



The Crash

September 2024 "The Fall Edition"

The IRKA newsletter: the leading network connecting rhino professionals.

President's Perspective

Happy World Rhino Day Month!

I hope everyone had a fantastic WRD! It is always fun to see the creativity of the various celebrations for this special day. As rhino keepers, it is a day to reflect on the gains we have made, but also a stark reminder that there is still much to be done to save these species.

Many hoorah's to our Fundraising Committee for our SUPER cool WRD limited edition Javan rhino t-shirt. Funds from this will benefit the critically endangered Javan rhino. The sale only goes for two weeks, so get yours today!

Thank you all in participating in the voting for the Board of Directors! It was the largest participation in our history. With the results, we extend our congratulations to some familiar faces including Cassy Kutilek, Cody Cseplo and Angie Snowie. While welcoming our newest member Justin Klauss from Fossil Rim. With the addition of our newest member we also say farewell with much love and gratitude to our Secretary, Stephanie Richmond.

We are very excited to announce that registration for RKW 2025 is now open! Remember that early bird registration can be a substantial savings! Omaha is hard at work making this a fantastic workshop.

If you have never attended one of our webinars, I highly recommend the Animal Response Ropes team on November 10th. You may learn something that could be invaluable to your facility in multiple scenarios.

Another great benefit of being a professional member is our Keeper Professional Development Program. Jazzmin Wipf shares her experience and insights gained by visiting the San Diego Safari Park. Participation is easy! We have a scholarship and multiple participating facilities to choose from to expand your experience and knowledge.

As always, thank you to our members, conservation partners and sponsors for helping us make this organization one of the BEST!

Peace, Love, Rhinos



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IRKA B.O.D. Results



Board of Directors voting ended in August with four positions to fill.
 2024 was the highest voter turn out in IRKA history.
 Thank you to everyone who participated!

Welcome Justin Klauss

Justin brings a lot of hands-on experience from working with black and white rhinos from neonatal to geriatric care. As a senior animal care specialist at Fossil Rim he has gained leadership skills while being in charge of managing a team, deadlines/projects, and animal needs on a daily basis.



"I enjoy meeting new people/networking and discussing rhino management issues. Oftentimes these discussions happen at workshops, conferences, and on professional online forums."

Congratulations to Angie Snowie, Cody Cseplo, and Cassy Kutilek, on their re-elections!

The BOD is dedicated to ensuring that IRKA progresses toward its goals and is accountable to the membership. As an organization, we need all BOD input to improve the future for all species of rhinoceros as well as directly addressing conservation, education and managed care issues.

Farewell Stephanie!

On behalf of IRKA BOD, I am extending a special note of thanks to Stephanie Richmond, our Secretary Extraordinaire!



Stephanie's contributions as IRKA's secretary for the last eight years have been invaluable. She has guided and recorded all of the critical documentation of numerous workshops and board meetings, for which we are deeply grateful. Her work has significantly improved the efficiency of our organization, allowing us to share projects and information seamlessly. Her instrumental role in transforming our documentation system from binders to computers and Google Drive, bringing us into the 21st century, is truly commendable.

Her enthusiasm and dedication to her role showed in every project she touched, including the initiation of IRKA merchandise. She was invaluable at workshops, helping with everything from planning and documentation to having spare hands to help wherever and whenever needed.

We will miss your calm and composure at our meetings - always having a word of wisdom to help guide a decision for our group. Always ready with a smile and *"How can I help?"* Your enthusiasm, energy, and positive attitude will be sorely missed.

At our last board meeting in June, we decided to show Stephanie our love and appreciation with a commissioned piece of artwork of her most beloved black rhino! Thank you, Stephanie, for all your hard work over the years, which will enable future

BOD members to access our history and share information with ease.

We look forward to your continued support of all things rhino and IRKA. We wish you the very best in your future endeavor's!!!

With all our love! The BOD



Christine Bobko
The Rhinory

World Rhino Day Fundraiser

Limited edition Bonfire shirts

With approximately 50 individuals left on the planet, and exclusively found in the Ujung Kulon National Park in Java, Indonesia, the **critically endangered** Javan rhino is on the verge of extinction.

The International Rhino Keeper Association (IRKA) is comprised of rhino keepers from around the world, and we need your help to save the Javan rhino.

We have designed a limited edition graphic for our Bonfire t-shirt and hoodie campaign to raise funds to support the International Rhino Foundation's **Javan rhino conservation program**

**SAVING A SPECIES TOGETHER --
WE MUST BE THE CHANGE!**



Funds raised could go toward one or more of the following essential projects:

- **Rhino Protection and Monitoring:** anti-poaching, snare removal, location and identification of rhinos, identify and remediation of threats (disease, invasive species, human-wildlife conflict).
- **Habitat Management and Establishment of Future Habitats:** invasive plant species control, human encroachment control, investigation of new habitat locations to support a second Javan rhino population in Indonesia.
- **Community Engagement and Empowerment:** supporting local communities to earn a living without the need of exploitation of wildlife, empowering women to become entrepreneurs.

The Bonfire campaign for IRKA's World Rhino Day will start on
September 22nd and run through October 6th.
It is LIMITED.

Once the campaign ends that's it, so be sure to get yours before October 6th!
We will be offering Premium Unisex T-shirts, Women's Fitted T-shirts, Youth Unisex T-shirts and Hoodies all in five color options.

