



The Crash

Newsletter for rhino professionals

November 2015

Presidents Perspective:

The Board of Directors and publishers of the Crash are sorry to say we missed the last Newsletter. We hope this Newsletter and RKW summary help catch you up on things for the IRKA.

The 9th biennial Rhino Keeper Workshop is history and it was another huge success! We had representatives from 17 countries and 116 delegates. Because we met in England, we joined forces with Save the Rhino International, (SRI) combining their "Rhino May Day" event with the IRKA's Rhino Keeper Workshop. Rhino May Day is a single half day event held every May bringing the latest in research and rhino conservation from Africa to the UK. SRI like the IRF is dedicated to saving rhinos. Traditionally the Rhino May Day invites the public, so for that day the workshop had over 150 attendees!

For me the highlights of the RKW were expanding my knowledge of rhinoceros keeping, meeting new people, and making new friends. This Crash will feature a link to the website so you can view all approved talks in PDF form. We had more keeper speakers at this workshop which was a first and they all did a great job. Tuesday's Rhino Mayday was especially informative. We started the morning with roundtable discussions on studbook keeping and individual rhino species. The group discussions were so popular that we added time on Thursday to go deeper into our discussions. SRI's Rhino May Day included the dog rescue squad from Africa which pairs bloodhounds and Belgian Malinois to help track and take down rhino poachers.

Attending Rhino Keeper Workshops can be costly. Our friend and mentor dr. Don Paglia has endowed the Tom Foose Memorial Scholarship for years to come. Don presented at our Chester Workshop and there's a link in this newsletter to his talk on black rhino iron overload disease. While a long read it is well worth the time, and may enlighten you on this serious condition, possibly saving your rhino. Along with Don's talk is an article by another one of our speakers from the workshop, Dr. Friederike von Houwald. Her perspective on training greater one-horned rhinos is fascinating!

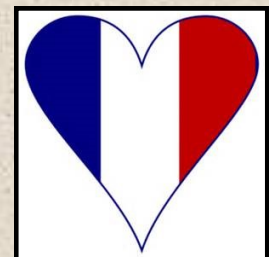
This summer was also election time for the Board of Directors. We say goodbye to Adam Felts and Dave Clawson who were both on the board since the inception of the IRKA in 2003, then the RKA! Both men are heading in new directions and have decided to not run for re-election. Their leadership of our organization helped make it what it is today. Adam served as our first president and Dave was our IT/website guru. Both men will be missed and are recognized for their time and effort to make our organization great. To replace them you voted to re-elect Vickie Steele (our BOD secretary), Sara Wunder-Steward, and newly elected Justin Smith from Fossil Rim and Stephanie Richmond from St. Louis Zoo. We look forward to having new blood on the board bringing new ideas and enthusiasm.

We are presently in negotiations with Lincoln Park to host the 2017 Rhino Keeper Workshop. If RKWs are to be carried on we must step up and be willing to host this important meeting of the minds. If you or your institution would like information on how to host a future RKW please contact me and I will be happy to help. Again, these workshops happen because you want them to. Help us help rhinos, host a Rhino Keeper Workshop!

Jane Kennedy, President-IRKA, Learn. Share. Save

Link to papers on our website: Chester Rhino Keeper Workshop [papers](#).

<i>Inside this issue:</i>	
<i>President's Perspective:</i>	
<i>Jane Kennedy</i>	1
<i>GOH training at Basel Zoo:</i>	
<i>Dr. Friederike von Houwald</i>	2-3
<i>Retiring BOD : Adam Felts and Dave Clawson</i>	
	3
<i>Dr. Don Paglia</i>	4
<i>IRKA Keeper Development Program</i>	
<i>Rhino Buddies</i>	
<i>Correspondence Updates</i>	5
<i>World Rhino Day at the Maryland Zoo : Carly Barron</i>	
	6
<i>IRKA New and Renewing Members</i>	
	7-8
<i>Institutional Supporters</i>	
	9



Reminder! The new edition of the Rhino Husbandry Manual is available on the IRF website:

<http://www.rhinos.org/research-publications/key-publications/>



Training Greater one-horned rhinos at Zoo Basel: Do it with a gentle touch!

By Dr. Friederike von Houwald, Curator Zoo Basel

When thinking about training of zoo animals, most of us think about target training. But there is also another way of training an animal and some zoo keepers will not be aware that they are doing it already during their daily work.

