

# ANIMAL KEEPERS' FORUM



DEDICATED TO PROFESSIONAL ANIMAL CARE

VOLUME III NUMBER 8

AUGUST 1976





# ANIMAL KEEPERS' FORUM

Edited by Ron Kaufman and Chris LaRue

Topeka Zoological Park 635 Gage Boulevard Topeka, Kansas 66606 USA

Animal Keepers' Forum is a non-profit monthly publication distributed to professional zoo keepers independently and by the American Association of Zoo Keepers as a service to its members. Animal Keepers' Forum includes news and official announcements of the AAZK.

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## OKAPIS AT BROOKFIELD

On July 5, Brookfield Zoo welcomed its second baby okapi this year. The okapi filly, which weighed an estimated 60 pounds, was up on her feet within 30 minutes after her birth. She has been observed romping in the exhibit yard and nursing from mother Oseena.

The young okapi is the result of the mating 14 months ago of Oseena, born at Brookfield Zoo in 1966, and Uhuru, 7½, born in the Frankfurt Zoo. The filly brings to six the number in Brookfield's okapi herd.

Brookfield Zoo was, in 1959, the site of the first okapi birth in America. Since that time Brookfield has had 11 okapi births. The 1974 census counted 53 okapis in zoos of the world, 41 of which were born in captivity. That year in the United States there were 18 okapis, 15 of which were born in captivity.

## INDIAN RHINOCEROS ARRIVES AT TORONTO Metro Toronto Zoo

A young male Indian Rhinoceros arrived at the Metro Toronto Zoo on June 28. The animal was shipped from Hamburg, West Germany on June 12. It is the first Indian Rhinoceros in Canada.

The five-year old rhino, named Vinu, was born in the Mysore Zoo in India. He was purchased from the Ruhr Zoo in Gelsenkirchen, West Germany for \$51,000. He weighs nearly 1,000 kg (2,200 lbs.).

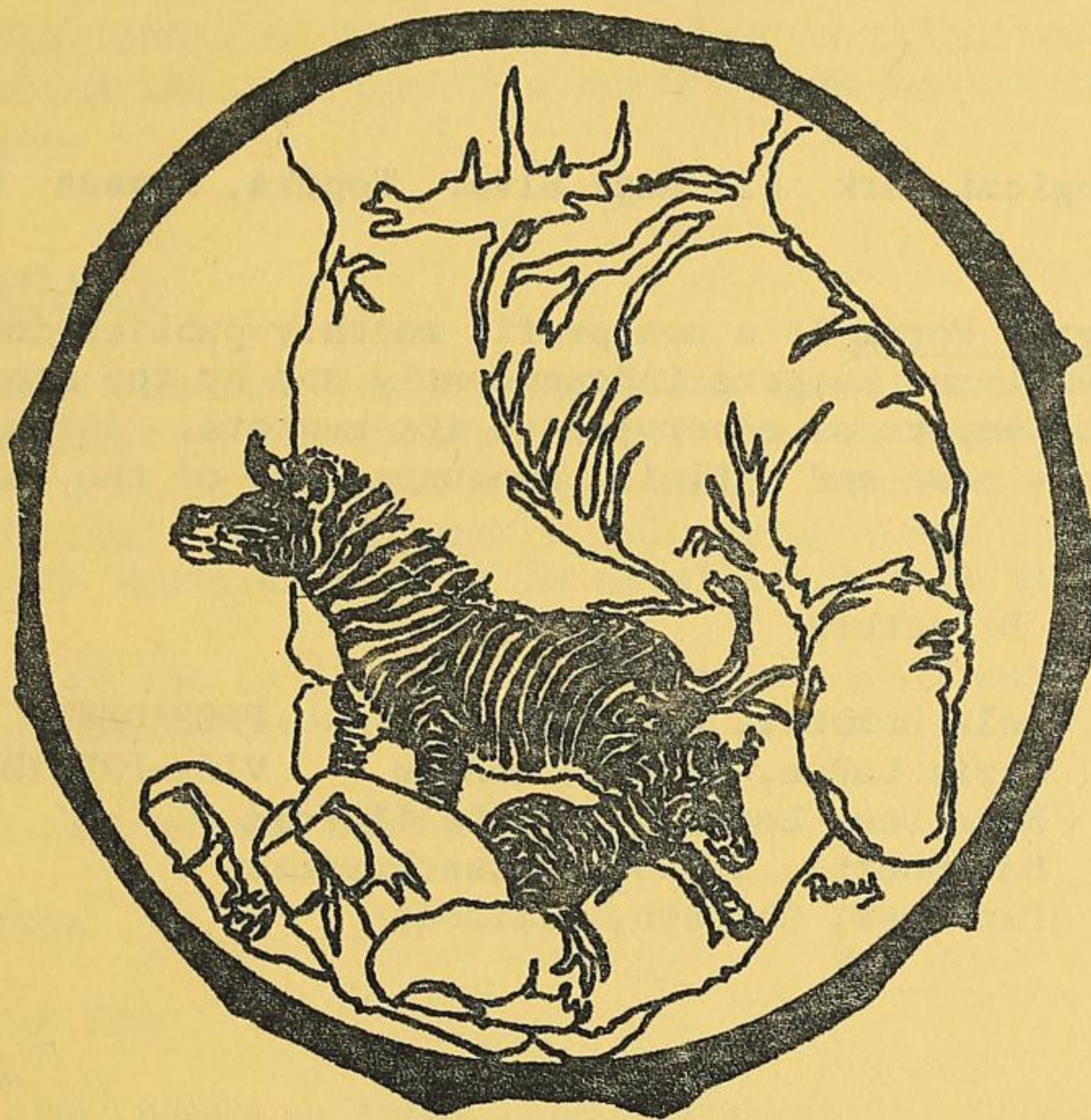
A female Indian rhino is expected to arrive at the zoo later this year or early next year.

