On a chilly morning in Louisiana last December, Dr. Raven Jackson-Jewett, often referred to as Dr. J by staff, was traveling the last few miles of a long journey from New Mexico. Over the past eight years, she had personally overseen dozens of similar treks in her role as Attending Veterinarian at Chimp Haven. But this one was special.

With her that morning were seven chimpanzees who would soon become the newest retirees to join the Chimp Haven family – Donovan, Whisky, Brandy, Charity, Elmer, Marie, and Wendy. As they rode into the quiet, forested sanctuary and caught the first glimpses of their new home, they had no idea they were making history.

With their arrival at Chimp Haven that morning, a scale had been tipped: the number of chimpanzees living in sanctuaries in the U.S. had officially surpassed the number that remain in research facilities.

Since the National Institutes of Health announced it would retire all NIH-owned chimpanzees in 2013, Chimp Haven has successfully welcomed 160 former research chimpanzees to their new lives at sanctuary. And behind each of those arrivals was a carefully planned journey with one goal in mind: bring every chimpanzee home to live the good life – the Chimp Life.

That journey often begins months in advance, when NIH decides which research facility will retire chimpanzees next.

“I start communicating with the sending institution as soon as I get the word,” said Dr. J. “We want to know as much about them as possible so we can start preparing for their arrival.”

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Medical records, behavioral profiles, and transfer recommendations are discussed at length until everyone agrees on the ideal group to travel together – usually six to nine chimpanzees at a time. That’s Dr. J’s cue to hit the road.

When the chimps arrive at the sanctuary, they’re given some time to acclimate to their new surroundings at the McGrath Welcoming Center.

“For the first week, our priority is to give them time and space,” said Animal Care Supervisor Michelle Reininger. “During this time, I’ll sit near their enclosures first thing in the morning, when it’s nice and quiet. I want them to get used to my presence without feeling threatened or overwhelmed.”

After an initial physical examination by Dr. J, a quarantine period ensures that all chimpanzees enter the larger sanctuary population healthy. This period lasts 17 – 28 days, depending on the group.

“It’s vital that we make sure all incoming retirees are nice and healthy before we introduce them to their new groups,” said Dr. J. “While we spend a great deal of time and effort considering each new individual chimpanzee who comes in, we are also always thinking about the impact to the larger group. We have a healthy, thriving colony to take care of, and we want to make sure we do that in the right way.”

After a successful quarantine period and a second physical evaluation, the new arrivals are finally ready to meet their new groups. That’s where Michelle and the rest of the animal care and behavioral staff shine.

Wendy often smiles with excitement as she waits for a play session with care givers.

Marie enjoys her retirement outdoors in the Louisiana sun.

“At this point, care staff has gotten to know each chimp’s personality,” said Michelle. “We start talking about who we think is going to bond well with whom, and which existing group the new chimpanzees will fit in best with.”

This matchmaking process is something the care staff is very particular about – and very good at.

“We’re constantly brainstorming with each other – do any of our groups need males? Which group could really use a relaxed female to balance them out?” said Michelle. “It’s all about creating the large, rich social groups that they would get to experience in the wild.”

The introduction process is carefully and thoughtfully planned. Typically, chimps are introduced and observed in small groups for one to two weeks before slowly being introduced to larger groups. Staff is looking for friendly social behaviors, like hugging and playing, between the chimps – and sometimes, it just doesn’t work out. In that case, the process starts all over again.

“It can take time,” said Michelle. “The most important thing is to give them a chance to be relaxed with the new group. We have their long-term health and happiness in mind, so we’re not going to rush it.”

The process is also a logistical feat and requires detailed coordination as groups are transferred throughout the sanctuary to allow for proper introductions in open, outdoor play yards. Sometimes, those introductions end up surprising staff.

“I think the greatest thing is when we get them into the big...continued on page 4
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

For many of us, spring is a welcomed break from long, chilly days as winter starts to give way to brighter, warmer weather – and it’s no different for the chimps. With the sun beginning to make regular appearances at the sanctuary, we are loving the opportunity to watch them spend more of their days outdoors, climbing trees or just finding the perfect place for a cozy nap. Soon, they’ll have more space than ever to explore. With nearly 75 percent of our $20 million capital campaign goal now raised, we’ve officially begun construction on our big expansion! The new habitat space will include forested habitats, open-air corrals, and everything a chimp needs to live his or her best life. Most importantly, it will expand our capacity and help ensure that we have space to welcome more than 100 NIH-owned chimps to the Chimp Life. If you’re interested in getting involved in this big project, be sure to visit our website at chimphaven.org for more info on how you can help.

Springtime also brought a very special visitor to the sanctuary. The incomparable Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE, founder of the Jane Goodall Institute & UN Messenger of Peace, visited Chimp Haven this April, and staff and chimps alike were thrilled to meet her! During her visit, she toured the sanctuary, shared a special connection with retirees Sarah Anne and Henry, and spoke with staff about our common goal of protecting the chimps for generations to come. It was an energizing visit from an unrivaled visionary and hero to many, and we look forward to sharing a behind-the-scenes look on social media soon.

Finally, Chimp Haven is very happy to welcome a new leader to our team. Taylor Shead recently joined Chimp Haven as Chief Development and Marketing Officer after serving humans in several leadership roles at United Way. In her new role, Taylor will channel her creative vision to engage Chimp Haven supporters all over the world. You might say she’s already taken with the Chimp Life – especially resident Henry with whom she has quickly established a friendship. She firmly maintains that he is “the most handsome chimp in the world.”

On behalf of all of the chimps and staff at Chimp Haven, thank you for your ongoing support. We hope to see you at the sanctuary soon!

