

Northwood Elementary Questions for OMG:

Q.) If cutting off the horns of rhinos does not do anything for you, why do people do it?

A.) *The tradition of using Rhino horns for supposed medicinal value dates back thousands of years. Ancient beliefs state that sprinkling ground up Rhino horn on your food would cure all types of medical problems but modern studies have proven them all to be false. Just like the old 'witch-doctor' would concoct strange mixtures to ward off demons, these also never worked, yet years of tradition has kept the belief and practice alive. The only way we are ever going to change this is through education.*

Q.) Why do people kill all the animals?

A.) *That is a tough question to answer since the reasons are different around the world. Some do it because they were brought up to believe that animals are less important than humans, some do it because they think it will heal them or make them younger, while some do it for greed. They see an opportunity to make money by killing an animal so they do. The best way to stop that from happening is to never buy such items. As they say, 'when the buying stops, the killing will too'.*

Q.) How many rhinos are left in the world and how many are killed each year?

A.) *It is estimated that there are around 25,000 Rhinos left in the wild. Each year the number of Rhinos killed by poachers increases 30% to 40%. At that rate, Rhinos will become extinct in our lifetime. Some species numbers are already so low that the species can no longer be saved. Last year over 650 Rhinos were reported killed by poachers. All of us have to get involved and do whatever we can to help them. That is why we (Olivia and Carte)r started the Rhino Letter Writing Campaign.*

Q.) Why do they kill rhinos?

A.) *The main reason that poachers kill rhinos is for their horns. In parts of the Far East, ancient traditions used ground up Rhino horn to supposedly cure different kinds of sicknesses. It was something that was hard to come-by so only people who were rich could afford to buy it. Now that the economy is changing in parts of Asia, there are more people who can now afford to buy Rhino horns. Many do this just to show off the fact that they have money, which is making the price for the horns higher and higher. Right now, an ounce of ground up Rhino horn is valued at more than an ounce of gold.*

Q.) Why do they treat animals so badly, why can't they just leave them alone?

A.) *That too is a hard question to answer but the main reason seems to be because people aren't educated enough about this. We are not saying that people who hurt or poach animals are not intelligent, they usually just don't know any better. The same reason is why someone steps on an insect. They were probably brought up to see insects as a pest or a nuisance or something to be afraid of, yet every creature on this planet has its purpose. If you were brought up to believe that all animals on this planet are here to serve man, then you too would have little or no feeling for animals, and more than likely, when you have kids someday, they would also believe that. If on the other hand you can teach kids the value of life and that we must respect all living things, then they will probably pass on that knowledge to their kids.*

Q.) Dear Carter and Olivia, are lions about to be extinct and if so, how are they dying?

A.) *That is a great question. Yes most lions are now being classified as endangered because their numbers are getting less and less. Lions are poached much like the Rhino for their body parts. Again, in many Asian cultures animal parts are considered to have magical powers so the people who can afford them and have more money are buying them. Lions are also losing the battle because of trophy hunting and because of the continued loss of their habitat. The more man takes over their habitat, the less area these poor animals have to live a normal life. Issues like a lack of food and in breeding are having horrible effects on the species.*

Q.) Do elephants re-grow their tusks after they are cut off?

A.) *No unfortunately they do not. There are some conservation groups who are experimenting with metal replacement tusks that can be applied to those elephants that have had their tusks safely removed by veterinarians in an effort to make them less attractive to poachers. The tough part is that the replacement tusks can only be applied when the original tusk has grown out a certain amount. The problem with that is that poachers don't wait to kill an elephant until it is mature; they kill any elephant they can find with even a little tusk.*

Q.) Are sea turtles extinct?

A.) *No, so far they are not. Of the seven types of sea turtles left on the planet, six of the species are considered endangered and the seventh is currently on the threatened list. The biggest threats facing sea turtles are being caught up in fishing nets and environmental issues such as plastic pollution. Sea turtles have been around for millions of years, yet unfortunately, unless we all get involved with trying to find solutions to the issue, they will not make it another 500 years.*

Q.) Are your cheetahs friendly?

A.) *Not really. You must always remember that any animal with a mouth can and will most likely bite. The cheetahs that we adopt each year are being taken care of by an animal sanctuary. The animals are protected and fed on a regular basis. Because they have become accustomed to seeing people and being fed on a regular basis, they will put up with us being around, but you must always remember that they are still wild animals and that they are carnivores (meat eaters) as well. We would never recommend that anyone try getting too close to a cheetah without being in the company of someone who knows him or her very well.*

Q.) Why did you start OMG?

A.) *We started OMG because we learned that there are many species that will simply go extinct unless someone gets involved with trying to save them. We love animals and we want our kids to have the same opportunity to enjoy them as we have. The only way we can do that is by getting involved.*

Q.) How much money do you have for the animals?

A.) *That's different depending on the species and on the particular campaign we are working on. In the case of the cheetahs, we have done several fundraising events, which usually allows us to send over a few thousand dollars each year to the Cheetah Rescue we work with. The Apps for Apes program we mentioned has allowed us to collect several iPads, which we donate to the various zoos that have orangutans. In cases like where we helped out during the Gulf oil spill, there we just collected animal rescue supplies and delivered them to the animal rescue organizations.*

Q.) How many sponsors do you have?

