

THE

 CHIMP LIFE
 KEITHVILLE, LOUISIANA

STORMY SKIES, RECORD HIGHS, *and Caring for Chimps During a Power Outage*

With extreme weather events on the rise in recent years, many of us have personally experienced the disruptive and dangerous impacts of record temperatures and powerful storms. For the team at the world's largest chimpanzee sanctuary, those impacts bring unique challenges.

Given Chimp Haven's setting on 200 acres of forested land in rural Louisiana, the sanctuary is no stranger to the occasional power outage. But with the uptick in extreme weather events in recent years, those outages have not only become more frequent, they've also been accompanied by record-breaking high and low temps, creating extraordinary challenges in caring for the sanctuary's 300 chimpanzee residents.

Over the past several years, both winter and summer storms have left the sanctuary without power for up to a week at a time, with each occasion accompanied by icy roads or soaring summer temperatures. As always, the Chimp Haven care team jumps into action. So, what does it look like to care for 300 chimps in the aftermath of a severe storm? Here are just a few of the unique items on our team's to-do list:

A round-the-clock crew – With icy roads and downed trees often leaving the route to the sanctuary unsafe or impassible, Chimp Haven's care teams establish a skeleton crew who remain on-site until roads are cleared. This team often remains at



Sleepy Buster staying cool with his frozen afternoon carrot.

the sanctuary for days at a time, providing the chimps' daily care needs, delivering meals and medications, and ensuring their safety 24/7.

Keeping the chimps comfortable – When the power goes out, so does the sanctuary's HVAC. The on-site crew fires up portable generators to keep fans and heaters running for the chimps in their bedroom spaces and distributes plenty of ice, water, and popsicles during the summer and extra blankets during the winter.

Food and enrichment – When they're not providing care for the chimps, the team is hard at work preparing for the hours and days ahead, coordinating





During the power outage, the Chimp Haven team dressed up in silly outfits to provide sensory enrichment for the chimps.

diets, arranging special produce deliveries, and getting extra creative to meet the chimps' enrichment needs (sometimes all in the dark!). This June, when a power outage threw a wrench in the enrichment plan, the team changed course and served up sensory enrichment with flashy costumes and musical performances (you should have heard the pant-hoots).

Sanctuary maintenance – While the care team gives their full attention to the chimps, the maintenance team is hard at work on sanctuary repairs. Downed trees, powerful wind, and ice cause damage that can make the chimps' living spaces unsafe; the maintenance crew routinely braves the elements to ensure their habitats are secure, often coming up with ingenious ways to chimp-proof on the fly.

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As extreme weather events continue, preparing the sanctuary for future storms and outages will be a major area of focus in the coming year. From adding HVAC in all chimp bedrooms (only about half the sanctuary's bedrooms currently have modern HVAC) and generators that would keep facilities up and running during power outages, key infrastructure upgrades will be critical to the chimps' care now and in the years to come.

In the meantime, the chimps rely on their dedicated care team; the days are long, grueling, and sometimes uncomfortable, but there's truly nothing this amazing crew wouldn't do for the chimps.



Behavior Tech Emmeline distributes summer enrichment treats to the chimps - towels frozen in fruit juice to help them keep cool.

WELCOME HOME, MERLIN, PENNY, AND HILDE!

Chimp Haven's newest residents arrived in the spring from a research facility in Texas, and they've spent the summer making themselves right at home at sanctuary.

Despite being the oldest of the trio at 45 years old, we heard that Penny liked to be treated as the baby of the group, but the team has loved seeing her come into her own since arriving at Chimp Haven, acting as the "social glue" of the group and providing lots of reassurance to the more timid, 38-year-old Hilde.

While Merlin's name conjured up images of an older, graying, wizardly chimp, this 31-year-old boisterous boy is anything but – he loves showing off with big displays and never misses an opportunity to charm care staff for an extra snack, especially pomegranates.

As this sweet group prepares to spend their first fall at the sanctuary, we're looking forward to lots of new adventures and friends in their future.



Top left: Hilde; Top Right: Penny; Bottom: Merlin

FOR THE ALAMAGORDO CHIMPS, *THE WAIT CONTINUES*

Although a federal judge ruled they could come to sanctuary, the National Institutes of Health signals it will not move more than 25 research chimps from a facility in New Mexico.

If you've followed news of the Alamogordo chimps over the past two years, you likely found reason to hope that more than 25 former research chimps who remain at their research facility in New Mexico might at last get to experience sanctuary. In December 2022, a federal judge ruled that the chimps were in fact eligible to move to Chimp Haven per the CHIMP Act, despite the National Institutes of Health (NIH) previously deeming them ineligible.

After more than a year without news, earlier this year, the NIH dropped its appeal, seemingly signaling it intended to

comply with the court ruling. But not long after, the agency announced it had no plans to move the chimps, a decision hinging on the fact that the chimps were classified as "moribund." (While "moribund" typically implies an active or imminent state of dying, these chimps have now maintained this classification for nearly five years.)

While the issue is no doubt complicated, Chimp Haven strongly believes that sanctuary is the best place for these chimps to live out their days. With a strong track record of transporting and providing hundreds of former research chimpanzees with expert care, the sanctuary remains eager to partner with the NIH and animal welfare partners on a path forward to welcome these sweet chimps home.

So Long, Summer!

As the first hints of fall begin to arrive at the sanctuary, the chimps are no doubt looking forward to cooler days ahead. Before we officially bid summer farewell, we're taking one last look back at the sun-soaked days of fun, popsicles, and pant-hoots you gave them this year. Thank you for your support!



Magic



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Every purchase benefits the chimps!

Get ready for fall and bring the chimps along with cozy, cool weather looks from the Chimp Haven store.



Shop now at www.chimphaven.org/store.

Fall Event Season

Fall foliage road trip calling your name? Make your way to the sanctuary for fall events and tours! Purchase tickets and book tours at chimphaven.org/plan-your-visit.

Chimpanzee Discovery Day | Saturday, October 19, 2024

Chimp Chat | Saturday, October 19, 2024

Private Tours | M – F, must be booked in advance

Make a Planned Gift

Create your own legacy by including Chimp Haven in your will or estate plan. Your gift, no matter the size, will play a vital role in securing the long-term health of the sanctuary and will provide care for the chimps for many years to come.

Learn more at chimphaven.org/planned-giving or email Taylor Johnson, tjohnson@chimphaven.org, for more information.