Warm regards,

Rana E. Smith
President and CEO

Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE, founder of the Jane Goodall Institute & UN Messenger of Peace

Rana E. Smith, President and CEO
social groups,” said Michelle. “All of a sudden they have social choices and they blossom. You see personalities come out and shine. As staff, we’re always guessing what the social hierarchy of the group is going to be and sometimes we’re shocked – they become their true selves and they often surprise us.”

The entire process of introducing a retiree to the Chimp Life can take several months from start to finish, but staff stresses that taking the time to do it right is their biggest priority – for new chimps and for the bigger colony.

“We feel the same sense of urgency that all animal lovers do to bring all chimpanzees to sanctuary,” said Dr. J. “It can feel like it’s taking a long time from the outside looking in, but when you look at the progress made over the past few years, it’s incredible what we’ve been able to do together. The most important thing to us is making sure the chimps – both new retirees and our existing population – are healthy and thriving. It’s more important for us to do it right than to rush it.”

A recent transformation caused by one of the December arrivals demonstrated what can happen when care staff makes the perfect match. One retiree, Henry, had been struggling for months to find a group where he fit in. His awkward social skills often came across negatively to other chimps, and out of nervousness he chose to spend a lot of time alone. That all changed when Donovan arrived at the sanctuary in December.

“Donovan is a very laid-back guy – really relaxed,” remembers Michelle. “When we introduced him to Henry, he just walked right up as if he was saying, ‘Hey, let’s hang out.’ Of course, Henry was nervous at first, but Donovan didn’t mind. He’s just been amazing with Henry. The other day, staff saw them playing. Henry, playing! We couldn’t believe it. It just shows what can happen when the chimps find their place. Everyone settles in. The whole group is doing awesome now.”

“To see them blossom over time and be part of a real social group is amazing. It’s like they wake up one day and realize, ‘This is the life I’m supposed to be living. This is where I’m supposed to be.’”

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Come experience the Chimp Life in person! The first round of bananas is on us. Learn more at chimphaven.org or @ChimpHaven on social media.*

**Chimpanzee Discovery Day**
Chimps, learning, and pant-hoots await at these family-friendly discovery events, offered just a few times per year.

- **Saturday, May 19**
- **Saturday, September 15**
- **Saturday, October 20**
- **Saturday, November 17**

**Chimp, Chat & Chew**
Take a closer look at the Chimp Life with these exclusive behind-the-scenes tours. Space is limited, so reserve your spot today by calling 318-925-9575!
HOPE
Hope is the socialite of her group. The first time she was introduced to her new pals, it was clear she was going to be Miss Popularity. So, what do you get the girl who loves the Chimp Life? In this case, something to carry in her hip pocket. She's known for always carrying the latest accessories.

WIMPY
Wimpy is, well, not wimpy at all. The second he got the chance to be around ladies, the theatrics began. Like many immature boys, he started by relentlessly poking the girls and instigating a few spats, but eventually showed his sweeter nature. This shameless flirt also loves to stick out his tongue (like, all the time). That’s no way to get the girl, Wimpy!

ROBBIE
Robbie has two passions in life: food and the outdoors. This gal just turned 30, and that passion for food might be catching up with her a bit. Still, it doesn’t seem to be slowing her down. She’s working with her new personal coaches on a plan to help her get to her ideal fitness level.

DONOVAN
Donovan is a ladies’ man and a chimp’s chimp. He was recently introduced to a new group and is loving all of his new group mates, particularly Henry. He is a big fellow and looks out for the other chimps in his group.

MARIE
Marie absolutely loves being outside. When released for the first time, she ran right out and climbed to the highest part of her structure. She loves blankets and uses them to cuddle up outside when the weather is cooler.

WHISKY
Whisky has won the hearts of care staff in just a short amount of time of being at Chimp Haven. He is adorable, sweet, and always runs to greet care staff. He loves to play with both his fellow chimps and staff. He likes to sleep with a blanket covering part of his body – but not his whole body!
LIVES YOU’VE TOUCHED

WENDY
Wendy is a sweet lady and can easily be spotted with her big belly. Her favorite part of her new home at Chimp Haven is the juice she receives from care staff! She is still warming up to everything but is acclimating well.

ELMER
Elmer is a smaller, sweet chimp. He is noticeable with his “Gandalf” beard. He is taking his time getting acclimated to Chimp Haven, but seems to be warming up to the new environment. He tends to keep to himself, but doesn’t hesitate to accept protection and reassurance from the other chimps in his group.

BRANDY
Brandy is a tough yet quiet chimp. She has not really begun to express herself yet and is probably still a bit skeptical of her new home. She is kind even through her uncertainty, but is calm and collected toward her group mates and care staff.

SPOCK
Spock is a modern-day renaissance man – you just never know what side of him you’re going to see next. At first, he seemed standoffish, but during his introduction to the girls in his group, he confidently walked right up to Hope and gave her a big, gentle hug. The strong, sensitive type with a heart of gold? What more could you ask for?

HAWKINS
Hawkins is a firm believer in the work hard, play hard mentality...emphasis on the play. His strong personality might seem intense to some, but that’s because he’s got very serious ideas about the best way to live the Chimp Life, and he’s not wasting any time getting to it. If some poo gets thrown in the process? So be it. #YOLO

CHARITY
Charity is adorable and playful. She is skeptical of the outside areas of her enclosure, but has been brave in exploring, little by little. She loves belly tickles from care staff and is known for smiling so big she becomes happily vocal. She is always excited to see care staff, but can usually be found hanging out with the other girls in her group.