## AAZK AWARDS CHAIRMAN RESIGNS

John A. Siegal, Chairman of the AAZK Awards Committee has resigned from that post effective immediately according to Bela Demeter, AAZK President. Mr. Siegal has served AAZK faithfully for several years and his work for AAZK is appreciated. Before replacing John, the procedures and functions of the Awards Committee will be re-evaluated at the San Diego Board meeting this month. Any members with ideas or suggestions may submit them to Bela or any other Board member before or during the San Diego Conference.



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A March of Dimes/National Foundation grant to the Zoo hospital enables staff members to study factors which produce identical twins, whether identical twins occur because of factors in the womb, or because of innate properties of the fertilized egg itself.

Zoo staff members are working with armadillos, the only known animals which regularly produce more than one embryo from a single egg. Results of the armadillo project may provide clues to identical twinning in humans, which carries increased risk of premature birth and associated infant death or brain damage.

Another aspect of research at the Zoo hospital involves chromosome studies. Chromosome, or genetic, studies aid researchers in understanding the inter-relationships of animals and the evolution of one species from another. Relationships among subspecies also may be studied.

Skin samples may be maintained and frozen in liquid nitrogen in the Zoo's cell bank. The cell bank lends itself to long-range storage of information contained in animals' genetic sets. Future scientists may call upon this information to study viral diseases and innate genetic abnormalities. By storing genetic information in cell banks, scientists may avoid some hereditary defects caused by inbreeding. Clarification of the mysteries which cause birth defects and abnormalities in animals may lead to means of avoiding or preventing similar birth defects in humans

