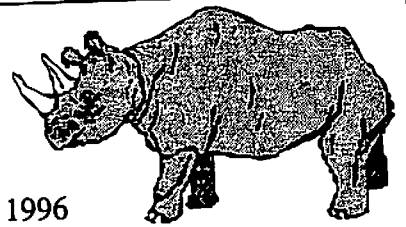


# REALLY, RHINOS!



Volume 10, no. 2, 1996

*This issue is dedicated to Anna Merz.*

## A Letter from Anna Merz

As so many of you will be aware, total disaster befell Samia and her baby very soon after I completed my last newsletter. Both fell over a forty foot cliff on the night of the 21st November 95. Both died; my beloved Samia instantly and little Samuel broke his back and had to be shot. The cause of the tragedy are known only to the trees, rocks and stars and they guard their secret. Her tracks and those of her mate, Kenu, were together on top of the cliff. Did the love, [sic] fight or play? We shall not know.

Three months have now passed but the pain of their loss has not. I miss them both all the time. But I have, however, been both comforted and astounded by the incredible outpouring of compassion their deaths has provoked. I have received over 200 wonderful letters, cards and faxes. I hope I have replied to everyone personally but anyone who wrote and has not heard from me please accept my heartfelt gratitude for the courage you have all given to me. It makes me feel that perhaps Samia's life and my love for her have not been in vain and that all of you who have cared enough to write to me will also care enough to ensure the continuation of her species on the beautiful earth in the next millennium. I am also deeply grateful that the documentary film made about her by Jack and Pauline Bollamy for BBC Wildlife on One Was completed and will be shown in the late spring, narrated by David Attenborough. I hope so much that it will show the whole world what wonderful animals rhinos are and make people care about them enough to create the political and economic pressure needed to ensure their survival.

Here at Lewa our work has to go on. The November rains having virtually failed we are terribly dry and longing and hoping for rain in April. On the 24th January the young black cow, Juniper, herself born here in 1988, produced her first calf. She is being an excellent mother. The three calves born last year to Morembo, Solia and Stumpy also continue

to make good progress. This week the team of volunteers brought by Janet and Spencer Golsthorpe of the Guernsey Rhino Trust arrived and have already laid the foundations of our new clinic. Last year they built a clinic for the Lake Nekuru Rhino Sanctuary. We are so lucky that this year it is our turn. Ten cases of supplies and medical equipment have already been donated by Dr. Marjorie Harmon's Support Group in Springfield, Missouri and six more cases are en route. The clinic is expected to cater to some 500 people on completion, about half will be our own people and the other half our neighbors. It will be under the supervision of Dr. Harmon. The nurse who it is hoped will staff it is now completing her training with AMREF.

So, despite tragedies our work must go on and I hope you will all continue to give us your support and encouragement and I would thank once more all of you who have written to me for your caring and kindness. We will not let Samia's life be in vain.



A personal, handwritten note from Anna:

Dear Ms. Lessee,

I have just learnt from Karen Kane of the Rhino Trust of your most generous donation of \$100 towards our work here with rhinos. We are in appreciation of your help. Keeping these precious animals safe [sic] is a major undertaking and a very costly one so we do so need our support and interest. Thank you very much.

Anna Merz.

[ed note: I have just read that Anna is leaving Lewa Downs and retiring to South Africa. If she hasn't already won it, someone should nominate her for the Goldman Prize. Wait, I think she won it! She deserves it. The Mother Theresa of the rhino world. Blessings to her for a long and healthy life!]

# Rhino Buy\$ Rhino Buys\$ Rhino Buy\$ Rhino Buy\$ Rhino Buy\$

Does anyone have a Mercedes? One of the best ads this year was done by Mercedes and it included live rhinos! I'd love to see the print or video excerpts of this. Can anyone help me?

