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- Neville Brothers continue message of love in latest release. **Story, Page 5**
- "Nukes in Space" is the movie, but no nukes is the message. **Story, Page 5**



Art Shriberg & Carol Lloyd
WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

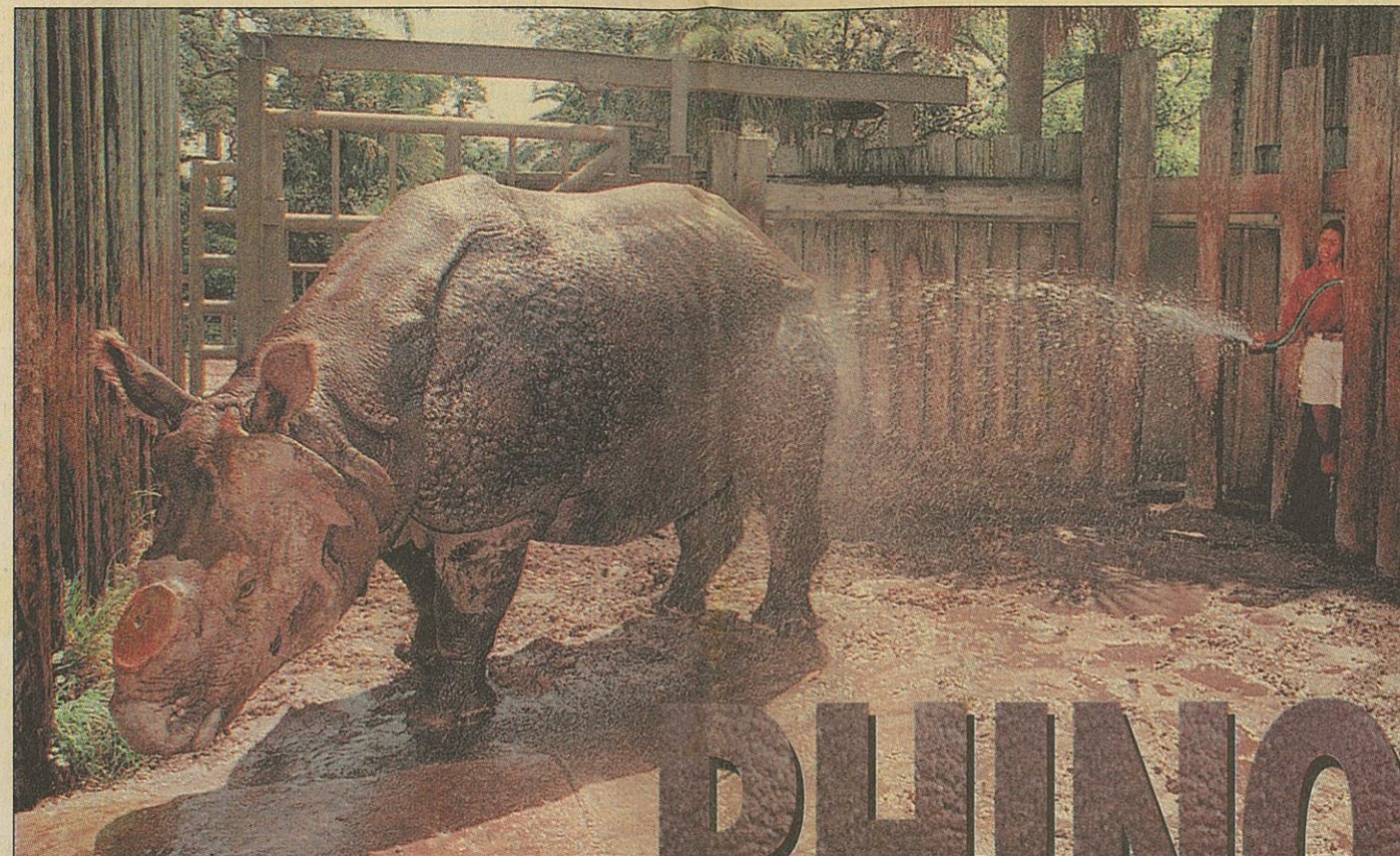
Reader says keep teachers in the closet

Here's a reader's response to a column in which we took a high school history teacher to task for telling anti-gay jokes to his students:

"I am *really* offended by your article entitled 'Intolerance from Teacher Unacceptable.' Did you two even bother to research your topic? Did either one of you ever attend a school with homosexual teachers? Did you speak to anyone who has?"

