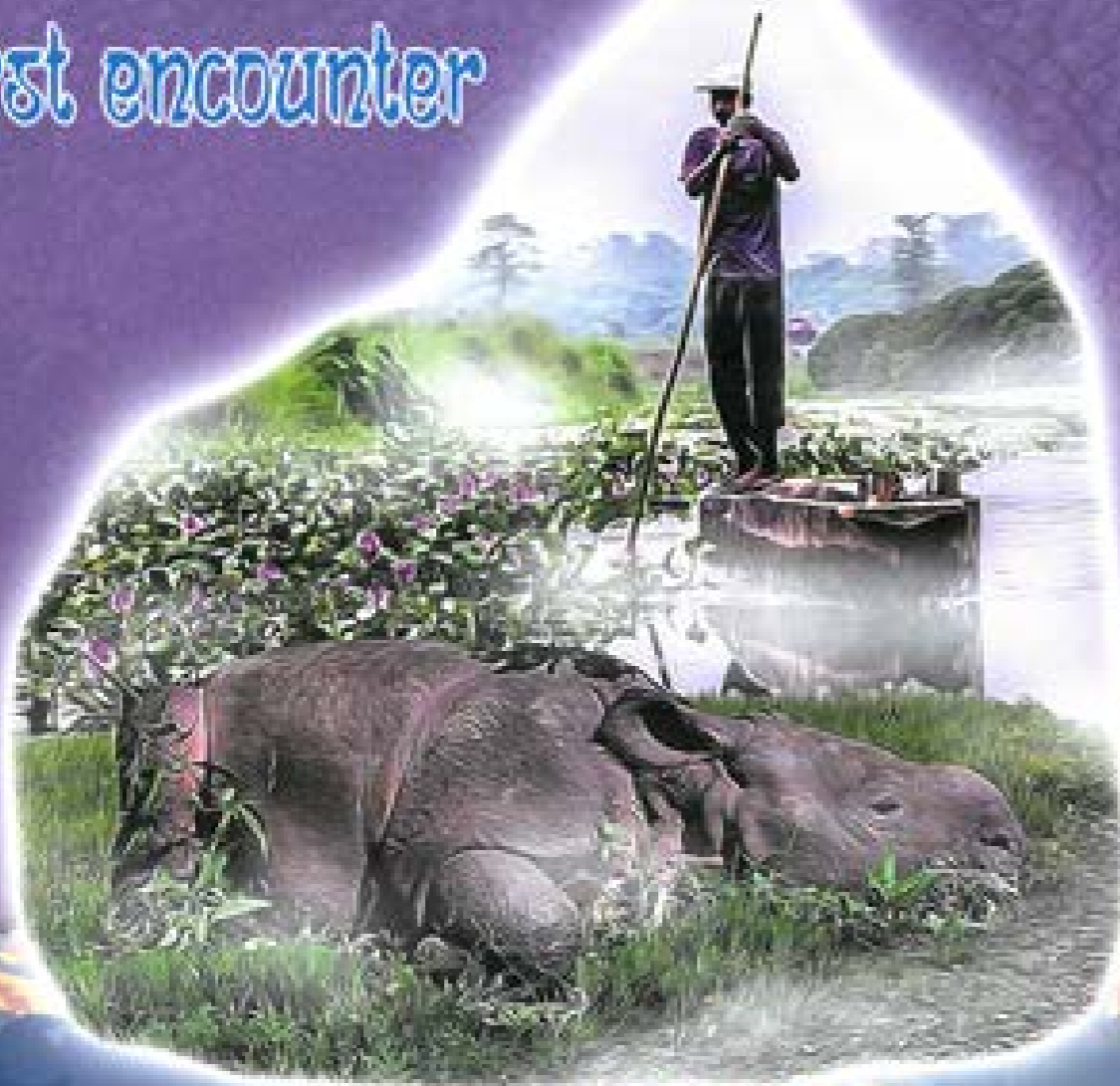
All of the water tossed her about,
turned her over, dunked her, and then spit her out.

She tried to relax as she gasped on the beach,
washed far from her home and out of Mom's reach.

Swept away



first encounter



The storm then passed on east of the park,
leaving her scared in a vast sea of dark.

Alone on the bank, her back leg was hurt,
afraid of the sounds and the smell of strange dirt.

She tried to get up, tried hard to move on,
but runs through sal forest now were all gone.

Narayani awaited the first rays of light,
to help break her free from the cold grip of night.

When low voices approached out of grey river fog,
she saw men gliding by on great river logs.

One kind man pulled his boat to an eddy,
to see the wet lump holding ever so steady.