What I would like to write about is the way, how we – here at Zoo Basel – work with our GOHs. It is a bit a different way and has helped us in many situations during the past years.

We don't use the target training on a routine base and I will not write about target training as this is something most keepers are aware of. But very often, time is limited during the day, so target training is squeezed into the daily routine, often not leaving many options to train for new traits.

But what will happen if the training with the rhinos is done during each minute while you work with the rhinos?

We have noticed that the more you learn during the daily routine about your individuals the more you can truly work with them. But in order to do this, you – the keeper – have to be very alert and 'read' the rhino's behavior like a book. This way of thinking is not new and has been performed by some very good horse trainers. They read the horse like a book and this enables them to communicate with a horse in a totally different way, every second, without force, without hectic, with clear aims and a huge success.

Knowing rhino behavior, knowing the likes and dislikes of every individual, the keeper can then adopt his 'routine' work towards this behavior and it is amazing how easy it suddenly becomes to move animals from one section to the other or how easy it is to lay them down and to also draw blood from the ear veins without a command.

How does that work? It is a process which will not take place from one day to the other and it needs a keeper who will really look at his animals. Not in terms whether the individual looks healthy, has eaten, has well-formed feces, etc. but in the way of body signals: what is the rhino doing with the head, how does it get up, how does it walk, why is it grinding the teeth, eye movement, ear positions, etc.

When noticing the differences, it will allow the keeper to choose the 'right' moment to ask the rhino for something. For example foot care: a rhino that has eaten, looks relaxed and is in a positive mood, can be scratched between the folds of the hind leg and the hind legs itself and it will not take long and the animal will lie down. No command is needed, no target used, only a very positive attitude from both sides. When the rhino is down, it is easy not only to examine the feet but also to work – if necessary – on the feet. Or drawing blood, same scenario: Choose a good moment – and you can predict such a moment if you know your animals – and when the rhino is down, approach it, scratch it, and make it feel comfortable. We usually use some crème (local anesthetic) on the ears that prevent the pain to occur when inserting the needle. Then we will wait some minutes scratching the rhino and can then take blood. This has worked in many cases.

Of course the security factor always has to be kept in mind. Never work with a rhino – no matter how nice it is - in a situation which can potentially trap a human being, always have an escape route and never work in such situations alone, never.

This really gentle approach has led to a complete shift in behavior in our rhinos (and other animals we work with). We also changed some management aspects in order to give the rhinos more options to choose from: For example: All our stables are connected to the outdoor exhibits. We have heavy duty plastic stipes on each door, to keep the warmth in and give the rhinos themselves the options to decide when they want to go out and if they want to go out at all. This is particularly useful in those seasons when the weather is changing or is not so nice.



GOH training continued...

This really gentle approach has led to a complete shift in behavior in our rhinos (and other animals we work with). We also changed some management aspects in order to give the rhinos more options to choose from: For example: All our stables are connected to the outdoor exhibits. We have heavy duty plastic strips on each door, to keep the warmth in and give the rhinos themselves the options to decide when they want to go out and if they want to go out at all. This is particularly useful in those seasons when the weather is changing or is not so nice.

Of course the keeper can influence the rhino's behavior, you don't have to wait for an hour until you can clean an exhibit, but what we want to achieve is a higher degree of flexibility – also in the thinking of the staff – and also in the rhinoceros thinking. By providing options, you keep a rhinoceros brain busy. And when they choose, they choose what they think is the best. The daily routine is sometimes nice, but a strict daily routine is also a killer. It becomes a routine that a) can become dangerous b) is really boring c) your creative brain cells will slowly die... and this is exactly what will happen in the animals as well.

Having a 'broad' routine is not a bad thing to have, we all have to make it through the daily work, but leave room for options! And use those options; you will be amazed how much fun it is]

There is no need to shout, push, or even use other items to move a rhino (or any other animal). They are absolutely gentle animals and you can do it with a gentle touch if you know your animals and can read them like a book.



IRKA Board of Directors says THANK YOU!!

The IRKA was pleased to recognize Adam Felts and Dave Clawson for their years of dedicated work to the organization. Adams award was presented by former Board of Directors member, Randy Pairan, and Dave's award was presented by his supervisor Dan Beetam. Thank you both for all of your hard work and dedication to the International Rhino Keeper Association. YOU BOTH ROCK!!!