Have you seen the Welch's endangered species jelly glasses? There's a black rhino on the glass (yes you can drink from it when it's empty) and you have a choice of grape or strawberry jam. So buy a big jar of peanut butter and spread the bread for rhinos! Thanks to Bob Neillie for the extra jars and to Tony Nichols for the coupon.

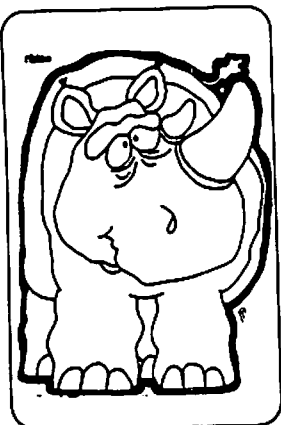
You don't have to travel to Africa the next time you get the urge to see a real African rhino. Just visit

**TOPANIEN**  
Citizens of the World Gallery  
Specialty Gifts and Souvenirs

7781 SW Capitol Highway  
Portland, OR 97219 • 244-9683  
10:30 am - 6 pm Tuesday - Saturday;  
11 am - 5 pm Sunday

Soapstone sculptures are purchased through a Kenyan family-owned business. (FYI... Throughout Kenya, no matter what job women do or for whom they do it, they receive lower wages than do their male counterparts.)

What's purple and teal and black? It's a cool polymer, handmade rhino pin (\$17), or earrings (\$22) by Merry Rosenfield who designs Magic Zoo (jewelry with personality). Well-made, authentic, inexpensive. Write: Magic Zoo, 11709 Rough & Ready Road, Rough & Ready, CA 95975. (916) 432-9439. Add \$1.50 s & h for the first item ordered, plus \$.25 for each additional item. Merry might also be willing to make a hair clip too.



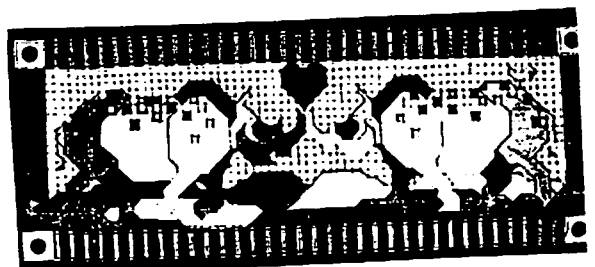
If you work with young children, you might want to get a copy of Susan Pagnucci's book, *Do Me! Stories*. It's a really fun hands-on way to work with children and endangered animals, and learn good folk tales, too. A professor from Nigeria helped add African sounds which the animals make when they walk, fly, grunt, etc. The story is

basically this: rhino gets stuck in some clayish mud and she will starve if she cannot get out. Lion comes to help, then hyena, giraffe, parrot, water buffalo, etc. Finally with the help of a gnat, they all pull her out. Order from Bur Oak Press, Inc. 8717 Mockingbird Rd S, Platteville, WI 533818. (608) 348-8662. \$11.90 including s & h.

Terriers in Space, PO Box 2277, Vashon Island, WA 98070. Write if you want a cool picture frame with rhinos on it.

*Zoo Crew* (Big Kids Productions, Inc., \$14.95, ages 2 and up). This video is from the What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up? Series. It takes viewers behind the scenes, where zoo keepers, nutritionists, veterinarians and animal trainers show how much care and feeding it takes to keep a menagerie happy and healthy, from filing an elephant's toenails to feeding baby animals with bottles and syringes. Footage from three zoos is set to calypso music. White rhino on the cover. Call: 800-477-7811.

You already know fiber is good for your health. Here's some fiber that delicious and not fattening! Kate Ward Thacker is an artist from the Midwest whose media is paper/fiber. She paints on water-



color paper and stitches it much like a quilt is stitched - outlining and adding texture. Her prices vary from \$190 for a 10 X 17 unframed piece to \$1000 for a 32 X 32.5 framed. Colorful, whimsical, very unique. Kate also offers "Vintage Confetti Cards" (\$9) which are handmade and created by layering a ground paper with ribbon and vintage images of miscellaneous items. The sample she sent me includes a postcard with two black rhinos from the Detroit Zoo. You want at least one Ward Thacker in your house! Write: Ward Thacker Studio, 1109-M Olive Lake Drive, St. Louis, MO 63132.

