



The Explorers Club Northern California Chapter

Also available at our web site: <http://www.explorersnorca.org>

**FRIDAY March 27, 2020 Meeting CANCELLED
DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**
Future meetings to be announced

FOLLOWING THE RHINOCEROS - FROM AFRICA TO ASIA

Dr. Robert R. Griffith MN'16. Presented Friday, 28 February 2020.

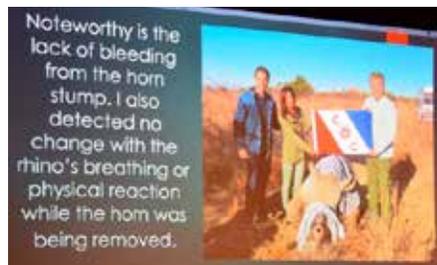
On Friday evening, 28 February the Chapter heard from an explorer, Dr. Robert Griffith MN'16 about the fate of the African and Indian rhinoceros and the process of dehorning them as a way to protect them from poachers. For centuries the horn of the rhinoceros has been regarded as an aphrodisiac by Asian and African cultures, and the subject of modest rhino hunting to obtain the marketable horn. In modern times, however, as concern about the preservation of the species led to rhino protection by law, the result has been a remarkable increase in the price that such a commodity can bring on the international black market. This means an increased threat against the rhino population; procedures to remove a rhino's horn, the primary target of the poacher, have been established as a way to protect the life of the animal. As a maxillofacial surgeon, Dr. Griffith has taken an interest in the dehorning procedures as practiced in order to provide training in medical skills valuable for safely performing the procedures.



The present situation in Africa is that the preserves are hard put to protect their rhinos. The poachers are poor, operating in secret, living in the jungle on sugar and water, until a rhino target wanders their way. The objective of the dehorners is to remove the horns so there is no reason for the poacher to kill the rhino. The irony is that before the laws were passed to protect

the rhino, the killing of the animal for the horn was a small operation. When the laws were passed, the perceived value of the horn on the black market sky-rocketed, and thousands of animals were slaughtered for the horns.

A mature rhino horn can weigh as much as 9 lbs, worth \$300,000 on the black market, and is sought after for ornamentation as well as perceived aphrodisiac effect and health benefits. Recovery of rhino urine is also sought after as a skin treatment. A separate motive to hunt the rhino is the prestige that comes with the use of the black rhino hide in some countries as a decoration on the handles of such tools as a knife. China is the primary market for the horn powder; Yemen is one of the countries that values black rhino hide for prestige.



The dehorning process starts with a helicopter team tracking and herding a target rhino to a safe landing place for the helicopter where the animal is sedated with a dart shot from the helicopter. When the animal is unconscious, one of the primary activities is to monitor the breathing of the animal to assure that it remains healthy. If problems are detected, the animal gets a shot similar to what is administered to drug overdoses to bring them out of the sedation. The two horns are carefully sawn off with a battery powered hand saw and carefully packed and taken to a governmental bank vault for storage. The rhino grows replacement horns in a couple of years.



Von Hurston

The white rhino of India is revered and hence well protected; there also, the horn is highly valued for its reputed aphrodisiac properties, although it is smaller than that of the African rhino and hence not as valuable. It also has more developed lips that provide better grazing control.

Dr. Robert R. Griffith is a retired Diplomat of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. He served in the United States Army Reserve with a discharge rank of Lt. Col. He has had a life-long interest in the outdoors and wildlife, as a wide-eyed seven year old becoming particularly fascinated with the rhinoceros after seeing the movie *Hatari!*, which prominently featured rhinos.

A strong advocate for animal conservation, Dr. Griffith was curious about the concept of rhino dehorning as an adjunct to preservation of the species, traveling to South Africa and listening to people struggling with the horror of poaching on a daily basis. After multiple interviews and seeing the dehorning approach in action, he became a believer, and now works to educate others about this addition to the overall effort to save these magnificent animals. Upon returning home, he has continued his relationship with the rhino reserve in Africa by sending much needed medical supplies.

Some of the Attendees at Friday 28th February meeting.