"You state that they are just 'different.' Well, until you have had a teacher watch you take a shower and find sexual gratification in doing so, or a coach who wants to spend a little more time with you for their own perverse reasons ... you really don't know what you are describing as 'a little different.' I am not a 'homophobe,' but then again I do not condone this type of behavior. And any teacher who openly presents the topic of 'homosexuality' as a choice in lifestyle should be dismissed on the spot.

"What a person's sexual preference is should *never* be brought up in the school classroom. Children are very vulnerable and this would be like an endorsement to them. ... I do not promote the idea of intolerance, but it should be like the military's stance of 'Don't tell or you're dismissed.' Your article seems to spread the idea that not allowing gays to teach the subject of homosexuality is intolerance. Since when? Classrooms are meant for learn-



Stephanie Johnson hoses down Jordie the rhino during bath time at Lowry Park Zoo.

RHINO

(E N D A N G E R E D)

SPECIES ON THE RUN

FUN FACTS

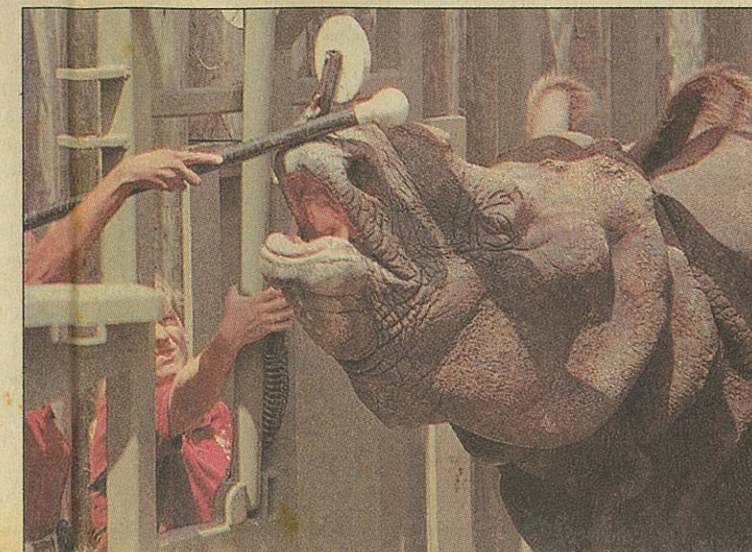


■ **NUMBERS:** Five species of rhinoceros exist in the wild and they number about 12,500, according to estimates from the International Rhino Foundation. They comprise 7,600 African white rhinos, 2,400 African black rhinos, about 2,100 Indian rhinos, less than 400 Sumatran rhinos and less than 100 Javan rhinos.

The African and Sumatran species have two horns; other species have only one.

■ **HABITS:** All rhinos are vegetarians, eating grass, leaves, twigs and fruit. Indian rhinos and white rhinos are primarily grazers — they eat grass. Sumatran rhinos and black rhinos are primarily browsers — they eat shrubs and trees.

White rhinos tend to be more gregarious and better able to reproduce



People hoping to save endangered rhinoceroses from extinction undertake efforts such as this week's bowling benefit to raise awareness.

By JENNIFER BARRS
of The Tampa Tribune

TAMPA — Jordie has bad eyes, dry skin and a taste for Vidalias.

But as minivan-sized mammals go, he is the most beloved of boarders at Lowry Park Zoo. And if he wants a bath — or even a mineral oil rubdown — well, he gets it.

Refuse a rhinoceros? Not at 4,000 pounds and counting.

"Oh, yeah, he'll walk right up to the barn door back here and knock against it when he's ready for a bath. Won't you, Jordie? Won't you?" coos zoo keeper Becky Millican, pressing her hand against Jordie's nubby hide.