[Buy Now](#)

For more information about the Javan rhino conservation program please visit the IRF website www.rhinos.org.
The mission of the IRKA is to promote professional expertise to develop and share the best practices for managed rhino care and contribute to conservation.
Check us out at <https://www.rhinokeeperassociation.org/>

Thank you for your support!

*Animal Response Ropes Teams
November 10th Webinar*



Join us for a discussion on different techniques to maneuver large animals during sedation procedures and emergency response.
The conversation will be led by Allison Liu and other members of Disney's rope team.

Registration is free for professional members

Keeper Professional Development

at the San Diego Safari Park

In May, I had the privilege of spending time at San Diego Safari Park, and the experience was both educational and extremely valuable. One of the highlights was the opportunity to learn directly from the keepers at the Rhino Rescue Center. As someone who trains rhinos and helps with ultrasounds at my facility, I found it helpful to observe their techniques firsthand. I gained valuable insights into some of the common challenges they face and the techniques they employ, which has inspired me to explore ways to enhance the ultrasound and aftercare processes at my facility.



I was impressed by their ability to train their rhinos in the field, even though they live in large crashes and with other species. This experience demonstrated that training is possible even when direct access to the animals is limited. It also gave me a renewed perspective and deeper appreciation for the work we do at my own institution. No matter the size or scope of the organization, there are universal challenges, such as the constant need to maintain cleanliness.



This trip to the San Diego Safari Park was an invaluable learning experience that has left me with ideas and ways to improve the practices at my facility. I highly recommend that others take this opportunity and do professional development through the IRKA.

Jazzmin Wipf
Potter Park Zoo

RHINO KEEPER WORKSHOP 2025

**May 18th-21st at
Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium**



Early Bird Registration 8/10-10/1, 2024

Regular Registration 10/2-1/15, 2025

Late Registration 1/15-2/15, 2025



Register today



**Do you have something exciting to share with our members?
We are accepting abstracts for posters and presentations now.**

Scholarships available through IRKA

Visit the [website](#) for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities



The volunteer committee would like to thank all the amazing volunteers who have come forward to get involved and help IRKA since the committee's inception. Thanks to their efforts, we are making strides in improving social media experiences and keeping the website relevant with the latest information and content. We are also continuing our volunteer partnership with the International Rhino Foundation, providing research on special projects.

Volunteer Opportunities include:

Webinar content curation

Facility focus curation

Video content for training/enrichment

For more information contact:

Jason Faessler at jfaessler@nashvillezoo.org or Jade Tuttle at jade.tuttle@nczoo.org

We can always use content for our social media sites!

Anyone interested in helping out can contact Pat Fountain at pfountain@ingham.org



Correspondences

Births:

San Diego Zoo Safari Park ----- male GOH calf
 Werribee Open Range Zoo ----- male SWR "Jabulani"
 Lunaret Zoo ----- SWR calf
 Taronga Western Plains ----- male Southern black calf

Deaths:

Indianapolis Zoo ----- male SWR "Spike"
 Whipsnade Zoo ----- female GOH "Beluki"
 Cameron Park Zoo ----- male SWR "Jabbon"

Transfers:

Wilderness Wildlife Center received male SWR "Edward" from San Diego Wildlife Park
 Zoo Miami received GOH male "Kiran" from the Toronto Zoo
 Rotterdam Zoo received male black "Malte" from Zoo Magdeburg
 Zoo Frankfurt received male black "Taco" from Kolner Zoo
 Woburn Zoo received male "Granvill" from West Midland Safari Park and female "Azeeza" from Safari Zoo
 Taronga Western Plains Zoo and Monarto Safari Park exchanged bull SWR;
 "Satara" is now in Dubbo and "Umfana" is now in Monarto
 Cleveland Metroparks Zoo received female black "Azizi" from Pittsburgh Zoo

New Members

Alexis Dufilho Williamson	----- Louisville Zoo
Clarece Willett	----- Mesker Park Zoo
Aaron Gabriel	----- Lion Country Safari
Melanie Vasquez	----- Lion Country Safari
Heather Wright	----- Pheonix Zoo
Dominique Bond	----- Disney's Animal Kingdom
Julia Morgan	----- Disney's Animal Kingdom
Rebecca Franklin	----- Disney's Animal Kingdom
Emily Kinsel	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Kelsey McLean	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Manuela Figueroa	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Cookie Gritus	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Heather Tripp	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Logan Popp	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Lisbeth Pisias	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Saralyn Johnson	----- San Diego Zoo Wildlife
Alliance	
Marie Brakenbury	----- Georgia Safari Conservation Park



New Conservation Partner



Conservation Partners are conservation organization or zoological institution which supports rhino conservation in accordance with the objectives and purpose of the IRKA. These partnerships often provide discounts for the supporting institution . It is important that as the IRKA grows we continue to garner the support from all facilities that are responsible for the protection and management of rhinoceros. We would like to extend our appreciation for the support from the following institutions, and hopefully we can add your zoo to this growing list! If you or your institution are interested in becoming a

Conservation Partner, please visit:

[Support IRKA](#)

Platinum Conservation Partners



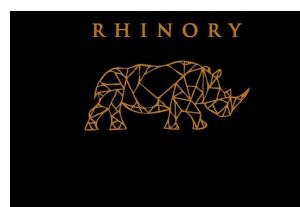
IRKA Partners





2024 Conservation Partners

POTTER PARK



Conservation Sponsors



IRKA | C/O Busch Gardens-Sara Wunder 3605 E . Bougainvillea Ave. | Tampa , FL 33612 US

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