# The Premature Natural death of our Friend, Samia the Rhino

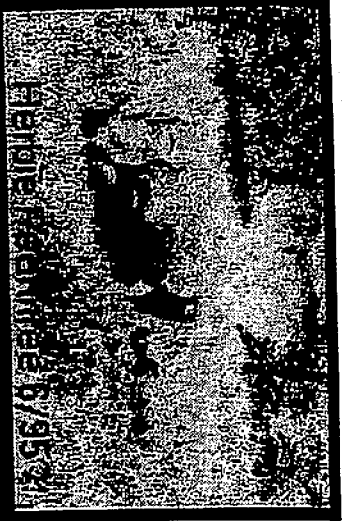
by Patty Pearthree: Bowling For Rhinos Coordinator



Anna Merz and Samia at Home, photo Gerry Ellis

I am sorry to report that Samia, the Black rhino hand-raised by Anna Merz died on Wednesday, November 23. The ten-year-old rhino and her seven-month-old son died from injuries sustained after being chased over a 40 foot cliff by a male rhino at Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (partially funded by AAZK Bowling for Rhinos fund raiser). Samia was one of the most famous rhinos in modern conservation. Many conservation articles and video documentaries have been made on Samia due to her friendly tolerance of strangers and photographers.

Anna Merz began raising the orphaned rhino in 1985 when Samia was only 3 days old. From her relationship with Samia, Anna has gathered an extraordinary amount of valuable new information about rhino behavior that has been useful to researchers both in the wild and in captive situations. Anna has published a book, *Rhino at the Brink of Extinction* with HarperCollins Publishers, which gives tremendous insight on the complex social lives of these wonderful animals. In fact, Anna claims to understand over 60 different grunting and snorting sounds as rhino vocabulary!



Rhinoceros and handler, 6/95



Rhinoceros and handler, 6/95



Rhinoceros and handler, 6/95

The birth of Samia's son Samuel, presented a unique and unprecedented opportunity to closely witness the maternal behavior of a rhino raised with substantial human influence. Anna's painstaking efforts to help Samia adapt to life in the wild proved successful. The rhino provided a model for examination of many of the behaviors which might be anticipated if a captive bred rhino were released to the wild. It was hoped that Samuel would also adjust and adapt naturally, completing the circle and the dream of returning creatures back to the wild if their habitat is protected. The experiences at Lewa prove that this concept can be a reality.

I was able to see Samia and Samuel almost daily during my stay at Lewa from May - August of 1995. While staying with Anna, I was routinely awakened to the squeaks of Samuel as he followed mom through the tall grass just outside of Anna's guest house. Samia bedded down each night close to the safety of Anna's house but as soon as she woke and showed off her calf to Anna, she wandered into the brush to become just like all other rhino - wild but protected in the safe haven of Lewa. However, all the efforts of the folks at Lewa couldn't save these rhinos from this natural death. When Samia began to cycle once again, it attracted an aggressive male to the area. He chased Samia over the cliff and Samuel, who never left mom's side, followed.

As you can imagine Anna, who spent 7 years of her life teaching Samia all she could to be able to survive as a wild rhino, is devastated by this tragic loss. Although Anna knows that they died of natural causes and an incredible amount of knowledge was gained from Samia and Samuel, it was an incredible blow to her personally. She will be happy to know that the 1996 Bowling for Rhinos event will be dedicated to the memory of Samia and Samuel. With continued support, only natural deaths will occur at Lewa rather than deaths due to poachers.