Annette Griffith

Jimmy Friedman, Barbara Berg, Cheryl Leonard, Bill Phillips, Char Rygh



Annette Griffith

Just about everybody



Von Hurson

Bobby Strawbridge, Kim Chambers



Annette Griffith

Paul Freitas, Joyce Chang, Chair Lesley Ewing, James Friedman, Wendy Crowder, Speaker Griff Griffith



Von Hurson

Barbara Berg, Annette Griffith, Bill Phillips



Annette Griffith

Bill Phillips, George Wade, Speaker Griff Griffith, Anders Jepsen, Jim Hurson

ON THE CRUISE SHIP AND AFTERWARD: A QUARANTINE TALE

(Dispatch from Rick and Aldeana Saber, on the Diamond Princess and in Texas)

To put to rest the rumors that the virus caught up with us forcing yet another quarantine or hospitalization in some remote, hidden government hideaway, **WE ARE NOW HOME!**

Our final hurrah was not terribly dramatic but did face a few unusual hurdles. All 142 of our surviving group were expecting release starting early morning of 02 March, then a leisurely drive from our enclosed quarters to either San Antonio Airport or a secret drop-off location in the City not known to the hoard of reporters dogging our group. The “Last Supper”, which choice of cuisine we all voted on was delivered on the 1st of March. Spirits were high as all readied for departure to homes all across America. With packing complete we rejoiced knowing our freedom was but hours away.

The Mayor of San Antonio had other plans which he dumped on our CDC overseers. Early dawn was greeted with the regular call of Reveille blasting over the speaker system on this enormous base.....at precisely 0545. With great enthusiasm we all arose and awaited word on preplanned bus departures, three of which sat awaiting our groups depending on flight departures. Promptly at 0600, the final medical checks were given by doctor teams..who also delivered an ominous message, “be prepared for a message to be delivered sometime before 0800 by CDC.” Half an hour later, we sadly observed the three buses slowly pull out of our camp and leave the base.

The message delivered by our CDC staff was short and blunt: we were on stand down until further notice. Admiral Knight stated that the Mayor had issued a “TRO” or temporary restraining order keeping us in confinement until all passed three tests displaying negative results. CDC immediately deployed Federal lawyers to fight the action and have us released immediately as our Federally ordered quarantine expired at midnight, thus we were free to leave. His orders prohibited us from entering San Antonio. As we were on a Military Air base, the Mayor had no power to confront us directly.

One of our passengers, a senior Lawyer whose expertise revolved around issues such as this said he was instigating legal actions under a class action suit claiming “unlawful confinement” aimed at the Mayor and said he would represent any of us, pro bono, who wished representation. Forty couples in our group immediately signed up. The best suggestion I heard on the open line of our conference call was to request Military assistance in form of an emergency airlift by one of the dozens of heavy AF Galaxy aircraft we observed flyover our buildings daily practicing touch and go’s on Lackland’s field, hoping for a mercy flight conveying us to a “Friendly State” with available commercial airlift to our homes from there. Instead, the behind the scenes rhubarb carried on throughout the day and into the night. The night of 2 March rolled into early morning of the 3rd, the familiar sound of Reveille sounded and word was passed that we had but minutes to pack and await imminent departure. We were told that a Federal judge had abated the Mayors decree; we were free.

No one questioned that staying around waiting for the next round was worthy of consideration! Buses returned and under the cover of dim daylight we were hustled through the gauntlet of processing tables where the issued iPhones were returned, orders for CDC release were issued to each of us, gifts from the City, the VA to Vets, and hugs all around from our former keepers, medical staff and even the Admiral showed each of us that “Let my People Go” was the mornings message. With little added fanfare we were checked and rechecked for passports, destinations, and sign offs, given green wrist bands for boarding and carefully married to our luggage for the 35 min trip to San Antonio Airport via a devious route that kept us mostly on base and out of the S.A. police eyes. At the airport, we were each assigned several burly assistants who gathered our luggage, guarded us from the Press corps hovering nearby and protected each of us through check-in, TSA, even up to the flight gates, not leaving until the flight departed.

Aldeana and I had PS (positive space paid for by Princess) to Houston where we connected to a B-777 onward to SFO with 140 vacant seats which we boarded using employee passes. A fast flight, we arrived thirty minutes early, headed to baggage claim where a NBC Camera crew met and interviewed me as our close friend Mia Pedroli gathered us and baggage and drove us tired puppies to our home where we were greeted by a dozen plants, flowers, gift baskets, Welcome Home signs, flags, even a sixpack of Corona adorned with a face mask. We crashed into bed around 2300 thus ending a fully post-cruise extended odyssey we wouldn’t wish on anyone.

We cannot thank you enough, so many of you, for your ongoing moral support, humor, well-wishes, even small contributions to our secret Voodoo Bar housing the healing waters.

Read the fine print when signing on for a cruise.

Beware of Post Cruise surprises.