It's a sultry summer morning when she and fellow zoo keeper Stephanie Johnson pull out the paintbrushes and swipe them up and down Jordie's mammoth back. He turns toward their touch and his small, fuzzy-fringed ears — oddly out of place on a creature who appears descended from dinosaurs — wiggle at the sound of his name.

Oh, he can hear *very* well. And he can smell a human within 800 yards.

Yet the rhinoceros remains one of the world's more mysterious animals, a seemingly magical beast among the most endangered of all land mammals. A two-horned specimen graces the logo of the American Association of Zoo Keepers.

To further educational efforts — and to help and protect the disappearing rhino — the association's SunCoast Chapter will sponsor its annual benefit for the animals Saturday. "Bowling for Rhinos," which includes an auction of merchandise and three games of bowling, begins at 6:30 p.m. at AMF University Bowl in Tampa. Anyone can participate, and all players receive a T-shirt.

Local chapters of the organization schedule this event individually. However, it is a national program that, in six years, has raised more than \$830,000 for international rhino conservation efforts. One

ing, not deviant behavior. What next — sadomasochists? They're people too — right? Please reconsider your position on the subject. Our children's lives are at stake!" — M.F., Tampa

Dear M.F.: We agree with one thing you said: Our children's lives are at stake. A large percentage of teenagers who commit suicide do so because they suspect they may be homosexual, and they know how intolerant society can be toward gay people. Your response is the perfect example of such intolerance and confusion.

You make the mistake of lumping homosexuality with pedophilia. Homosexuals don't want to lure young children into a sexual relationship; pedophiles do. Homosexuals, like heterosexuals, are attracted to people near their own age, not to children. A teacher who makes any kind of sexual advance toward a student of either sex should be summarily dismissed.

The letter we answered came from a student who was upset that her (presumably straight) teacher made jokes at the expense of gays (not — as you stated — that a gay teacher was defending or condoning homosexuality). We said no adult — especially a teacher — should belittle anyone for their "differentness," whether based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or physical ability.

From the e-mail bag

Thanks to Joe Foster, professor of anthropology at the University of Cincinnati, for straightening us out about Latin America. We said it was so called because Latin is the common root of most of the languages spoken there, such as Spanish, Portuguese and French.

He writes: "Sorry, but t'aint so. There are numerous languages in Mexico, Central America (or Mesoamerica) and South America that are not in any way derived from Latin. ... Several of these pre-Latinate earlier arrivals have over half a million speakers, and a few have over a million each. Some examples are Quechua, Guarani, Quiche Maya, Yucatec Maya, Aymara These languages are not only not related to Latin, but they aren't even all related to each other. It is indeed a 'world of difference.'"

We appreciate the response and all the questions — and answers — that readers send us. Keep them coming!

Send questions to Art Shriberg and Carol Lloyd in care of this newspaper, or by e-mail: humandiff@aol.com. The volume of mail received prohibits personal replies, but questions and comments of general interest may be discussed in future columns.

Indian rhinos are almost as amphibious as hippopotamuses. They love the water. Sumatran rhinos, which live primarily in dense forests, have an enormously varied repertoire of chirps and squeals.

■ **HUNTING AND HORNS:** Big-game hunters pay between \$10,000 and \$50,000 per rhino to kill those animals legally selected for hunting. A taxidermist charges about \$25,000 to stuff and mount a rhino.

Poachers can get up to \$30,000 for a single rhino horn. Others can pay up to \$600 per pound for powdered horn.

The rhino's horn, used more for foraging than fighting, is prized for its alleged powers. Primarily, Asian consumers claim it reduces fever. Historically, others thought it was a powerful sexual stimulant. In the Middle Ages, Europeans believed that a drinking cup made of rhino horn would neutralize any poison that enemies had sneaked into wine.

In parts of Indonesia, rhino blood is used in deathbed rituals to speed the dying person's soul to heaven.

■ **HISTORY:** Baluchitherium, a prehistoric relative of the modern rhinoceros, was larger than any land mammal that lives today. This animal, which lived in Asia about 25 million to 37 million years ago, was more than 16 feet tall.