Rhinos in  
captivity  
form a key  
element in  
the battle  
to save the  
species

It was in 1960 that I met my first captive rhino. She was a six-month-old female white rhino of the northern race known as Abongi, and she was an orphan, her mother having succumbed to injuries she received during a translocation operation which moved rhinos at risk from the West Nile district of Uganda to Murchison Falls national park. She was a delightfully comely animal, reintroduced to the wild at four years of age, who lived to produce a calf of her own but died on the spears of a poacher. Her calf survived that tragedy but died, along with all the other black and white rhino in Uganda, from the bullets of the Kalashnikov rifles of the army of Idi Amin Dada. In just 30 years the northern race of the white rhino has been cruelly reduced, from a population numbering over 5,000 to a mere 33 carefully protected animals in the Garamba national park in eastern Zaire.

The echo of rifle fire has been heard almost everywhere that rhino occur. The carnage has taken place throughout Africa, often in locations once thought to be safe havens for these splendid creatures. The greed of a few hunters, in just a whisper of time, has destroyed an evolutionary success story which had lasted millions of years.

In February this year I was looking at a group of black rhino in the Western Plains Zoo at Dubbo, New South Wales, Australia. Captive yes, but safe from the marauding poachers, part of the worldwide co-operative programme of captive breeding which may prove to be a lifeline for future generations of rhinoceros. Although such relocations of rhino can prove costly, both in financial terms and occasionally through accidental death, yet those animals that were successfully moved are alive and snorting now – not bones being bleached white in the African, Indian or South-east Asian sunshine.

We all agree that the best place to save species is in their wild habitat, but the fact is that the rhino in managed populations in captivity are, sadly perhaps, an increasingly important element in the battle to save the species for the future, a battle which continues in protecting animals in their wild state in national parks and similar reserves, or in specially protected reserves in the lands of their occurrence.

It is probable that, where rhinos have disappeared from countries such as Uganda, their eventual return will have to be from one of these sources. It is more than probable, for example, that in the national parks of Uganda the northern race of the white rhino will be replaced by the southern and that these will come from captive or semi-captive sources, from zoos and wildlife parks.

Zoos and wildlife parks worldwide are committed to playing their part in rhino conservation through captive breeding, research and environmental education, as well as support for in-situ activities.

All people of goodwill know that the world will be much diminished if this fascinating family of animals is lost.

# A Zoologist SPEAKS

By Professor Roger Wheeler, director of Edinburgh Zoo

SAVE THE RHINO, INTERNATIONAL

# The Sports Report

by Tony Nichols

## Men Really Do Read the Articles!

I recently purchased the January 29, 1996 issue of *Sports Illustrated* to READ (the only reason, honey) and was happily surprised to see an article about rhinos. Oh gee, look this is also the "Swimsuit Issue". (I got it for the sports?) Seems our favorite creature had favorable coverage in this most popular of periodicals. The featured photography was done in South Africa and is incredible. (I got it for the pictures?) The three main stories are portraying the wildlife, the people of South Africa, and of course what to wear to the beach. (I got it for the animals!)

Rhinos play heavily in the first story. The writer, E.M. Swift is sensitive to the plight of the rhino and wants to SEE a black rhino. He flies to the Mkuzi Game Reserve where he goes on a walking safari to find one of the 70 living there. An hour is spent tracking a bull rhino into a thicket. After the armed tracker comes rushing out of the brush, saying, "Too dangerous, no trees" to climb, Mr. Swift decides there isn't enough protection from a charging rhino. "What am I doing here?" is a recurring theme. They leave.

After touring Mkuzi and nearby Phinda Resource Reserve, he has seen cheetahs, nyala, lions, and 6 white rhinos. Finally, on his last day, a black rhino is seen and photographed. A nice cow/calf pair is spotted, and the writer climbs a tree to observe them from just 50 yards away. *Sports Illustrated* and Mr. Swift should be thanked for their sympathetic portrayal of the rhino's dilemma. In the article's closing sentence, the sentiment is obvious: "and may God

grant them speed in fleeing all poachers." Hmmmm.... I'll have to buy this "Swimsuit" issue very year, just in case.