Capt. Rick Saber MN’01 and Aldeana Saber



**HONOR ROLL
Paid Up Dues 2020**

MEMBERS

Alexander, James
Alexander, Linda
Allan, James
Austin, Jenifer
Ballou, Philip
Beebe, Morton
Berg, Barbara
Blake, Richard
Boothe, Joan
Carter, Susan
Chambers, Kimberley
Chang, Joyce
Chase, H. Keith
Chirurg, James "Thom"
Cohn, Francesca
Cook, Sandra
Dana, Don
Dehmel, Richard
Diggles, Michael
Dolan, Thomas
Ellis, Scott
Estey, Sue
Ewing, Lesley
Fox, Susan
Freitas, Anna
Freitas, Paul
Friedman, James
Hemming, Peter
Hermalun, Brendan
Heydorn, William
Heyneman, Donald
Higgins, Robert J.
Holmes, Robert
Horne, William
Jake, Krist
Jepsen, Anders
Kelley, James
Klein, Ronald
Lapham, Ellen
Laverty, Laurence
Leonard, Cheryl
Mangus, Rodney
McCown, George
Meniketti, Marco
Nishimine, Kendall
O'Kane, Teresa
Prigoff, Jim
Ross, Sandra Miller
Roush, Col. John
Schmidt, Wendy
Smith, Steve
Straka, Bill
Vasquez-Lavado, Silvia
Velivela, Vignan
Worden, Simon
Wren, Sherry

SIRDARS

Blumberg, Marion
Boothe, Barry
Brandt, James
Cohn, Lawrence
Crowder, Wendy
Dolan, Kathy
Elkus, Nancy
Fish, Sandra
Friedman, Christen
Heyneman, Louise
Jepsen, Kathy
Judd, Kathy
Longo-Cohn, Mary
Mani, Cassandra
McLoughlin, Liz
Nikas, A. James III
O'Keeffe, Bonny
Patterson, Tom
Schmieder, Kay
Stewart, Zach
Straka, Barbara
Weiman, Mark

FROM THE CHAIR

We live in changing times. When I wrote this message last week, I was planning to go to ECAD and I wrote about some of the things that happen over that weekend. ECAD has been postponed till October 10th, our March dinner meeting has been cancelled, and future events will be planned month-to-month.



Some of the work parts of ECAD weekend will likely continue, but by teleconference rather than in person. I anticipate that there will still be a Chapter Chairs' meeting and if so, I'll report soon on what happens there. As preparation for the Chapter Chairs' meeting, several of the officers and board members helped with our chapter's annual report. It's a summary of what happened in 2019 and frankly, we did a bunch of fun things. If you want to see our 'year-in-review', it is posted on our website.

Our big chapter news is that we will say a brief goodbye to the Dolan Center and what meetings we have through the end of May will be held at the United Irish Cultural Center. The Cultural Center is in the western part of the city, near the ocean. It's not as central as the Dolan Center, but fairly easy to find. This is not a permanent move and James Barnes is hoping that we come back to Dolan in the fall – but perhaps as one of several locations rather than as an every month occurrence. I've already heard from folks in the East Bay that the Irish Cultural Center will be at least a 90 minute trip, so while it is probably a better option for those from the Peninsula and the North Bay, it's not ideal for everyone.

We are also gearing up for a field trip – the topic for the first field trip this year is likely to be expedition medicine, led by Dr. Paul Freitas, with assistance from other medical trained and wilderness experienced chapter members. It's been too long since our last field trip and many kudos to Jimmy Friedman, MN'19 for helping with field trips and starting to get one set up so quickly. There are still some details to work out, and since it will involve some hands-on training, we need to make sure it will really be safe to join together as a group. Notices will be sent out as soon as the date, time, location and such are settled.

In May, in addition to our regular dinner program, we hope to be able to hold our annual meeting. Our three elected directors, Jim Hurson, MN '10, Paul Freitas, MN'10 and Sandra Cook, MN'16 have served their first three-year term. Jim Hurson has already said that he does not feel that he is in a position to run for a second term, so we are looking for one or more people who want to engage in the chapter to run for the Board. If you are interested in nominating yourself or recommended someone else for the Board, please let our Secretary, Joyce Chang (Joycechang03@gmail.com) or me know.

Finally, we are going ahead with plans for a summer picnic. If you have thoughts about locations or want to volunteer to help, please get in touch with Karin Baye (sbooks10@gmail.com) or me.