He saw she had breath, and life left to live,
felt something special that this creature could give.

She radiated a power, even trembling and cold,
it was a magical scene for this man to behold.

So he picked her up and stowed her away on his boat,
and together to Sauraha the odd couple did float.

They ended up at the clinic of a kindly old vet,
who nursed her to health with tears, love, and sweat.

Narayani



Dr. Gairhe



Team Nepalorado 2010



She was such a small rhino, just a few months of age,
and her body was trashed by the wild river's rage.

But Dr. Gairhe had seen tough cases before,
and he'd never give up on her, that was for sure.

Narayani grew healthy under his care.
She got special attention because rhinos are rare.

There are very few left alive in the wild,
and to save even one made this sweet old vet smile.

She was thankful for men and grew stronger each day,
then met many others along her new way.



She lived at the headquarters of the big jungle park,
playing all day and kept safe after dark.

There were other sick animals being cared for,
a tiger, an otter, an elephant, a boar.

A big silly gharial with a bad broken jaw
welcomed the princess with a hearty guffaw.

She loved her new friends and was never afraid
for the future before her was already laid.

The great tiger, Ram, had once told her such
that new kindly men would help her this much.

Gharial



Guardians of conservation in Nepal



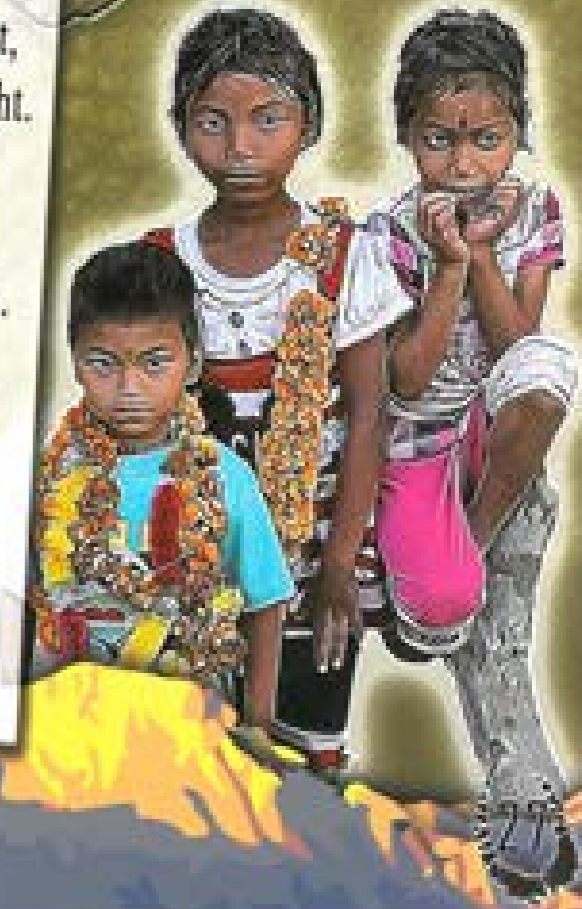
Narayani was loved by each person she met.
Her magical spirit was hard to forget.

An endangered species before them fighting a fight,
and these people could help her and make it all right.

For there's a war being fought over these unicorn,
what is sought for by man is the price for their horn.

Sometimes the horn is worth more than gold,
smuggled off to black markets and eventually sold.

Poachers kill rhino to make human potions,
taking their lives over false healing notions.



The horn is just keratin and is not at all rare,
it's actually what makes up our own nails and hair.

Narayani the princess must now plant the seed,
that live, healthy rhinos are what the world needs.

But her story is huge and it needs to be heard
by many more people to pass on the word.

So from Chitwan she went north to Kathmandu,
to live out her life at the great Central Zoo.

At the zoo her story would make hearts be filled,
so people would see no more rhinos are killed.

Narayani

Greater One-horned Rhino



Team Nepalorado 2011



Narayani got stronger, her horn started to grow
up to the sun like the old chants did go.

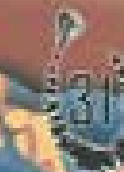
Love bumps on her bum made all the kids laugh
and the plight of wild rhinos was told by zoo staff.

One group of tourists she was happy to face
was Team Nepalorado, from the United States.

They came every year to help out in Nepal,
and would go back to Denver with lessons for all.

They worked at a zoo on the other side of the world,
and within their midst was that one special girl.