A.) *That also depends on the campaign we are working on. With our Rhino campaign, we currently do not have any sponsors but we do partner with a few organizations that help us get the word out. In the case of the Plastic Awareness Coalition, we now have over 70 partners. As a nonprofit organization, we are always seeking sponsors who can help us with our various campaigns.*

Q.) Is Africa the only place that there are animals that are in danger of becoming extinct or have gone extinct?

A.) *No. There are a lot of animals all over the world that are constantly being added to the endangered list or are being classified as extinct. We work right here in the USA with many organizations in an effort to help local animals from becoming extinct such as the North Atlantic Right Whale and the Black-footed ferret. BTW, do you know how the Right Whale got its name? When the early settlers discovered that they could harpoon whales for their meat and blubber etc, they set out to catch as*

many as they could for food. After years of hunting all types of whales, the fishermen found out that the Right Whales were easy to catch because they did not dive deep in the water once they were harpooned, instead they tended to stay on the surface where they could be easily chased and caught. They were named the Right Whale because it was the 'right' one to go after and have success catching them ;-)

Q.) How many animals have died (become extinct) this year?

A.) That is a question that no one can correctly answer. There are hundreds of animals that go extinct without anyone even noticing. We are also still discovering species that no one even knew existed until now. Sometimes we end up finding species in remote parts of the world that we once thought were extinct, yet years later they show up again. The list of endangered and recently extinct species is always changing. Sometimes a species can be classified as extinct in certain parts of the world but not in the entire world.

Q.) How do the animals get killed?

A.) Unfortunately man has come up with many ways to kill animals. Most of the animals that are currently listed as endangered are being killed from habitat destruction. This means that man is invading the space that these animals live in, and using the trees, or land or other things to benefit them. This can come in many forms but the results are usually the same. When a species no longer has room to grow and have families, they start competing amongst themselves for the limited remaining habitat and food sources and the weakest of the species will die off. In the case of 'wildlife trafficking', most of these animals are killed off in the quickest and least expensive way possible. It is sad but that is why educational programs such as ours are so important.

Q.) Why do people have to kill animals? They maybe just eat them or use them for decoration?

A.) Man developed an appetite for meat early on and that demand is ever growing, even though it has been proven that we could survive perfectly well without it. The issue of what is right is not one that anyone can make for someone else. Each person needs to decide what is right for him or her. As for the issue of killing for fun or for decorations, that is another issue that we hope our education program will help address. If we can show these types of people the value of the species to the ecosystem maybe we can convince them to stop.

Q.) How many rhinos are extinct?

A.) That depends on how far back in history that you want to go. I know that in the last 200 years, we have lost 3 species of Rhinos.

Q.) Why can't people just not kill animals?

A.) *As long as the world's population continues to grow out of control, the issue of man killing animals is not likely to go away. Even if a species is not bothering us today (such as the Mountain lion) eventually we will have taken away its entire natural habitat and forced the species to live amongst our communities where conflicts are bound to happen. As for the many other reasons people might kill animals (aside from the need to eat), education would again probably be the best way to address that issue.*

Q.) How do mommy rhinos help their babies with their horns because they are not very long?

A.) *That is a great question. Since Rhinos have no arms, they have to use whatever they can to help lift up their baby's. Since their horns (head) is the only part of their body, which is not needed to support their massive weight that is what they use. Mommy Rhinos also need their horns to fight off predators and or enemies. They use their horns to show the baby's how to pull bushes and shrubs out of the ground so they can get to the parts of the plants that they like to eat. Also, if the baby Rhino falls in a mud puddle and is too weak to get out, the mommy uses her horns to lift and push the baby back to safety.*

Q.) When they cut off the sharks fins why do they throw the sharks back in the water?

A.) *The shark fins are the only parts that people like to eat. It brings in the most money. If the fisherman kept the entire shark body on his boat, it would quickly fill up and leave him no room for collecting even more fins, so they just cut off what they need and throw the rest away. It is estimated that each year over 75-million sharks are killed for their fins. OMG supports Shark Finning bans and we have even signed on to legislation proposals that would ban restaurants in the USA to sell Shark Fin Soup. If you ever go to a restaurant that offers Shark Fin Soup on their menu, we encourage you to politely ask the manager to remove it from their menu.*

Q.) Are cheetahs the fastest animal on earth?

A.) *No, Cheetahs are the fastest animals on land. There are many bird species (such as hawks) that are faster and many fish species (such as the blue fin tuna), which are much faster.*

Q.) Why are so many people poaching animals?

A.) *Poaching is done primarily for greed (money). On one side you have the person that wants to buy the animal parts, they turn to a supplier who promises the end consumer (person like me and you) that they can get them whatever they need as long as they are willing to pay whatever it takes. Then the supplier looks for people who*

are poor and desperate for a few dollars and they offer them a little money to go and kill the animal. The person actually killing the animal is usually the one that is only doing this because they have no other way to feed their families. The person acting as the supplier and the end consumers are the ones that are causing entire species to go extinct.

