It's a dreary January morning in Louisiana, the kind of Sunday when anyone would want to be huddled indoors, but Behavior Technician Robyn and chimpanzee retiree Crystal are meeting at their usual place on the outskirts of Crystal's 15,000-square-foot corral. They have an appointment with each other they're not about to miss.

Over the past three years, Change to: Crystal’s Walking Club has clocked more than 30 miles with various Chimp Haven staff, but there's no doubt Robyn is Crystal's favorite walking buddy.

Crystal is part of Chimp Haven's Gympanzee program, which pairs staff with chimps to help the chimps become more healthy and active. As part of the Gympanzee program, staff work one-on-one with chimps to provide personalized care and positively address a whole host of issues, ranging from mobility to, in Crystal's case, physical activity to promote healthy weight loss.

On this particular Sunday, security cameras capture Robyn and Crystal as they walk side by side. Robyn bobs up and down and gives lots of verbal encouragement through the flexible mesh between them. As they round the side of the corral, they both burst into a jog – something that would have seemed impossible for Crystal when she first came to the sanctuary. After their walks, Robyn lavishes Crystal with praise and spends some time indulging Crystal in her very favorite reward – touching Robyn's boots (Crystal loves boots!).

Not long after the jog, Robyn gets the opportunity to gauge the progress she and Crystal have been making together. Since last September, they’ve walked more than eight miles together, and Robyn has noticed big changes in Crystal's energy and stamina. But until now, she hasn’t had an easy way to weigh Crystal on a regular basis.

That’s all changed now that Crystal and her group have moved into one of Chimp Haven's brand-new open-air corrals, the first chimp living spaces completed as part of the sanctuary's Welcome Them Home expansion last summer. In addition to lots of new space for the chimps to roam and explore, the newly expanded buildings have provided staff with an important resource: a metabolism room, where they can more easily provide basic care for the chimps, like capturing their weight or even asking the chimps to voluntarily present their arms for a blood draw.

Robyn has been working with Crystal to teach her to come into the metabolism room and sit on the scale, which is built into the floor of the room. It’s then that she learns the results of their walking club: Crystal has lost an incredible 60 pounds since her last physical exam!

Crystal is not the only chimp who has gotten more active since moving into the new corrals. Thirty-nine-year-old Angela, lovingly nicknamed “Big Ang,” was never much of a fan of exercise, despite the ongoing encouragement and commitment of her trainer, Rebekah. But when Angela’s group moved into their new corral, it was as if she were inspired to explore like never before. The staff was thrilled to see her walking up and down the platforms of her new space, and her next weigh-in showed she’d lost 20 pounds.
Are you ready to “Meet the Chimps”?
Chimp Haven to be featured in a new TV series produced by National Geographic and airing on Disney+

That’s right, the Chimp Haven retirees are coming to a TV near you. We always knew they were stars, and now they’ll have their chance to shine on screen!

The description below from Disney gives a sneak peek at what you’ll see in the series:

National Geographic’s “Meet the Chimps” takes viewers into the secret life of one of the largest and most unique wildlife sanctuaries in the world – Chimp Haven – a 200-acre refuge tucked deep in the forested heart of Louisiana, which is home to more than 300 chimpanzees. This six-part series tracks the ups and downs of this extraordinary group of chimps that are given a second chance at life by a staff whose dedication, compassion and commitment knows no bounds... The series gives viewers access to everything happening at Chimp Haven, including food squabbles, alliances, romances, ...tears, tantrums, high jinx, and heartbreaks.

*The air date for “Meet the Chimps” has not been announced as of the printing of this newsletter. Stay tuned for more details!*
Lives You’ve Touched

Help us give a big pant-hoot to our newest arrivals.

Alfredo may be a sanctuary newbie, but he’s already a staff favorite. Everyone loves him, and as you get to know him, it’s no mystery why. He loves interacting with people, especially through a good game of chase where he shows off his signature “gallop.” He also happens to be a very handsome guy. “He’s perfect,” says Caregiver Ellen.

Katy is large and in charge, and has no qualms about taking what she wants – namely food, especially from Alfredo. She was excited to see the whole group during their introductions, and she has developed a close relationship with Lucy and Wanda, who she likes to hang out with.

Wanda is a laid-back girl who loves being outside – in fact, you might even find her hanging out in the pouring rain, perfectly content! She’s close to the other girls in her group but also like lots of quiet time to herself. She and the gang also love snooping on their neighbors.

Lucy is a friendly girl who loves to eat grass and also seems to really enjoy having her picture taken! In situations where other chimps might be a little nervous – like moving into a new living space for the first time – Lucy is brave, leading the way for the rest of her group. She and Alfredo arrived at the sanctuary together, and the two remain close (staff like to compare them to an old married couple).

Shay is a little guy who needs a little time to warm up to new situations and friends. He would prefer it if you didn’t touch his things, like his fishers or his bedroom mesh, thank you very much. But as both Alfredo and Caregiver Ellen learned, if you’re persistent, Shay will eventually come around. He and Alfredo have become buddies, and just the other day he presented his belly to Caregiver Ellen for tickles.

Spring at the Sanctuary

Here’s a peek at what the chimps have been up to this year.

Randy was one happy chimp when his group was introduced to one of Chimp Haven’s multi-acre habitats in February. Care Supervisor Lindsey caught his excitement in this sweet moment.

Our new favorite bromance blossomed this spring when big, cuddly Randy met Rero for the first time. And they haven’t stopped playing since! Their friendship is so strong that Randy will even forego his favorite activity – eating – to sit with Rero until he’s ready to go outside. “These two boys were just what the other needed,” shared Caregiver Miranda C. “They complete each other.”

Bowen
Dreaming of a trip to sanctuary?

New opportunities to visit for 2020!

Chimp Haven is thrilled to offer new opportunities to experience the Chimp Life in 2020. Visit chimphaven.org/visit to purchase your tickets and plan your visit today.

**Chimpanzee Discovery Day**
Chimps, learning, and pant-hoots await at these family-friendly discovery events, offered just a few times each year. Tickets available for purchase online or at the gate.
April 25, October 17, November 14

**Chimp Chat & Chew**
A special tour for an exclusive group of chimp lovers, with a behind-the-scenes look at life at the sanctuary and in-depth conversation with the experts on the Chimp Haven staff. Spots are limited and attendees must register in advance.
April 24, June 25, September 10, October 17, November 14

**Sanctuary Tours**
Chimp Haven offers exclusive opportunities for private sanctuary tours on a limited basis throughout the year. Tours are booked by request only at chimphaven.org/visit.

**Brunch in the Wild**
New for 2020, Brunch in the Wild is an unforgettable way to experience life at Chimp Haven. In addition to behind-the-scenes sanctuary access, guests will enjoy a beautiful seated brunch with views of Chimp Haven's forested habitats and the chimps who call them home. Space is limited; reserve your seat at chimphaven.org/visit.
May 29, September 25

**Chimp Life Photography Experience**
Join us for a one-of-a-kind photography experience at Chimp Haven’s beautiful 200-acre sanctuary! This experience, led by Chimp Haven’s resident photographer, is open to professional and amateur photographers interested in photographing the chimps. Space is limited, register at chimphaven.org/visit.
September 10

Please remember to include Chimp Haven in your will or estate plans – and let us know when you do so we can thank you.