Team Nepalorado 2012



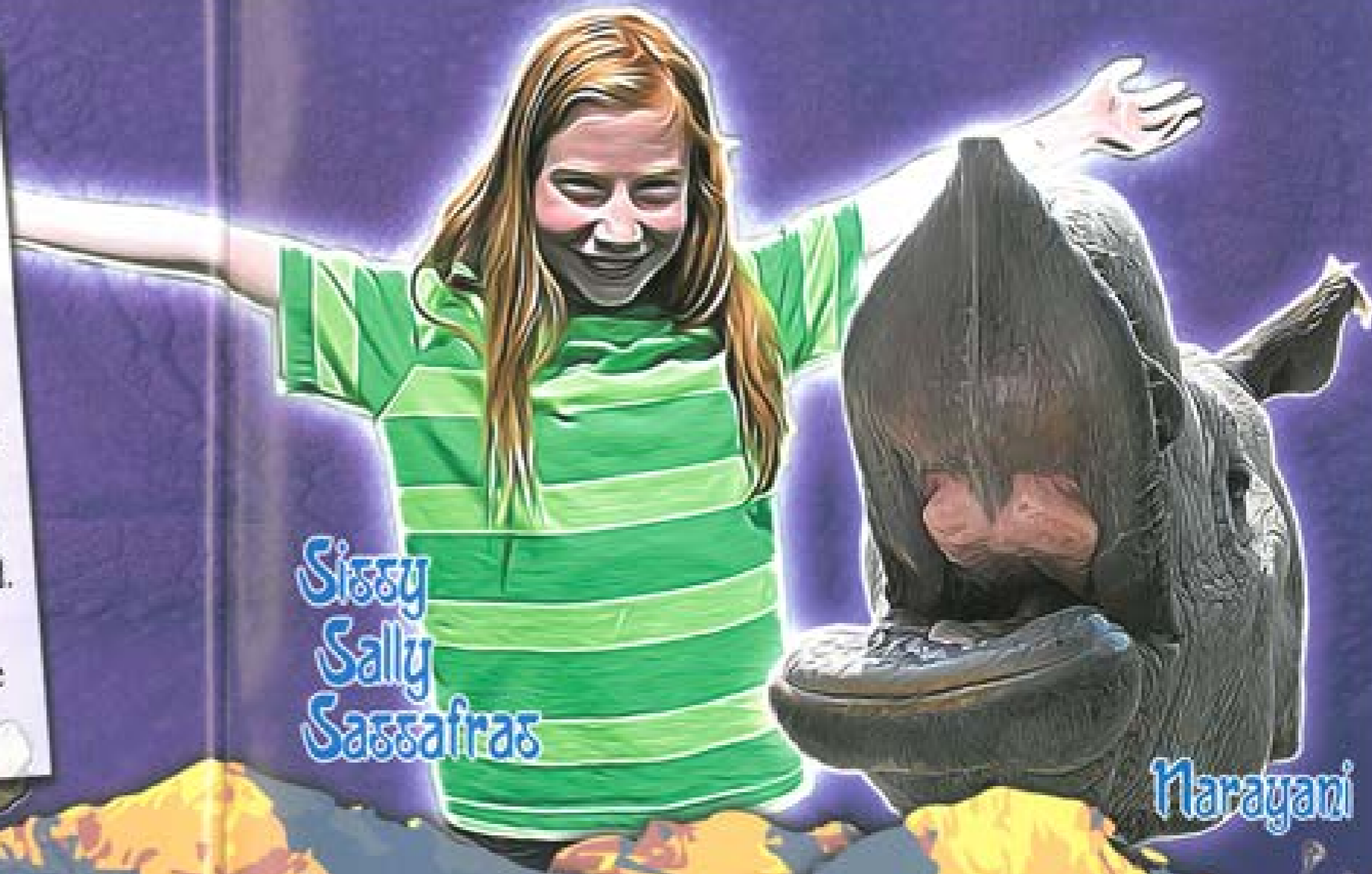
Her name was Sissy Sally Sassafras
and she loved rhinos, penguins and giraffes.

Animals were her true love you see
and where they lived was where she'd be.

She met Narayani in Nepal's Central Zoo,
and fight for these rhinos was what she would do.


She made it her mission to help spread the word,
and make sure the message was abundantly heard.

"Wild rhinos should be saved and always be free
for future generations to travel and see!"



Sissy
Sally
Sassafras

Narayani



In 2010, a young, wounded rhino washed ashore along the Narayani river in Nepal. A boatsman found her in Chitwan National Park. She captured the attention of some American visitors that year as she was being nursed back to health. She now lives at the Central Zoo in Kathmandu and her story continues to inspire guests from around the world.

Her name is Narayani.

rhino skin

Narayani's words to remember:

Nepal - A South Asian country located between China and India that contains part of the Himalayan mountain range and Mt. Everest, the highest point on Earth.