Q.) What do they use the tigers' paws for?

A.) *Tiger paws are mainly used in Asia to make ancient medicines. Some of the paws are used as decorative art pieces and to show off to friends, etc. but most of the paws are used to make potions which typically have no proven medicinal value.*

Q.) Do you have any more animals you save?

A.) *Yes, we are involved in many different initiatives. We have been fighting to get the two remaining Rattlesnake roundups here in GA stopped. Last year we actually got the folks in Claxton GA to change their Rattlesnake Roundup to a Wildlife Festival where no snakes were killed. That was the first time they had even done that since they started the tradition over 46 years ago. We (Carter and Olivia) collected over 1,200 signatures on a petition to our Governor to try to make that happen and we had several meetings with the head of the GA DNR (Department of Natural Resources). We are very proud of that.*

Our Plastic Pollution campaign helps a lot of animals all over the world because we are teaching people to use less plastic, which means there is less in our environment for animals to accidentally eat.

As for animals that we save through adoptions, we (Olivia and Carter) currently help a Whale Shark, two Fruit Bats, an Orangutan, a baby Elephant, and a Chimpanzee. We also have seven rescue cats, three rescue dogs and a guinea pig named Rapunzel.

Q.) Do you know which zoo around this area that has an iPad orangutan?

A.) *Yes, we have already donated an iPad2 to the Atlanta Zoo. Next time you visit ask about the iPad Enrichment program. We also have a second iPad, which we will be delivering to the Nashville Zoo soon. We still need 12 more so if anyone is interested in donating a used iPad2, please send us a message and let us know. There are plenty of zoos still in need of one.*

Q.) Are all types of tigers endangered?

A.) *Yes, unfortunately they all are. There are two species that are starting to make a comeback in the small protected area where they now live but they are still not off the endangered list*

Q.) How do they kill a cheetah?

A.) *Cheetahs are usually shot by farmers. The cheetah's body is so slender that there usually is not enough meat on its body to serve as a food source so hunting for its meat is not the problem. Hunters typically shoot them to keep them away from their livestock.*

Q.) How do you teach an orangutan to use the iPad?

A.) *The process is actually fun to watch even though it takes a long time for them to realize that they are actually affecting what is happening on the screen. First you have to understand that they are far too powerful to just hand them the iPad, they would break it in a minute. Handlers at the zoo who are trained are working with the species, will hold the iPad through a cage so that they can only touch the screen with a single finger.*

The doctor/veterinarian working with the orangutan will place a video on the iPad that they recorded of the mother. They cover the video with a red square, which goes away when you touch that color. They then place a video that they took of the baby and place it under a blue square on the screen. Each day they allow the orangutan to come and touch the screen. After a few days, they start to realize which video appears when they touch a certain color.

The interesting thing to see is that after time, the mother will always come and touch the color that reveals the video of their babies and the babies always touch the color that reveals the video of their mother. Orangutans are very smart creatures.

Q.) Did Olivia get to hold the baby cheetah?

A.) *No, we never got to hold the baby cheetahs because when they are that small, the doctors/veterinarians want to be sure that they don't get sick from germs we might have on us at the time. Both of us did get to work in the kitchen where they mixed all the raw meat and blood with the medicine that needed to be added to the food and then go into the sanctuary area and feed the adult cheetahs. You can see all the cool pictures on our FaceBook page.*

Q.) Why do rhinos use their horns against other animals?

A.) *Since Rhinos do not have arms or hands, if they are attacked they have to use something to protect themselves. Since Rhinos are herbivores (which means that they eat vegetation) they do not attack other animals to eat them, they just use their horns for self-defense.*

Q.) Why if people have heard of this are they still killing them?

A.) *That is the beauty of education. The more we can teach people how bad it is to just kill animals, the more we can get them to realize that they need to stop. In many cases, treating animals badly and killing them without caring is something that takes generations to change. We (Olivia and Carter) are going to schools all over the world to teach kids so that when they grow up, they will know not to do the things that the previous generations may have done. It will take time but it is the only proven way to affect change.*

Q.) Why do baby rhinos die when they are separated from their mother?

A.) *Baby Rhinos rely on their mother for at least the first four years of their life. If the baby is at least that old, it will have learned enough to fend for itself. When poachers come in and just kill the mother and the baby is younger than four, it typically is not strong or smart enough to avoid trouble and it will die. Baby Rhinos have the same feelings as you and I. If their mothers are taken away from them, they actually get so sad, just like humans. Many are so sad and upset that their mother has been killed, that they actually give up trying to live. The pain is so strong that they no longer care to be alive. Unfortunately, veterinarians have only proven that they suffer from grief recently and most of the poachers are not aware of this fact. That is why educating everyone you see about such things is so important.*

Q.) Don't people also kill squid?

