

THE

CHIMP LIFE
 KEITHVILLE, LOUISIANA

The Final Countdown to Welcome Them Home

With some of the last remaining eligible chimpanzees in research facilities on their way to Chimp Haven this spring, the race is on to complete their home sweet home.

Since 2005, Chimp Haven has welcomed hundreds of chimpanzees once used in biomedical research to a peaceful retirement at sanctuary – and a life designed just for them.

Now, we’ve reached a historic moment: Some of the last remaining chimpanzees in research facilities who are eligible to come to Chimp Haven are on their way to the sanctuary this spring – and the expansion that will provide room for them still needs a final push to be completed in time to welcome them without delay.

Between February and May of this year, Chimp Haven will welcome 29 new chimp retirees to the sanctuary. These chimps, who will come to us from a research facility in Texas, are currently among the last eligible chimpanzees in government-owned research facilities slated to retire to Chimp Haven.

It’s a milestone many years in the making – and it’s one we cannot wait to celebrate by providing them with the exceptional life they have earned.



Aerial view of Chimp Haven

To do that, though, we must complete the final push needed to complete our sanctuary expansion project – a labor of love which began with the goal of making room for every chimp in research to have the opportunity to come home to Chimp Haven.

Now, with just months to go before they are all home at last, construction on the project is entering its final stages, and \$1 million is left to raise to close out this historic, \$20 million project and bring them home for good.

The final countdown has arrived as we work with urgency to complete the Welcome Them Home sanctuary expansion by summer. We can’t wait to introduce these wonderful chimps to their new life at Chimp Haven – but we need help to make that happen.

For more information about how you can be part of this historic moment for the chimps, please visit chiphaven.org/welcomethemhome today.



A new commissary for food storage and preparation (left) and one of the rooms from the new veterinary suite(right)

Update: Crystal Walks On, Rain, Shine, or Snow!

You may remember reading about Crystal last spring – a 34-year-old go-getter chimp who is also a star of Chimp Haven’s Gympanzee program. Gympanzee pairs chimps with members of the Chimp Haven care staff with members of the Chimp Haven care staff to help keep them physically active and thriving. Through her special bond with Behavior Specialist Robyn Gillies and the “Walking Club” the two of them created together, Crystal has lost an incredible 64 pounds in the past two years. We checked in with Robyn to see how she and Crystal maintained their dedication to each other through COVID-19, and even snow in Louisiana.

Chimp Haven (CH): When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, staff temporarily paused Gympanzee in order to maintain safety measures at the sanctuary. How did that impact your training with Crystal?

Robyn Gillies (RG): Yes, the pandemic definitely impacted our Positive Reinforcement Training for a little while – but I would see Crystal doing her laps on her own and would encourage her from afar! Once we got the clear to train again, we were right back to it.

CH: Crystal moved into a brand new, 15,000-square-foot living space in 2020 – how does she like all the new space?

RG: She’s responded so well. Since it’s a larger space than her old play yard, we started off by taking longer breaks between laps to help her build up her stamina. Now all she needs is a quick break to touch my boots (her favorite reward) and she lets me know she’s ready to keep walking.

CH: The sanctuary got snow more than once this winter! Did that impact your training at all?

RG: If I’m there, Crystal is ready to walk, and many times even run a lap! The cold and snow is great incentive to move faster.

CH: Looking back over the past two years – with 64 pounds lost – what makes you most proud of your partnership with Crystal?

RG: I love that the novelty hasn’t worn off and she still loves to walk with me. It’s also been so great to see her progress as she’s moved into the brand new spaces we have available at the sanctuary. And my favorite part is her enthusiasm: I will go by and see her walking around the corral on her own. When she sees me coming she does what I call a “Booty Bounce” of excitement! She gets bursts of energy and breaks out into a run – it’s the best.



Crystal and Robyn enjoying one of their afternoon walks together!

Lives You've Touched

This amazing crew arrived at Chimp Haven in December. They've settled in wonderfully, and we look forward to watching them embrace the Chimp Life.



Some chimps have a special attachment to certain toys or items, which staff nickname their "babies." Opal has her prized set of keys, Crystal loves rubber boots, and **Irene** is almost always seen carrying around toy balls! At 33 years old, we love that she's keeping her playful spirit alive.



Sweet **Una** is a big fan of belly rubs and loves attention from her caregivers. When she sees them coming, she presents her belly and insists on her favorite form of attention to start the interaction. She's also made quick chimp friends with Terri, Sean, and Eve.



There's no doubt about it, **Hanna Banana** has a flair for the dramatic, but she has no trouble endearing herself to people with her big personality. She's sweet and sassy and will quickly let other chimps in her group know just what she wants!



Sidney loves playing by running back and forth through her bedroom area with her care givers, and literally screams with excitement. Her playful spirit never fails to brighten your day – especially when she does somersaults during a game of chase!



At 44 years old, **Holly** is a sweet soul who has effortlessly won the adoration of care staff. She loves sleeping outside and is quickly becoming one of care staff's favorite "sweet ladies."



Calvin doesn't need the spotlight – in fact, he prefers to hang out in the background. This sweet guy gets along with everyone and his easygoing attitude is contagious.



Moving Day!

As new multi-acre forested habitats are completed as part of Chimp Haven's *Welcome Them Home* expansion, chimp families are getting to experience the forest for the first time!

Top left- Gage, Samson, and Sophie patrol their new habitat.

Bottom left- Hayden takes a few minutes to examine the plants and trees.

Below left- Lexus checks out her new surroundings from the top of a play structure.

Below right- Cherry Blossom tests out a new cabana by the moat.





Taffy
Living the Chimp Life
since August 2019

COVID-19 Update

While we eagerly await the day we can safely hold events at the sanctuary again, we're bringing the Chimp Life to you at home! Join us for webinars exploring all facets of sanctuary life and download educational lessons and activities for home or classroom learning. Webinars are free, but space is limited, so register today at chimphaven.org!

Wildlife Waystation

This year, in addition to welcoming more chimps from research facilities, Chimp Haven is partnering with our friends at the North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance in their effort to rehome 32 chimpanzees at the Wildlife Waystation, an animal sanctuary in Los Angeles that closed in 2019.

NAPSA is working in partnership with reputable sanctuaries – including Chimp Haven – to find these chimps permanent homes and has launched a fundraising campaign to support the transport and care of these sweet chimps.

Pending funding, Chimp Haven hopes to welcome 11 of the Wildlife Waystation chimps to the sanctuary, including what would be the sanctuary's first set of twins!

If you'd like to learn more about how to support the relocation of the Wildlife Waystation chimps to Chimp Haven, please visit

primatesanctuaries.org/chimps-in-need/.

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