

Community rallies to help save orangutans from extinction



Animal Action Night on Dec 16 inspires action for orangutans

The 9th annual Animal Action event on December 16 at Quality Hotel Mermaid Waters will raise funds for orangutans, which currently face extinction.

Animal Action Night: Inspiring Action for Orangutans Christmas Extravaganza host and AA Xposé Media Director/ Photojournalist Aldwyn Altuney said Animal Action events inspired action for the humane treatment of animals worldwide.

"After being sick of seeing animal cruelty in society, I wanted to do something about it and founded the world's first Animal Action Day in 2007," Ms Altuney said.

"I ran seven free day events raising funds for different animal charities each year, including the Animal Welfare League, World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), David Fleay Wildlife Park, Sea Shepherd, Voiceless, Save Japan Dolphins, Save China Tigers and Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, and this is now our second night event on the Gold Coast. Last year's event inspired action for whales."

Animal Action Night: Inspiring Action for Orangutans aims to raise awareness, appreciation and respect for orangutans. It will raise money for the Orangutan Foundation International Australia (OFIA).

OFIA co-founder / president Kobe Steele said OFIA's mission was to support and continue the orangutan and forest conservation efforts initiated by Dr Biruté Mary Galdikas in Kalimantan, Borneo.

OFIA has two core campaigns; caring for orphaned and displaced orangutans at the OFI Care Centre & Quarantine in Pasir Panjang Village, Central Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo and securing habitat for their future release.

"The OFI Care Centre currently cares for 340 displaced or orphaned orangutans, which costs a hefty \$1 million a year to run," Ms Steele said.

"Orangutans are threatened with extinction due to the destruction and degradation of the tropical rain forest, particularly lowland forest, in Borneo and Sumatra. This has been caused primarily by intense legal logging, illegal logging, conversion of forest to palm oil plantations and timber estates, mining, clearing forest for settlements, road construction and large-scale fires facilitated by the El Nino weather phenomena."

The illegal animal trade has also been a factor in the decline of wild orangutan populations and orangutans are occasionally hunted and eaten by some of the indigenous people of Borneo as well as migrant loggers and plantation workers who do not have dietary prohibitions against eating primate bush meat.

"At one time, the world's wild orangutan populations likely included hundreds of thousands of individuals, but current estimates indicate far fewer wild orangutans now remain. During the past decade, orangutan populations have decreased by 50% in the wild," she said.

Entertainment at Animal Action Night: Inspiring Action for Orangutans includes the launch of Vavachi Entertainment's new show World on a String - a tribute to Michael Buble, featuring Thomas Armstrong Robley and his 4-piece band, Ten Tenors co-founder/ internationally acclaimed tenor Roger Davy and country rock singer Tyson Colman. Speakers include Kobe Steele, Sunshine Coast Conservationist Casey Murtagh, who has personally raised over \$65,000 for Orangutan focused projects in Borneo and Sumatra, and MC/ Animal Action Events founder Aldwyn Altuney.

There will also be a special appearance by Santa (aka Rod Hyatt), as well as a roving masseuse, stalls, raffles and auction items for the cause.

Animal Action events aim to encourage people to take action for animals, even in small ways. You can do this by making healthy choices while shopping - buying cruelty free; reducing your consumption of animal products or becoming vegetarian or vegan. You can also write to your local, state or federal elected rep to convey views on animal protection; volunteer with animal organisations; write a letter to the editor of your local papers; recycle and compost at home and express concerns to food companies and supermarkets that are involved in sustaining animal suffering.

"Together, we can all make a difference for animals and the environment," Ms Altuney said.

Tickets for Animal Action Night: Inspiring Action for Orangutans are \$55 each or \$50 each for a table of 10, including entertainment, a drink on arrival and 2 course meal, and are available from the Eventbrite link on the Facebook page 'Animal Action Events' or visit www.animalactionday.com

CAPTION: - Aldwyn Altuney, Santa and Thomas Armstrong-Robley prepare for Animal Action Night 2015. Photo by Joyita Sio

Contacts

Aldwyn Altuney

61409895055

mailto: aldwyn@aaxpose.com