A.) *Yes, fisherman in places like Japan and other parts of Asia love to eat squid so they hunt/fish for as many as they can get. There are entire fleets of small fishing boats that will drop fishing lines with hundreds of hooks on them every night deep down in the ocean so they can catch as many as they can.*

Q.) Can't you just show the president about what you are doing and then maybe he/she could stop it? But why not?

A.) *We wish it were that easy. I am sure being President of an entire country has to be an overwhelming job with countless responsibilities. It is impossible for one person to handle all the responsibilities on his or her own. Many times, the President himself may not be aware of all the problems, that's why he has so many people working for them. We started the Letter Writing campaign for that exact reason. We want to be sure that President Zuma knows how bad the problem is and that he reads the letters from thousands of people around the world so he can see that everyone is begging him to get involved before it is too late.*

There is no guarantee that he will help save the Rhinos, we can only hope. Sometimes the very people who are the suppliers pay the President lots of money so that he doesn't get involved and if that President is one of those people who was brought up to not respect animals, then maybe he will not help but we can't just sit around and let

the species go extinct. That is why we are doing this and thanks to the help of each one of you, we are going to have plenty of letters to take to him.

Q.) Do they use cheetahs for their fur?

A.) Yes, trophy hunters do as well as a few of the locals living in Africa. Cheetah fur has a unique pattern to it so there are a few people who are willing to pay lots of money for it but luckily the demand is not high. Have you guys ever heard of a King Cheetah? Look it up on Google and check out the cool pattern they have on their fur. We actually got to feed a King Cheetah while in Africa. It was so cool since they are so rare.

Q.) Do they kill monkeys?

A.) Yes and lots of them. In the more remote areas, monkeys are killed for their meat. It is referred to as Bush-meat. The tribes that live way out in the middle of nowhere tend to have to eat whatever they can find. Also, there are some cultures that think that the hands of monkeys have healing powers and can ward off enemies so that is another reason they are killed.

Q.) How many animals have you adopted?

A.) We have a whale shark, two fruit bats, an orangutan, a baby elephant, and a chimpanzee. We also have seven rescue cats, three rescue dogs and a guinea pig named Rapunzel (we call her Punzi).

Q.) Are you helping plants? If so what kinds of plant are going extinct?

A.) Currently we are not working to help any particular plant species and we do not know all the types that are considered endangered. We do get involved in trying to stop deforestation in places like Borneo where they are stripping the land of all the natural vegetation so they can plant Palm Oil trees. Look up 'deforestation for the palm industry' and you will see what we mean. It is extremely sad. Not to mention every animal species that used to live there is also being wiped out, including the orangutans.

Q.) Do you help all of Africa's five most endangered animals?

A.) No, unfortunately we are a small family and there is only so much we can do at a time. We do work with several agencies in South Africa who are fighting to stop the Ivory Trade, which is killing tens of thousands of elephants each year. Leopards and lions are endangered because of habitat loss and trophy hunting. We do try to help out where ever we can.

Q.) What species of sharks are endangered?

A.) *The simple answer is “any shark with a fin is in danger.” Unfortunately the demand for shark fin is so high and keeps growing because of the people who are becoming more and more wealthy throughout parts of Asia. The more money that people make, the more they want to show off to their countrymen that they can now afford shark fin soup (which typically cost \$150.00 per cup of soup). The fishing methods used to catch sharks can not tell the difference of the type of shark that bites on the hooks so every species is in jeopardy.*

Q.) If poachers are illegal why don't poachers get arrested? Where did you learn all of this information?

A.) *Yes, poaching is illegal and if they are caught they are arrested and sometimes put in prison. Unfortunately, there are not enough law enforcement personnel to protect all the animals so most poachers go free. Typically, poachers are either well-trained military personnel or very poor locals who desperately need the money. I (Carter) want to ask President Zuma to take all the poachers who are poor locals and make them present our Rhino Presentation to at least 10 schools full of children. They would have to tell all the children what they did and how wrong it was. After doing that at 10 schools, we feel confident that they will finally be educated enough to know never to do that again.*

We learn about the various issues that we are involved with by reaching out to experts that work with different organizations and reading as much as we can. There are a lot of issues that need caring people to help out and when we started out tackling a problem, we know that the best way to make a difference is through education and to do that you have to be educated on the issue yourself.

Q.) Do you have any future campaigns? If so, what are they?

A.) *Yes, we are working to try and find a Congressman who will help us fight the issue of Ocean Acidification. There is so much pollution (carbon) from all the oil and coal we burn that the carbon, which comes from the burnt fossil fuel, ends up in our air and in our oceans. We use so much fossil fuel in the US that the amount of carbon that is put into our air is more than the oceans can handle. The increased carbon is throwing off the pH balance in our oceans, which is making the water too acidic. I know all this sounds complicated but it means that the water is no longer balanced the way all the species in the ocean need it to be to survive. The increased carbon is killing off 30% of our coral reefs around the world and causing shellfish to grow to only 40% of their normal size.*

Ocean acidification is causing all kinds of problems, which currently are not being regulated. We want someone to help us get a law passed that will allow certain organizations to create regulations/laws that will limit the amount of carbon released each day in America so we can try and keep the balance of the ocean.