Lesley Ewing, FN'93

**EXPLORERS CLUB ANNUAL DINNER CANCELLED
DUE TO COVID-19 VIRUS**

FROM TAGS TO RICHES

The retrospective photography exhibition of graffiti/urban art collected by explorer **James Prigoff FN'67** that opened on Friday, February 7th at the First Amendment Gallery, 1000 Howard Street. in San Francisco provided a glimpse of the world wide nature of urban art (as it is now known). Many of the attendees who gathered to hear Jim Prigoff MN'67 seemed to be individuals who, in their younger days, had actually been the artists who drew the images. One image not included was that of Joni Mitchel singing the song that was rewritten to be "The day that Democracy died".



March 2020 Issue
Northern California Chapter
Established 1973



CHAPTER OFFICERS & TEAM

Chair: Lesley Ewing FN'93
chair@explorersnorca.org
510-459-0858
Vice Chair: Tom Dolan MN'14
tdolan@outdoorstorms.com
Secretary: Joyce Chang MN'17
Treasurer: Anna Freitas MN'17
Treasurer@explorersnorca.org
Webmaster: Mike Diggles FN'92
Newsletter: Anders Jepsen FN'03
ajviking@aol.com
925-322-8893

Chapter Calendar of Events

(Venues are identified as soon as known.)

2020

March 27 Cheryl Leonard
Found Objects and Music .TO BE RESCHEDULED
April 24 Dr. Paul Auerbach
Enviromedics Irish Cultural Center
May 24 Dr. Sandra Cook
Foreign Devils on Silk Road Irish Cultural Center
June TBA

2018

October 26 Sir Richard Feachem
Shrinking the World Malaria Map Dolan
November 30 Leon McCarron
Exploration by Walking Dolan
December 16 Holiday Party
. Home of Rick and Aldeana Saber

2019

January 25 Pat Scannon
Recent Discoveries Dolan
February 22 James Nestor
Outdoor adventure. Dolan
March 22 Paul Saffo/Richard Weise
Dynamics of Change. Aquarium of the Bay
April 26 David McGuire
Swimming with Sharks. Dolan
May 31 ANNUAL MEEETING plus . . . Dr. Paul Hunt
Hannibal". Dolan
June 9: Picnic
. Tilden Park
September 27 Robert Anderson
Material Science & Forensic Engineering Creola
October 25. Michelle Westmorland
Headhunters Revisited. Dolan
November 22 Dr. Barbara Bekins
Windows into Subduction Dolan
December 15 Holiday Party
. Home of Rick and Aldeana Saber

2020

January 24 Dr. Jo Anne Van Tilburg
Easter Island Dolan
February 28 Dr. Robert Griffith
Endangered Rhinos Dolan

CHAPTER DIRECTORS

Directors (Past Chairs)

Joan Boothe MN'07
Lesley Ewing FN'93
Lee Langan FN'99
Anders Jepsen FN'03

Alan Nichols FN'84
Bob Schmieder FE'86
Rick Saber MN'01
Stephen Smith FN'96

Elected Directors

Jim Hurson MN'10
Sandra Cook MN'16
Paul Freitas MN'10

Chapter Email Addresses and Chapter Phone Number

chair@explorersnorca.org
vicechair@explorersnorca.org

treasurer@explorersnorca.org
secretary@explorersnorca.org

webmaster@explorersnorca.org
fieldtrips@explorersnorca.org

Late arrival phone number for Monthly meetings at the Dolan Law Center
The door will be locked and unattended after 7:15 p.m.

MEETING VIDEOS

Our Chapter now records all of our dinner meetings. Videos of recent speakers' presentations are available on the Chapter Website.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE CHAPTER?

There are lots of tasks that come up during the course of a year: speakers, meetings, field trips, membership, newsletter, etc. A good place to get started is by volunteering to serve on a committee. Talk to any of the Chapter Officers or Directors for more information.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER 2020 DUES

The Northern California Chapter dues are paid for the calendar year. Dues are now due for 2020.

Sirdars have annual dues of \$50.00. In addition to their national dues, members have optional dues of \$25.00. Dues can be paid by check payable to The Northern California Chapter of The Explorer's Club or by paypal. If you use paypal, there will be a \$2.00 fee for the service. If you pay by check, please mail your check to Anna Freitas, 161 Camino Posada, Walnut Creek, CA 94595.

Please note that Northern California Chapter dues can be tax-deductible depending on your individual tax situation.

To recognize those who pay their dues, we include an honor roll of paid sirdars and members on the monthly newsletter.

**MONTHLY DINNER MEETING FOR MARCH
OF THE
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER
OF THE EXPLORERS CLUB
HAS BEEN CANCELLED
DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS PANDEMIC**

**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR
ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FUTURE EVENTS.**