Presented to Adam Felts

BOD (2005-2015), President (2005-2013), Executive Committee (2005-2015)

Your commitment to establishing and guiding the IRKA, and it's dedication to rhinoceros conservation, is appreciated.



Presented to Dave Clawson

Founding Board of Directors IRKA

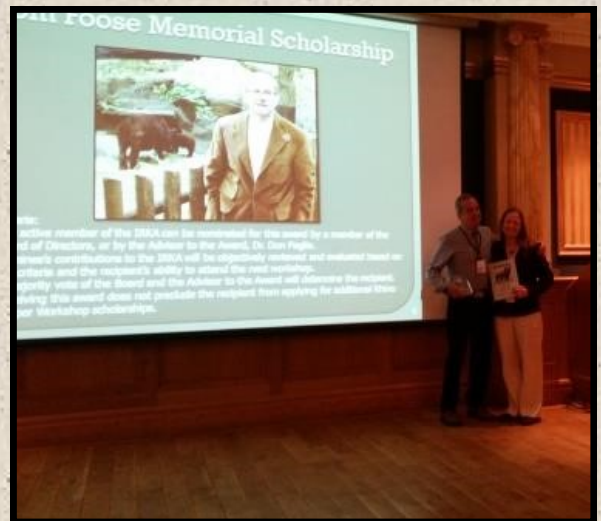
Your design and development of website, combined with your knowledge of technology, were invaluable to IRKA.



Thank you, Dr. Paglia for your commitment to iron overload in browser rhinoceros!

If you weren't fortunate enough to attend the recent Rhino Keeper Workshop at the Chester Zoo, we would like to introduce you to Dr. Don Paglia and his achievements in black rhino Iron Overload Disorder research. If you work with black rhinos, or may have the chance to care for them one day in your career, please take the time to read his PowerPoint slides and attached narrative to familiarize yourself with his work. Dr. Paglia has made great strides in understanding Iron Overload Disorder and offering treatment methods to keepers to help extend captive life spans by 20-30%. Dr. Paglia is also a major contributor to the Rhino Keeper Workshop by sponsoring one recipient to attend through the Tom Foose Memorial Scholarship. Please join us in congratulating Don in his life's work and outstanding achievements. It is an honor and privilege to call him a friend and colleague. Thank you, Dr. Paglia.

Link to: "Perspective of iron overload disease in browser [rhinoceros](#)"



Dr. Don Paglia and 2015 Tom Foose Memorial Scholarship recipient Roxanne Losey at Chester RKW!

Keeper Professional Development Program

The International Rhino Keeper Association (IRKA) has developed a program that will provide rhino keepers the opportunity to expand their knowledge and husbandry experience. This program has been designed to enable rhino keepers to work at other institutions to familiarize themselves with different management styles. Due to the professional nature of this program, it is only available to Professional or Associate Rhino Keeper Association members.

The IRKA has selected facilities with different management styles to maximize the keepers' potential for enhancing their expertise. It is the hope of the IRKA that the institutions participating in this program will take this opportunity to share their trials, tribulations, triumphs and successes with their professional colleagues. At this time, the hosting institutions are: Busch Gardens Tampa, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Gardens, The Wilds, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, San Diego Zoo Safari Park, and Denver Zoo. The concept of the program is quite simple, but we feel it is an invaluable tool for expanding the skills of rhino keepers by providing them the opportunity to work alongside their colleagues and learn the nuances of that institution's husbandry practices.

Approval process:

The keeper participating in this program must not only have their institution's authorization, but agreement to pay their wages. The institution's approval requires that employee is covered by their institution's workmen's compensation and will provide documentation of personal health insurance. This will provide assurance that the hosting institution will not be liable to cover medical costs. When application has been approved, there will be a fee of \$10 to be contributed to the IRKA scholarship fund.

Plan your rhino adventure! Learn more about breeding dynamics, enrichment and training, reproductive strategies, general care and management and neonate care. Contact Joe Hauser with any further questions or to help create your own Professional Development Program. jhauser@buffalozoo.org

Visit www.rhinokeeperassociation.org to explore each institution, and plan your expansion of knowledge!!!



“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 Jennifer Conaghan at jconaghan@zoo.nsw.gov.au 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!