We are also still working on trying to stop the last Rattlesnake Round-up here in GA, which is still being held in Whigham GA.

Carter is working with the folks at the O'Charley's restaurants in an effort to get them to stop offering plastic bags for their 'To-Go' orders. They are looking at a reusable bag for all 'To-Go' orders and then offering the customers a free beverage if they bring the bag back for their next 'To-Go' orders.

Olivia is working to try and get Chick-fil-A to stop using Styrofoam cups for all their beverages and she is trying to get Subway to stop offering plastic sandwich sleeves to all orders that are eaten on site.

Both of us are trying to get GameStop to stop offering plastic bags with your purchase since 95% of what you buy at GameStop can be hand-carried out.

We are both also working to try and ban Shark Finning and stop restaurants from serving Shark Fin soup.

Q.) How did you come up with your organization's name?

A.) *When Olivia was seven and Carter was eight-and-a-half, we sat down to try and come up with a name for the organization they wanted to start. Olivia came up with names like "Please feed me, or Please adopt me" and Carter came up with the name "Save me for the next generation". As they were studying about endangered species, we (mom and dad) kept hearing them both say "Oh My Gosh" or "OMG," every time they learned about another species in trouble. Since OMG was the emotion that the kids were feeling as they learned more, we decided it would be great if we could use those letters in the company name. So combining Carter's message of saving species for the next generation, we came up with One More Generation.*

Q.) How did you adopt the cheetahs?

A.) *With the Internet, it is fairly easy to adopt animals from anywhere in the world. We have been adopting Cheetahs from the Ann Van Dyk Cheetah Center in South Africa for years now. We encourage kids everywhere to adopt as many animals as possible because that helps the agencies who care for these animals be able to continue to do so.*

Q.) About how many animals get killed from plastic pollution?

A.) *That is a question that no one knows for sure. It is estimated that 100,000 Marine mammals and over 1-Million Sea Birds die each year from eating plastic. That does not include the countless animals such as cows in India, which are all estimated to have 20 to 30 kilos of plastic in their first stomach (try to watch the video "Plastic Cow" but only after you have your parents permission).*

There are many whales, dolphins, and fish that swallow plastic and just die and sink to the bottom of the ocean without anyone knowing what happened. It is impossible to know for sure how many animals die each year. The only thing we can do is try to educate everyone about the issue and hope that they all try to use less plastic and only use plastic that can be recycled.

Q.) When you give animals mayonnaise if they spit it out, does it still work?

A.) *Yes, mayonnaise is thicker than the oil. Once it is squirted in the sea turtles mouth and into their stomachs, it takes a few minutes but their stomachs mix everything up and all of a sudden it starts to come out. The animal tries so hard to get it out that most of its stomach contents come out as well, which includes the oil.*

Q.) Why do people only kill helpless animals instead of harmful animals?

A.) *To answer that question, you would have to define what you mean by a 'harmful animals'. Most animals are fine if you leave them alone. Take a rattlesnake or a shark for example, they have been known to harm humans but they don't go and seek out humans. Against man, almost all animals are mostly helpless. People kill animals for many reasons, sometimes for food, sometimes for fun and sometimes for greed. The best way to address the issue of all of the senseless killing is through education. The more people know about the reason a species is on the planet, the less likely they will end up killing them.*

Q.) Why do cheetahs roar?

A.) *That is also a great question. Let me ask you this, if a cheetah, and a snow leopard were sitting at the table having a roaring contest, who would win? The answer is neither. Cheetahs and snow leopards don't actually roar like a lion. They make hissing sounds similar to a louder version of what a house cat does.*

Q.) Why are there only 60 Indian rhinos?

A.) *That is a sad situation. There are only 60 left because they have been poached to almost extinction. We keep taking away their natural habitat, which is providing them less places to hide so they are easier for the poachers to find and kill. These rhinos also live in remote areas where there are not a lot of large cities so it is also not noticed right away that there are less and less around because of poaching.*

Q.) Why do rhinos have horns?

A.) *That we do not know, that would be like asking why humans have thumbs. We know that evolution allows species to adapt so the species can survive and since rhinos*

have been around longer than man; it would be hard to say when they first developed horns or what they looked like thousands of years ago. We do know that they need their horns for many reasons which is why we need to fight to try and stop poachers and to educate the buyers of rhino horns so they realize that removing the horns do not make them healthier or smarter, it just kills the rhinos.

Q.) Why are rhinos fat?

A.) *Actually, Rhinos are not fat at all, they are just 'Big Boned' ;-) No seriously, rhinos are actually very lean animals. They look fat but their vegetarian diets ensure they stay fit and healthy. I am sure that rhinos at one point needed to be big and muscular to fend off enemies etc.*

Q.) What did you do to start off your animal passion?

A.) *I think the passion is always there, you just need to allow the passion to grow. In our case we both love animals and our parents always made sure we understood that animals were just like humans, they all have the right to be here and they all are just trying to survive and have families just like us.*

Q.) What do they do with the horns of the rhinos?