[ed note: Now this is the way to "shoot" rhinos in the wild!]

## It's Roller Hockey time again!

The San Jose Rhinos, 1995 Roller Hockey International Champions, started their second season this week. In 1996 the Roller Hockey League will consist of nine teams. If you are interested in Rhinos souvenir merchandise, you are smart. It's great rhinabilia. The logo is dominated by a charging rhino. This year's selections will have WORLD CHAMPIONS prominent on several items. Be sure to mention where you heard about this. (Hint: R, R!) Check with the merchandiser through the season in case they add new stuff. Watch the Rhinos play on ESPN or ESPN2.

City	Team	Schedule
San Diego	Barracudas	6/23
Sacramento	River Rats	6/16, 7/20
Anaheim	Bullfrogs	6/20, 7/28
Oklahoma City	Coyotes	6/21, 7/13
Oakland	Skates	6/27, 8/12
Vancouver	Voo Doo	7/1, 7/16
Los Angeles	Blades	7/5
Denver	Dare Devils	8/9

### Team:

San Jose Rhinos  
99 Almaden Blvd. #555  
San Jose, CA 95113  
(408) 287-4442  
(800) 20-RHINO

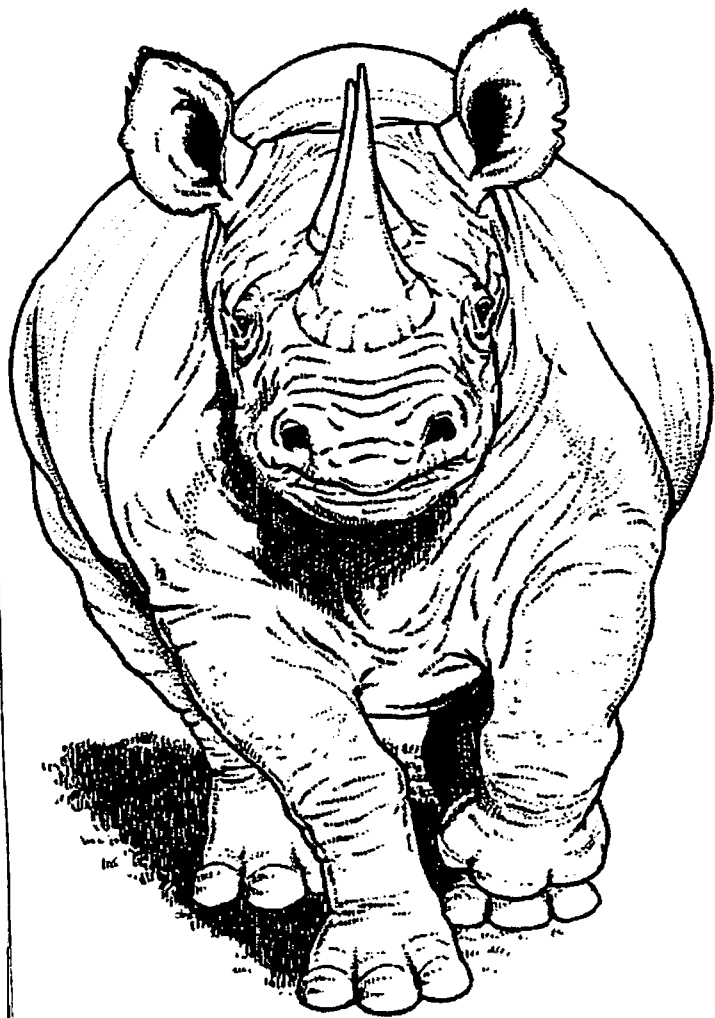
### Catalog:

Keen Merchandise  
40 North 1st Street  
San Jose, CA 95113  
(408) 280-5336  
(408) 977-7908

Next time, the Rochester Raging Rhinos and the Nissan Pathfinder's African safari.

Save the Rhino!