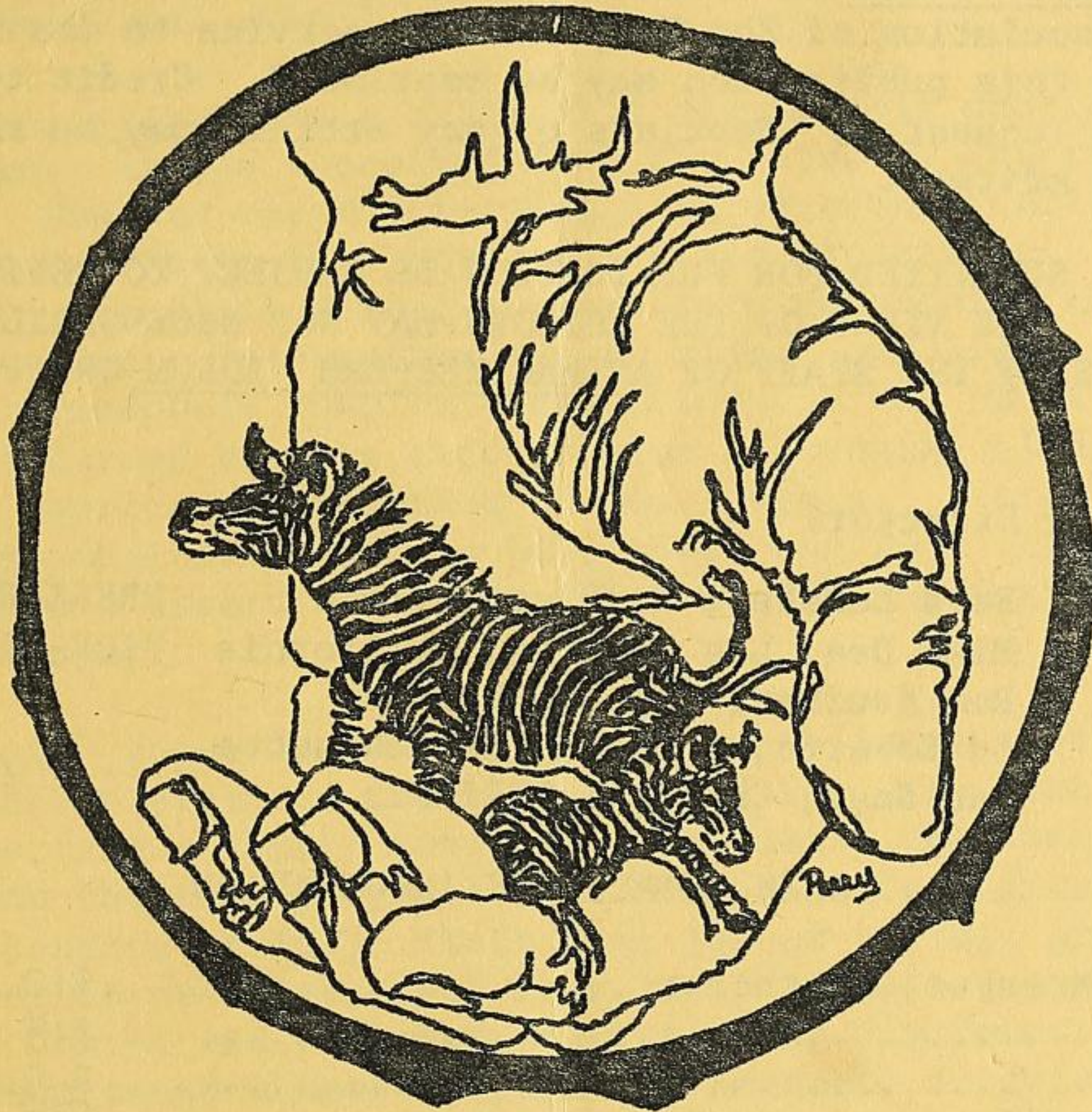
Although current Zoo research efforts center on reproductive and related studies, the research staff at the Zoo hopes to expand its capabilities in the future. Microbiological experiments, the study of viral and bacterial infections, will ultimately be incorporated along with increased behavioral research projects.

MORE RHINOS DISCOVERED from Oryx, vol. XIII, no. 4, July, 1976

The Malaysian Game Department has made the remarkable discovery of a group of 10-20 Sumatran rhinos in south Pahang Tenggara and north Johore. This may be the largest surviving group anywhere, and most important because it is the only viable breeding group on the Asian mainland - no other known group in Malaysia numbers more than three animals.



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*Second Anniversary*

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As an additional aid to penetration, a number of species have a bony structure surrounding the urethra in the penis, the os penis or baculum. The baculum varies in size from less than one centimeter in some rodents to about sixty-five centimeters in the walrus. The os penis assists in penetration in those species where the amount of erectile tissue in the penis alone could not guarantee intromission.

Reproductive success is essential to the successful continuation of a species. Adaptation and evolution have produced a number of systems of different designs, but amazingly similar in function and response. In all mammalian species, the erection starts a series of events which can be joyous or annoying, depending on the outcome.

#### TOO FEW AND FAR BETWEEN DEPARTMENT... BIRTHS AND HATCHINGS

The San Diego Wild Animal Park announces the birth on October 15 of a female black rhinoceros. The baby, named Nanyuki, is the first of her species ever born in the collection of the Zoological Society of San Diego. Her birthweight was estimated at 27.3 kg. (60 lbs.). The Wild Animal Park also reports the rare birth of an Indian rhino on October 18. The male Indian rhino named Maharaja is believed to be the first surviving second-generation of its species ever born in captivity in North America. His weight at birth was estimated at 36.3 kg. (80 lbs.). His parents are Jaypuri and Lasai, both born in captivity. Jaypuri gave birth once before on March 24, 1975, but the young male died the following day of undetermined causes. Both youngsters are being cared for by their mothers and have been observed nursing and surveying their environment.

The Topeka Zoological Park announces the natural hatching of the green iguana. The event took place in the Tropical Rain Forest exhibit. Four young of undetermined sex survived to be captured and placed in a rearing area. The nest site has not been found. Another nest site that was being monitored contained 26 fertile eggs that never hatched. Incubation period is believed to be somewhat over 140 days. The ground temperature at the nest site probably varied between 70 and 100 degrees. The soil was composed of good garden loam and hard packed clay. Hatching date was sometime in late September. The zoo also announces the birth of second-generation yellow anacondas on the 17th of October. Ten out of twelve hatchlings have survived. The two non-survivors drowned and one unhatched egg was recovered.