A.) *Rhino horns are chopped up in to smaller pieces (about the size of the teachers' erasers) and then ground up into a fine powder, which is then sprinkled onto food and beverages.*

Q.) How did you start OMG? Did you just tell everyone and they let you start a business?

A.) *Yes, kind of. We kept telling our parents and other family members that we wanted to save animals and make a difference. At first they all told us that they liked that we cared and told us that someday when we grow up, we could follow our passion. But after awhile, they started to realize that we were serious and that we wanted to start now, not wait until we were older. Eventually they told us that as long as we worked very hard and never complained about all the work we would have to do, they would help us.*

Q.) Who started the OMG program?

A.) *Carter and I started it. Once we started researching about animals that needed help and started reaching out to other organizations that were also helping that species, we were able to figure out how we could help. We started by picking campaigns that were local and as we learned more and more, we branched out to start*

helping around the world. The best way to help animals is by educating yourself on the issues they face, talking to experts who know what needs to be done, and then going out and educating everyone you meet about the issue. Before long, you will have motivated lots of people who are now also working to help the same species you set out to help. The key is that you have to be flexible. We started out only trying to help animals, but along the way we learned that you have to also take care of the environment, so we added our environmental outreach programs as well.

Q.) How did you keep the cheetah still?

A.) At first the cheetahs were running around like crazy. It was a bit scary at first but after we fed them, most of them started to settle down. There was one (her name is Scarlet) that actually lay down beside me and started licking my arms, my face and even my leg. It was fun, but it also hurt a little because their tongues are so rough. BTW, do you know why their tongues are so rough? It is so they can pull the fur or feathers off their prey before they eat it since their stomachs can't digest fur or feathers.

Q.) How long does it take for you to get to the place where the animal is?

A.) Once we landed in Johannesburg, we had to drive about 3.5 hours to get to the animal sanctuary where our cheetahs live. It was a 16-hour flight from Atlanta to Johannesburg, South Africa.

Q.) Do poachers sneak up on the rhinos when they are trying to kill them?

A.) Yes, they usually do. The rhino's eyesight is very poor but their sense of smell is great so poachers always attack from down-wind. They can get fairly close without being seen and then they can shoot them.

Q.) Do rhinos like to kill people who are trying to kill them?

A.) Rhinos are like any other species on the planet, if they think you are trying to kill them, they are going to attack to defend themselves and their family. The unfortunate part is that poachers use guns so they can hurt or kill the rhinos before the rhino has a chance to try and hurt the poachers.

Q.) Do rhinos run fast?

A.) Yes they can run fast for short distances. If they were to chase you, you could not outrun them. The best thing to do if chased by a Rhino is to run from side to side. Rhinos can not turn very fast and their eyesight is bad so you might have a chance, just remember to stay down-wind.

Q.) How fast can the cheetahs go?

A.) *Cheetahs can run for short bursts at speeds over 60 miles per hour. Their claws cannot retract so they get excellent traction and can change direction instantly.*

Q.) Do you think it is hard to do your job?

A.) *Sometimes it is but I would never change a thing. Each day that we go to a school or a church or a scout troop etc, we hear all the great comments from kids and adults about how our work has helped them learn something new or given them the courage to try and make a difference themselves, and that makes it worthwhile. I also love the fact that we get to travel all over the place and help so many animals. We have hand fed so many different animals I can't even count them any more, and each one was more amazing than the last one. Most people go their entire lives without have the opportunities we have had so far. I love it.*

Q.) Will you do this when you are grown up?

A.) *This is Olivia, yes, this is what I will do all my life. I want to be a wild animal veterinarian and someday have the world's largest animal sanctuary.*

This is Carter, I know I want to also work with animals all my life but I think I want to be an inventor. I would love to invent a machine that could take all the plastic trash out of the ocean without removing plankton and other marine life. I also want to be an architect so I can help Olivia design the animal sanctuary.

Q.) Do you have to travel to places like Africa or the Rain forest to be able to save the animals?

A.) *No, you can do lots of work right here to help animals in those areas. Since my sister and I love traveling, we welcome the opportunity to travel just about anywhere.*

Q.) How old are you guys now? Do you guys take care of lions, hyenas and all those other animals?

A.) *I (Olivia) am 10 and my brother Carter will be 12 on Feb 22nd. My birthday is Aug 30th. We have not adopted lions, or hyenas yet but when we brought the large check over to South Africa for the cheetah agency, we did allow them to use part of the funds to build a shelter for the African Wild-Dogs they care for. You can see pictures of the shelter on our FaceBook page. I actually got to go in the ground where the mommy wild-dogs have their babies.*

Q.) What grade are you in now? What grade were you in when you started this?

A.) *I am in the fifth grade and Carter is in the sixth grade. We were in the second and third grade when we started OMG.*

Q.) How do you make OMG?

A.) *Starting a nonprofit organization was not that easy at first since our parents had never done anything like this before. I know they took classes and got people who run nonprofits to help them with all the paperwork but after that, it was pretty easy.*

Q.) How do you pay for all those animals? What are you going for right now?