Tony



Unfortunately, my local AAZK chapter has gone inactive, so no Bowling for Rhinos this year. Grrrrr. Fortunately, I have managed to amass about \$700 for the nonevent.

Unfortunately, I need at least \$2,000 to even be considered as a top money-raiser (so I can go visit Lewa Downs). Fortunately, I have a long list of people I can ask for donations.

Unfortunately, the money has to be handed in by September 1st. Fortunately, I know I can count on you to help me reach my goal. Make your check payable to AAZK (that makes it tax deductible too!) and send it to Really, Rhinos! PO Box 40503, Tucson, AZ 85717-0503. Please, be generous and believe that 100% of your donation goes directly to the rhinos. I have some great prizes for the persons who donate the most money.

Fortunately, I have faith in my fellow rhinophiles and know they will come through for me. Thank you, friends!

---

**Absolutely, Judyth.** I want to help your rhino fund raising efforts. To show you my support and appreciation for all your hard work, I am enclosing a check, make out to AAZK in the amount of:

\$100     \$50     \$25     \$15     \$ Other (be kind, please!)

I understand that if I send you the most money (sure I can get others to give me money too!), I could win a very nice rhino prize donated by you. What a woman!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## News from the World Wildlife Fund [Focus, 18(2), March/April, 1996]

Tanzania's reserves and national parks contain some of the wild's last remaining viable populations of elephants and black rhinos. Unfortunately though, in the last two decades, poachers have claimed almost 90 percent of Tanzania's rhino population. In response, WWF has worked with the Tanzanian government and individual parks to beef up anti-poaching efforts which includes a new VHF radio communications system for Tanzania's Department of Wildlife. The network allows management personnel in all the wildlife reserves to communicate with each other and to mobilize quick, coordinated action against poachers. Meanwhile, in the Rungwa/Kizigo game reserve and neighboring Ruaha National Park, WWF funds are providing equipment and training for anti-poaching units.



And a bit to the west in Zaire, somewhat of a success story. In 1984, due to widespread poaching, the northern white rhino population in northeastern Zaire dropped to 15, all inhabiting Garamba national park. Today, due to intensive monitoring and anti poaching efforts supported in part by WWF, the population has reached 31. The rare northern white is a different sub-species from the whites found in southern Africa. They are adapted to the high rainfall, lightly bushed, seasonally long grass, savannas found in northeastern Zaire. Garamba National Park (about the size of Delaware) has suffered from an increased number of armed poachers entering the park from the north. The park's isolation, in turn, makes it difficult for tourists to visit. Now, according to Kes and Fraser Smith, who have worked to rehabilitate the park since 1984, tourists may be attracted by trained elephants at Garamba. In the coming year, the park project staff hope to lure more tourists with the opportunity to view from elephant-back the rare northern white rhinos. The tourism could play a role in financing the staff's plans to add work with local communities to their ongoing anti poaching, wildlife monitoring, and park development efforts.



### My vote for best annual report of the year goes to Save the Rhino International!

SRI's Rhino Climb and 5th Anniversary Brochure includes: "The Rhino that Climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro", "Rhinos and Apples", "Rhino's-eye View of the London Marathon", "Pink Rhino Rocks on. Rhinos on the Moon", "Rhinos into the Next Millennium" and more! Gorgeous color photos. Jam packed with facts, figures and myth-breakers. Douglas Adams (*Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*) is a dedicated patron. You'll find out just how dedicated when you get your brochure. SRI also supports Garamba National Park! Here is an example of SRI's many rhino projects. Ongoing support for priority rhino projects in Namibia. Donations are sent straight from the charity, or through the Namibian Black Rhino Fund. Funds permitting, the charity hopes to establish a rhino sanctuary for desert rhinos on the edge of Damaraland as an added security for the wild population. Preliminary research has been conducted, and a suitable site identified. To receive a copy of the brochure (if still available) and to make a donation to this worthy organization, write: Save the Rhino International, 4th Floor, 105 Park Street, London W1Y 3FB.