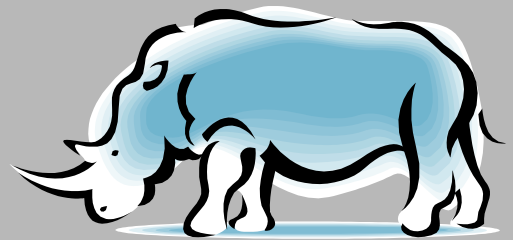
Correspondence Updates:

The IRKA send our congratulations and celebrate with the following institutions:

- Disney Animal Kingdom: Southern White Rhino born
- Lion Country Safari: Southern White Rhino female born
- Memphis Zoo: new acquisition of two female Southern White Rhino
- Cotswold Wildlife Park: 2 Southern White Rhino males born
- San Diego Zoo Safari Park: Southern White Rhino female born
- Busch Gardens Tampa: Southern White Rhino Female born
- White Oak: 1.1 Southern White Rhino born

The IRKA sends our condolences to the following institutions:

- The Denver Zoo : death of 21 year old male black rhino “Mshindi”
- Potter Park Zoo: death of male black rhino

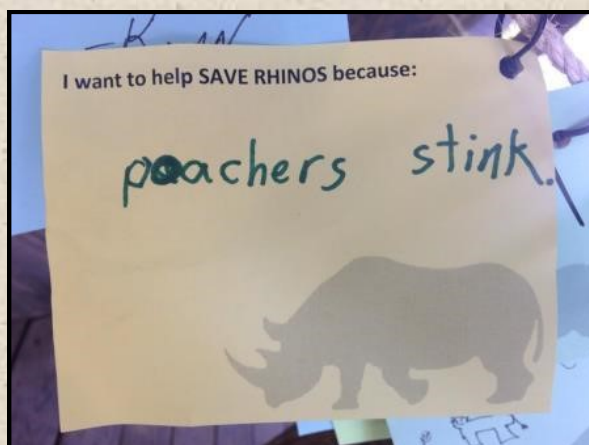


World Rhino Day at the Maryland Zoo: Carly Barron

This year The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore celebrated World Rhino Day in conjunction with our series of "Wild About" days. Wild About Rhinos Day celebrated the five species of rhino with informative posters, as well as interactive stations where guests could guess how much hay a rhino eats in a day or touch and play with rhino enrichment.

We also had a keeper-run manicure station for receiving rhino nail decals (a BIG hit!) and an opportunity for guests to fill out notecards explaining why they want to help save rhinos. We got some awesome answers and hung each card around the rhino exhibit for other guests to enjoy throughout the day.

The Zoo advertised the day on its Facebook and Instagram pages, and keepers also did their nails with rhino decals and shared them on social media with the hashtags #nailit4rhinos and #teamrhino. It was definitely a successful day and we had a great time!



#TeamRhino

2015 New and Renewing Members to IRKA

Richard van Sluis	Dierenpark Amersfoort, NL	Andrew Stallard	San Diego Zoo
Charles Moxley	Albuquerque Bio Park	Jane Kennedy	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Katherine Richter	Abilene Zoo	Stacy Strother	Disney Animal Kingdom
Lovisa Lofving	Destination Kolmarden	Michele Gaffney	San Diego Zoo Global Nutritionist
Sofie Gejskog	Destination Kolmarden	Christopher Tubbs, PhD Research	San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation
Muhindo Nicholas	Uganda Wildlife Education Center	Autumn Nelson	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Megan Wright Walker	Blank Park Zoo	Lance Aubery	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Alex Droma	Uganda Wildlife Education Center	Danielle Crawford	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Maggie West	Fort Worth Zoo	Justin A. Shaw	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Andrew Neale		Patricia Huntley	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Christy Nitz	Disney's Animal Kingdom	Sonja Jaramillo	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Deserrai Buunk	Toronto Zoo	Alex Higley Konold	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Mark Wittkopp		Kelsey Brandt	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Nicklas Gotfredsen	Denmark	Mindy Albright	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Peter Lassen	Denmark	Ian Chatfield	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Brian Teasdale		Charles Tucker	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Kim Anicito		Gloria Kendall	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Wendy Shaffstall	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Melodi Tayles	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Paul Reinhart	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Peter Jones	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Randy Pairan	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Amanda Lussier	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Marjorie Barthel	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Jake Shepherd	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Renee Carpenter	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Jennifer Minichino	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Libby Krouskop	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Mike Veale	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Lissa Browning	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Sasha Stallard	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Steve Yelverton	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	Charlie Hyde	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Lara Metrione	Postdoctoral Fellow	Jonnie Capiro	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Joseph Alfano		Justine Zafran	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Linda Reifschneider	St Louis Zoo Docent & President of Asian Elephant Support	Kathryn Garagarza	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Julie McGilvray	San Francisco Zoo	Ken McCaffree	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Joseph Hauser	Buffalo Zoo	Matt Gelvin	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Lisa Bergemann		Meghann Sweeney	San Diego Zoo Safari Park
Megan Cooper		Chris Andrus	San Diego Zoo
Jean Mano	Racine Zoo	Jennifer Moll	San Diego Zoo
Christylee Tonkin	Australia	Kymerlee Nelson	San Diego Zoo
Angie Snowie	Toronto Zoo	Kelly Elins	San Diego Zoo
Kayondo Henry	Uganda Wildlife Education Center	Krista Perry	San Diego Zoo
Ray Hren	Milwaukee Co. Zoo	Douglas Kresl	San Diego Zoo
Kim Caldwell	SD Zoo Safari Park	Barbara Letton	San Diego Zoo
Kelly Ann Brown	Buffalo Zoo	Michael Suhm	San Diego Zoo
John D. Armstrong	Toronto Zoo		
Danielle Fogel	LA Zoo		
Jamie Newsom			
Tim Junker	Houston Zoo		
Dave Clawson	the Wilds		