A.) *Olivia and I still use our own money for the adoptions we do. We are just like everyone else, we have to do work around our house to earn money, and also we get birthday money too. We also do fundraising events and collect donations for when churches invite us out to speak to them etc. Our parents are also trying to get grants from companies so we can afford to do more to help animals and to bring our plastic program to more schools. Right now we are talking to companies about the need to help us educate more communities in such issues as plastic pollution and on the need to save Rhinos.*

Q.) What do rhinos eat?

A.) *Rhinos are herbivores so they only eat vegetation. Each species of rhinos have their own types of plants and shrubs that they like to eat. White rhinos have a wide mouth, which is ideal for eating tall grasses while the black rhino has what is almost like a finger on their upper lip that allows them to grab shrubs and small bushes and pull them out of the ground so they can eat the base of the plant and the roots.*

Q.) How are you going to save the rhinos?

A.) *Through education. The more people we educate about the fact that rhinos are being poached to almost extinction and about the fact that their horns are no different then your fingernails, then eventually we will help stop the demand for their horns. Carter and I could not do this by ourselves; we need each one of you to help. The letters that you guys are giving us will show President Zuma that the whole world is begging him to get serious about saving rhinos.*

Q.) When are you going to Africa? What part of Africa are you going to?

A.) *We are waiting to hear from the South African government as to when we can have a meeting with President Zuma. We are hoping that we can do this in April or May.*

Q.) Did your teachers help you or your parents or did you want to do it yourself?

A.) *Carter and I came up with the idea ourselves and we kept bugging our parents. Our teachers are also big fans and supporters of what we do. If you are passionate about wanting to make a difference, you have to tell every adult you know, over and over and over until they see you are serious. Eventually someone will reach out to help get you started.*

Q.) How did you find out there were poachers?

A.) *Poaching for animals has been going on since man realized they could make money doing it. We knew that poachers killed rhinos but we never realized how bad it was until we started looking into it. When we went to South Africa, we learned more about the issue and we then knew we wanted to try and educate others on the issue*

Q.) Can you go around and tell hunters not to kill animals?

A.) *That probably would not be wise, or safe considering most hunters believe they have the right to do so. But what we can do is to continue to educate as many people as possible on the issue and eventually they will start to get the message. Hunting for food of a species that there is a lot of is considered acceptable or okay. It is the hunting for trophies and for reasons of making money on what you just killed is what we have a problem with.*

Q.) How old is the cheetah?

A.) *I assume you are asking about our cheetahs. My cheetah's is named Diputsu and he is about 12 years old, Olivia's cheetah is called Talala and she is about 13 years old.*

Q.) Do any birds get killed?

A.) *Yes, many birds are killed each year to supply the craft business with long colorful feathers. The situation is actually getting better now that there are so many bird farms, which breed the birds to collect the feathers.*

Q.) What animal was the most fun to save?

A.) *All of them. I have a hard time seeing where one species is better or more deserving than another. We do enjoy working to save the fun animals such as elephants, cheetahs and rhinos because we usually get to get up-close and personal with them and sometimes feed them etc. That is always fun.*

Q.) Where was the farthest place you went or going to?

A.) *So far South Africa is the furthest we have traveled. We are working with the Australian Zoo and with Bindi Irwin, who is the daughter of famed Steve Irwin a.k.a., the Crocodile Hunter and we plan to eventually visit them and help them educate more kids about the need to save endangered species. The Australian Zoo just featured Olivia and me in their "Cricky" magazine. We will be featuring that on our website in the next week.*

Q.) How did the rhinos get endangered?

A.) *Too much poaching and far too many trophy-hunting permits are being issued. Poaching is getting worse each year and the South African government allows far too many hunting permits each year for rich hunters to come in and kill rhinos for fun. They allow this because it is a great source of money for the country. Unfortunately, that money is not being used to help save the species, nor is anyone regulating the impact of all the hunters.*

Q.) When some animals like rhinos make paths through the brush, how do other animals hide?

A.) *When big animals like rhinos and elephants trample through the tall grass and brush area, they tend to flatten paths which allow smaller animals to use the paths while staying concealed. The Africa Painted Dogs (a.k.a. African Wild Dogs) love to roam where rhinos have trampled because it allows them to sneak up on their prey and also stay hidden from their enemies.*

Q.) Why do we need African Wild Dogs?

A.) *African wild dogs are very important to the ecosystem because they are very efficient scavengers. Like most predators, it plays an important role in eliminating sick and weak animals, thereby helping maintain a natural balance and ultimately improving prey species.*

Q.) How do sharks die after you cut off their fins?

A.) *Sharks use their fins to allow them to swim, much like we use our hands to swim. Without their fins, they can no longer swim and their bodies sink to the bottom where they die because of a lack of moving water going through their gills.*

Q.) Why are there so few Wild Dogs left?

A.) *Throughout Africa wild dogs have been shot and poisoned by farmers, hunters and, at one time, by rangers who considered them as bloodthirsty raiders of livestock and dispersers of wild herds. Loss of habitat forces them to seek food where humans live which means they interfere with farmers etc. It is not their fault; humans have left them no choice. The African wild dog, also called the hunting dog, is a vanishing species in East Africa. Field studies have shown that the wild dog is a highly intelligent and social animal. Unlike most carnivores, Wild dogs share their food and even make sure their young and older members of the pack get their fair share.*

Q.) What can you do to save sharks when they sink down to the bottom?