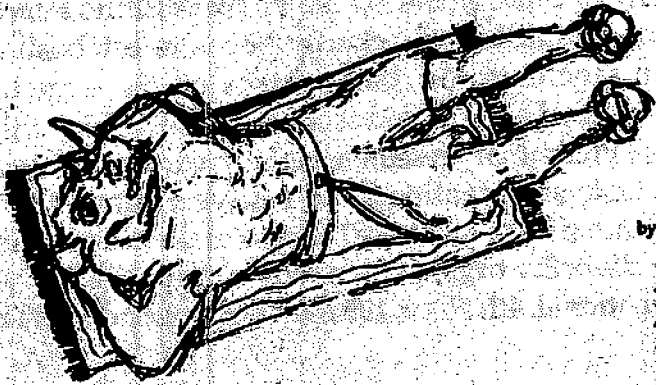
The International Rhino Foundation is dedicated to the conservation of the 5 species of rhinoceros. Their mission is to contribute to rhino conservation by providing technical, administrative and financial services and support for programs which emphasize intensive management and scientific research both in the wild and in captivity. IRF uses 100% of all donations in the field. Membership levels range from StudentSenior (\$35) top Benefactor (\$500). Members get a one year newsletter subscription, personalized membership card and window decal. IRF, 1400 International Rd. Cumberland, OH 43732 (614) 638-2286.





If VISTA or the Peace Corps aren't your cup of tea, think about being Earthwatch volunteers. Here is an excerpt from the Richmond Palladium-Item (Indiana).

Two retired science teachers (formerly Peace Corps volunteers in Antigua) joined Earthwatch, an international research organization that seeks to help humans understand the planet. To accomplish that, Earthwatch organizes research trips that team professionals and volunteers. That kind of mission appealed to J.D. and Janet Wickersham. J.D. said, "I've always wanted to go on a safari." They chose the black rhino because of its endangered status. They received a briefing manual and joined people from Connecticut, Belgium, Denmark and England in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe. Janet said they found the animals very relaxed - when they found them (despite the black's reputation for being very dangerous). Each day, the team drove out into the bush, parked the jeep and began listening for radio signals from rhinos tagged with radio collars. When a signal was detected, it still required looking for a spoor, footprints, evidence of grazing or other signs. With the rhinos coated with dust, they often were hard to spot. Once they located the rhinos, the team recorded every move. Survival for the Wickershams would be considered primitive by the most U.S. standards, given the cost of the trip (\$1,995 a person excluding airfare). Headquarters was a tent camp, with sleeping bag and mat, elephant stew and other delectables cooked over an open fire. The bathhouse had indoor showers and toilets. That was clearly overshadowed by the continual landscape and soundscape of wildlife. "We were high on a bluff and could look out and see elephants, hippos, Cape buffaloes, giraffes - whole herds of animals in the valley," Janet said. "At night, we could hear lions roar. There were no lights in the camp. Seeing the stars in the night sky was just unbelievable. Earthwatch, PO Box 403, Watertown, MA 02272 (800) 776-0188 [www.earthwatch.org]



by Aaron, Cahalina High School, 1996

In the next issue meet Billy Ray Luigi, my Italian-Texan friend. Also rhino graphic and some cool Internet sites for rhino watching.

A one year quarterly subscription to *Really, Rhinos!* is \$20 (\$25 foreign). Make check payable to Judyth Lessee. 100% of each subscription is donated to rhino conservation projects. Send feedback or rhino citing to: *Really, Rhinos!*, PO Box 40503, Tucson, AZ 85717-0503. Phone: (520) 327-9048. e-mail: rinophyl@rtd.com. (WWW cite coming soon!)

Have a safe and comfortable summer!

If you find errors, please know they are printed for those who always look for them. We try to print something for every...

Really, Rhinos!

PO Box 40503 NEW!

Tucson, AZ 85717-0503

Support Bowling for Rhinos.  
Send your check today!