Kathmandu - The capital city of Nepal.

Chitwan - The first national park of Nepal, established in 1973.

Narayani - The name of our orphaned rhino and the river where she was found.

Terai - A belt of marshy grassland, savannah and forest in southern Nepal.

Sauraha - A village and the eastern gateway to Chitwan National Park.

Monsoon - The rainy phase of a seasonally changing weather pattern system.

Sal Forest - A dominant tree and forest type in Chitwan.

Eddy - A calm, sheltered area of a river where current is slowed.

Unicorns - A legendary, mythical creature with one horn.

Endangered - Classification of animal populations that are at risk of disappearing.

Black Market - An underground economy where things are traded illegally.

Peacher - A person who kills wildlife illegally.

Potion - A consumable liquid or powder associated with false properties or witchcraft.

Keratin - Fibrous structural proteins that form hair, nails and horns.

Team Nepalorado - A group of eager travelers from Colorado, USA who go to Nepal to help with animal conservation projects.

thanks

So many people came together to make this second book project go from a dream to a reality.

Our Sissy Sally Sassafras model needs a huge thank you for putting up with our photography demands. Thanks to Sallie Markey for bringing our conservation heroine to life. We hope to see more of her as the journey continues. Stay tuned.

Thanks to the two Mikes - my brother, Mike Johnson, for his editing prowess and my friend, Mike Hames, for his contributions with both this book and "The Elephants of Denver." Without them, these books would not have been possible.

I would like to thank KM Concessions and Service Systems Associates for their continued sales support and tremendous generosity over the past fifteen years. Their incredible team has been behind me throughout this entire journey.

Also, many thanks to all of our Nepal contacts for their years of guidance as we tackle global conservation issues together. World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Nepal's National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), the Central Zoo in Kathmandu and all of our Nepalese colleagues are paramount to the success of this program.

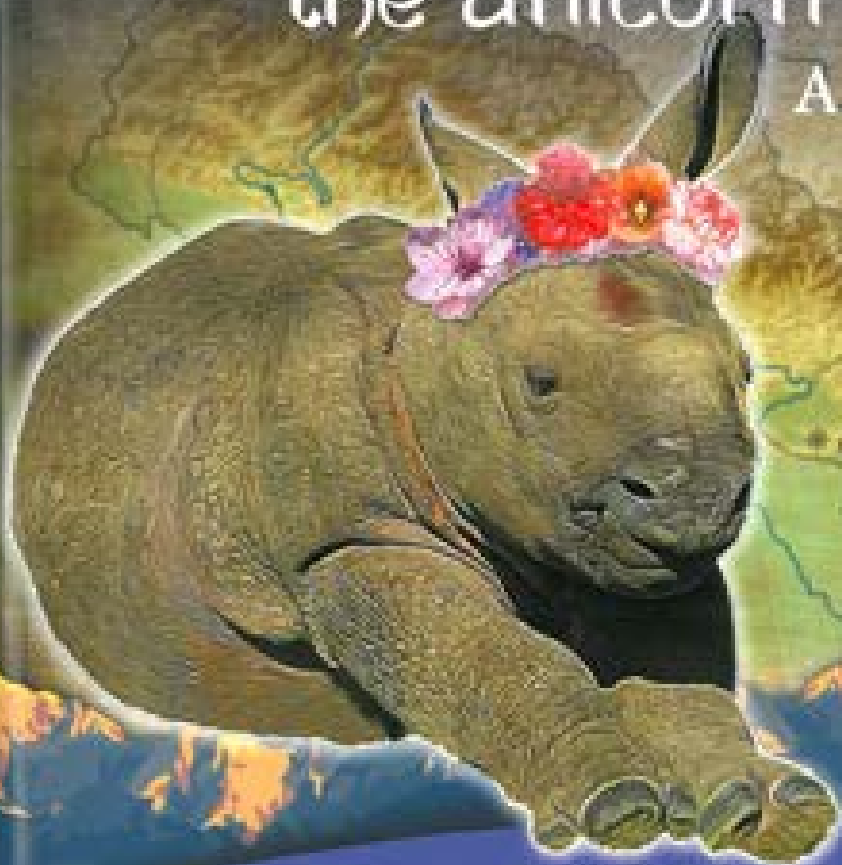
And finally, to my very good friend, Ray Lucero, for being my rock through all of this. His graphics work, design savvy and eye for detail made this book come to life. Thank you. The last two years have been a wonderful ride.



elephant trunk print

Narayani

the unicorn of nepal
A Rhino Tale



NEPAL

Kathmandu

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