■ **AND MORE:** Rhinos can live up to 50 years. They often weigh between 2,000 and 6,000 pounds. Natural predators are hyenas, lions, tigers and man.

The white rhino isn't really white. Its name comes from a mistranslation of the Afrikaans word for "wide," referring to its lips.

Indian rhinos have a habit of rubbing their horns against abrasive surfaces.



GARY RINGS/Tribune photos

Jordie points to a target in exchange for a treat of fruit. He also gets fruit after a bath from keeper Becky Millican. His horn is short from a habit of rubbing it on abrasive surfaces.

three areas of conservation: the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya; the Ujung Kulon National Park in Indonesia; and the Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park in Sumatra.

In preserving these ecosystems, scientists say they are preserving far more than ranges for the estimated 12,400 rhinos in the wild. Elephants, giraffes, zebras, antelope and three large cat species roam northern Kenya; a research program dedicated to tigers and elephants is ongoing in Sumatra.

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BOWLING FOR RHINOS

■ **WHAT:** benefit and auction organized by the SunCoast Chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers; all money goes to protecting the rhinoceros. Nationally, the two people who raise the most money through pledged donations get an all-expense-paid trip to Kenya. Anyone can participate; everyone gets a T-shirt.

■ **WHEN:** 6:30 p.m. Saturday

■ **WHERE:** AMF University Bowl, 13109 N. 56th St., Tampa

■ **TICKETS:** \$15 to register in advance, plus \$20 in donations necessary to bowl three games. Participants also can pay \$25 on the day of the event. Call (813) 935-8552, Ext. 229, for information.

CHANNEL SURFING



Tampa unlikely setting for 'SNL' skit

PASADENA, Calif. — "Gothic Talk," a recurring gag on "Saturday Night Live," is set in Tampa because the city seems a most unlikely place to find people who look like they've overdosed on Anne Rice novels.

SNL cast member Molly Shannon, who came up with the sketch this past season, explained the Gothic connections at an NBC party Friday night.

"I thought it would be weird to have the pale-skinned cult in Florida where everyone is supposed to have a tan," she said. "And Tampa seemed like the least likely place to find Goths."

She laughed when she heard that there is an occult crowd that roams the streets of Ybor City dressed like refugees from a vampire movie.

"I think they must be in every city," she says.

And if she could see some of the public access shows in Tampa, she would know that "Goth Talk" is not that far-fetched.

For the skit, Shannon created Ciry Nightshade, a sort of Punk Valley Goth girl who is the ditzy co-host of a public access cable show. SNL comic Chris Kattan plays her co-host, Azrael Abyss, the prince of sorrow.

Two offbeat skits this past season featured guests Rob Lowe and Jeff Goldblum both dressed in outlandish black leather garb.

Call it a "Wayne's World" of the '90s. The gag spoofs young people who are into a fad that involves black clothes, black lipstick, black eyeliner and homage to the dark side.

"They're sort of shy and brainy," Shannon says. "I used to have a roommate who was a student at NYU and she was into vampires and Anne Rice novels and all that. ... There's a lot of Goths in New York. You see these girls with white faces and jet black hair."

Shannon says she's not sure if there will be more "Goth Talk" during the next season because she didn't get much reaction from the skits. "People want to

see more of Mary Katherine Gallagher," a nervous Catholic school girl, she says.

Kattan, however, thinks "Goth Talk" scored with younger viewers who get the joke.

"You expect to find Goth people in places like New York or Los Angeles so it's more pitiful if these Goth wanna-bes are in Tampa," Kattan says.

"It's a whole underground thing that few comics have made fun of," he adds. "It's been very well received. The funny thing is that the real Goth people love it. They think we're right on."

"Saturday Night Live" has other Tampa Bay area connections. Comic Jim Breuer, returning for his third year to SNL, lived in Palm Harbor for a couple of years after his parents, Jim and Doris, moved down from Long Island, N.Y. He was already working on his stand-up act when he lived here.

And Darrell Hammond, best known for his Clinton impression, was born in Tampa. His family moved to Melbourne

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