Thank you everyone for renewing your IRKA membership &/or just joining our organization. If you have not been receiving the Crash newsletter or the weekly rhino news emails, please email Sara Steward, Membership Chair, at Sara.Wunder@BuschGardens.com so we can make certain that we have your correct information. To date, we have 250 members & 18 Supporting Institutions.

2015 New and Renewing Members to IRKA

S. Wiseman	
Tina Olling	
Cyrielle Leturgeon	Africa Alive!
Jennifer Fedesna	
Jade Tuttle	North Carolina Zoo
Jason Pootoolal	African Lion Safari
Kathryn Clemens	Birmingham Zoo
Mickey Crocker	
Carol Bresnay	
Leendert Rookmaaker	Rhino Resource Center
Roxane Losey	
Gaetan Petit	CERZA Zoo & Rhino Orphanage in KwaZulu-Natal district, SA
Edward Beyer	
Ellen Wiczorek	Cheyenne Mountain Zoo
Jeff Dolan	Disney Animal Kingdom
Janel Jankowski	
Jennifer Gruenewald	
Cassandra Kutilek	
Angela Binney	
Denise Wagner	
Courtney Palmer	
Lisa Braun	
Susanne Wyatt	Indianapolis Zoo
Bonnie Reda	
Melaine Sheridan	
Alice Elliott	
Lawrence Sammarco	
Natalia Oviedo	
Wendy Grave	
Ingrid Hartney	San Francisco Zoo
Rebekah Gregory	Austin Savanna
Samantha de Belle	
Thijs van den Houten	
Sara Wunder Steward	Busch Gardens Tampa
Michael Skidmore	Lincoln Park Zoo
Katie Edwards	Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute
Jeffery Campbell	Out of Africa Wildlife Park
Ayshea Seston	Chessington World of Adventure Resort
Carly Barron	The Maryland Zoo

Sarah Cassin	
Susan Petrunio	Knoxville Zoo
Louis Keeley	Blank Park Zoo
Clinton Kennedy	

Supporting Institutions New or Renewing:

- ◆ Zoological Society of San Diego
- ◆ The Wilds
- ◆ Tulsa Zoo & Living Museum
- ◆ Lowry Park Zoo
- ◆ Tanganyika Wildlife Park
- ◆ Henry Vilas Zoo
- ◆ Taronga Zoo
- ◆ Taronga Western Plains Zoo
- ◆ The Horns and Heroes Project
- ◆ Potter Park Zoo
- ◆ Maryland Zoo
- ◆ Fossil Rim Wildlife Center
- ◆ Buffalo Zoo
- ◆ White Oak
- ◆ Jacksonville Zoo



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:

Justin Smith at: justins@fossilrim.org

Partners



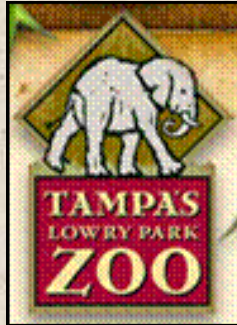
2015 Sponsors at \$2,000 and Above



2015 IRKA Conservation Calendar Sponsors



2015 Sponsors at the \$500 – \$1,999 level



2015 Sponsors at \$100 level