A.) *Unfortunately, once a shark has had its fins cut off, there is nothing that can be done to save it. The best way to help sharks is to tell everyone about what is happening to sharks and ask them to sign petitions that ask for the end to restaurants serving shark fin soup.*

The people that hunt sharks for their fins don't care what happens to the shark, they only care about how much money they can get for the fins.

Q.) Why do people continue to kill animals, even though they know the species is endangered?

A.) *If there is a market (buyers) who will pay large amounts of money for the animal to be killed, the fact that the species is endangered makes it an even bigger target because the poachers know that there are less and less around. The best way to change that way of thinking is through education. That is why we started OMG. We want to educate as many people as possible so they can learn how important every species on the planet is.*

Q.) Do rhinos ever fight back when poachers are attacking them?

A.) *Yes they do. In fact, rhinos have killed several poachers but that is not too common. Poachers know how dangerous rhinos can be so they use high-powered rifles and tranquilizers to immobilize them before they start cutting off their horns.*

Q.) How did your family members come up with the idea of adopting a cheetah for you?

A.) Our entire family knows how much we love all animals. Our Aunt was traveling in South Africa and heard about the cheetah center. When they visited, they learned that they could give an adoption as a gift so she did. We have continued to adopt the same cheetahs ever since. As we learn about more and more animals that need help, we continue to adopt more and more animals. We also do various fund raising events each year where we donate the money to all types of organizations who are working hard to save animals.

Q.) Are you guys worried that Rhinos will become extinct?

A.) Yes, the extinction of rhinos is something that we worry about but we also realize that unless everyone stands up and tries to help them, they are definitely going to die-off in our lifetime. We know that we can not save them by ourselves but educating everyone we can about how serious the situation is, we will hopefully get more and more people fighting and speaking up to save them.

The letters that each of you wrote will make a great impression on President Zuma and we feel confident that he will realize that rhinos are loved by people all over the world and he needs to do something now before it is too late.

Q.) Why is it illegal to kill rhinos? BTW, my step mom adopted a monkey and a cow.

A.) Since there are only about 25,000 rhinos left on the planet, all countries which have rhinos have made it illegal to kill rhinos. Unfortunately, people still find ways around the system. Countries like South Africa still allow hunters to come and hunt them as long as they pay a large amount of money for the hunting license. The number of rhinos being killed each year by poachers is driving the species to the brink of extinction, which is why we all need to do what we can.

P.S. Please tell your step mom that we are so proud of her. We feel that everyone should adopt at least one animal each year ;-)

Q.) What are you guys doing or learning about now?

A.) We have been very busy lately learning about the rhino situation and about teaching schools our Plastic and Recycling Awareness Curriculum. Our immediate

goal is to introduce our plastic awareness education to as many schools as possible. Plastic trash is such a huge problem that everyone needs to know about it so we can all start to make a difference. So many animals die each year by eating plastic that they mistake as food. Animals don't cause the trash to end up in our rivers, oceans and landfills, humans do. What we are doing to all these animals is really sad.

Q.) Why are people too lazy to throw away their trash?

A.) *That is a good question. Again, we think that the only way we can get people to start caring more about our planet is through education. If we could tell the whole world how bad the issue of Plastic Pollution is, we feel we would be able to save thousands of animals each day.*

Q.) Is it true that 2 rhinos are killed every day? Also, my dad meets with the WWF and they are also trying to save animals. I wish I could see a dodo bird. How can you save rhinos if you don't live in South Africa?

A.) *The actual number for 2012 was 1.8 rhinos per day. That is a 49% increase in the number of rhinos killed in 2011. At that rate rhinos will become extinct in the wild within 12 to 15 years unless we can convince the South Africa government to get serious about saving them before it is too late.*

We would love to speak with your dad to see what they are doing. We too have reached out to the WWF and we are trying to see if they can help us with our letter writing campaign.

We would also love to see many of the animals that are now extinct. The only thing we can do now is to fight for the remaining animals and hope that we can get everyone to start caring again.

Thanks for asking the question about how you can make a difference without living in a different country. It does not matter where you live, if you are serious about wanting to save an animal, or even a person, you can still do that without living in that country. Our Rhino Letter Writing campaign is proof that you can make a difference even from GA. When we show up at President Zuma's office with all the letters from around the world, he will see that the whole world is begging him to help save Rhinos. If you get enough voices demanding they the right thing be done, it will put pressure on the South Africa government so they will have to act.

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All these questions were great and we both want to thank each one of you for allowing us to come and present our Rhino Presentation. Your letters helped us exceed our goal of collecting 1,000 letters and we look forward to handing all of

them over to President Zuma. We hope you will also try to follow your passion and that we will have the opportunity to come back and talk about our trip.

Remember,

***Anybody can make a
difference... if we can,
you can too.***