

Westside Today
*Beverly Hills 90210, Santa Monica Sun,
Malibu Beach, Brentwood News*
November 2006

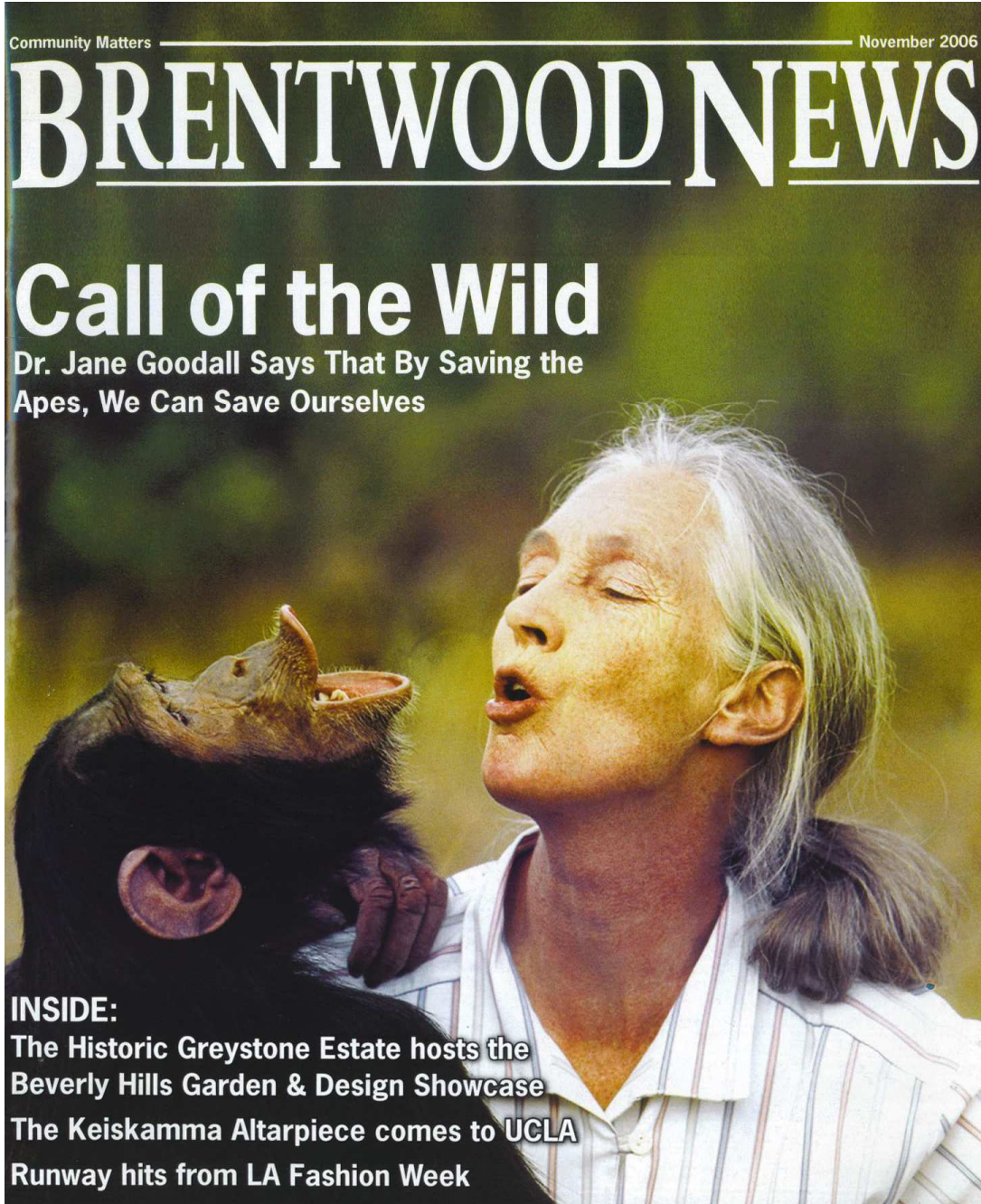
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Community Matters November 2006

BRENTWOOD NEWS

Call of the Wild

Dr. Jane Goodall Says That By Saving the Apes, We Can Save Ourselves



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BRENTWOOD

Call of the Wild

Dr. Jane Goodall Says That By Saving the Apes, We Can Save Ourselves

By Katie Hall



DR. JANE GOODALL RECENTLY CAME TO LOS ANGELES, WHERE PARTICIPANTS AND SPECTATORS GATHERED AT GRIFFITH PARK TO CELEBRATE THE FOURTH ANNUAL ROOTS & SHOOTS DAY OF PEACE.

The planet is in trouble, according to Goodall, and it's only by acting as responsible global citizens that we can truly make a difference. We must not rely upon governments or corporations to act; the power resides within us, as individuals.

Goodall is best known for her work with chimpanzees in the wilds of Africa. But as a U.N. "Messenger of Peace," her message has now expanded.

Goodall said that in her opinion, the world has about 20 years to get its act together.

Otherwise, she warned, we could soon approach a point of no return.

Jane Goodall was there to inspire her followers and to keynote the "ChimpanZoo" conference being held at the Los Angeles Zoo.

Roots & Shoots

Dr. Goodall travels the world for over 300 days a year to promote the work of the Jane Goodall Institute, including its global youth program, Roots & Shoots.

The Roots & Shoots' mission is "to foster respect and compassion for all living things, to promote understanding of all cultures and beliefs, and to inspire each individual to take action to make the world a better place for people, animals, and the environment."

By engaging the youth, the next

generation, she hopes to cultivate peace and understanding around the planet.

Dr. Goodall encouraged her listeners to take action "every single day of your life—how does it affect the environment, the world around you, society? Start making little changes. It's billions and billions of little changes that start to make a difference."

TACARE

In Africa, the Jane Goodall Institute is working in partnership with local communities to alleviate poverty, improve education and health, and promote sustainable livelihoods. The Lake Tanganyika Catchment Reforestation and Education Program (TACARE) has six areas of emphasis: community development, water

and environmental sanitation, education, agriculture, forestry, and health. The Institute works in 24 villages situated on or near the shores of Lake Tanganyika.

Bushmeat Crisis

In Africa, chimpanzees and other primates face a crisis—the illegal commercial bushmeat trade -- the hunting of wild animals for meat. It "has become the most significant immediate threat to the future of wildlife in Africa and around the world," according to experts. Because many primates have slow life histories (they mature and produce offspring slowly relative to other mammals), the bushmeat trade is regarded as unsustainable. There are too many animals killed without enough time to regenerate the population.

According to Goodall, there may only be 200,000 chimpanzees left in Africa—down from maybe a million at the turn of the 20th century. Goodall added that in 20 years, the only nonhuman apes left might be those in captivity.

In the U.S.

Many primates here in the U.S. face challenging fates of a different sort.

Great apes (chimpanzees, orangutans, gorillas, bonobos) are on the endangered species list. However, in the U.S., they are classified only as "threatened," because it is illegal to perform biomedical research on species classified as endangered.

Animal activists say it's not right that these social creatures should be forced to live solitary lives in 5'x 5'x7' cages, where they are anesthetized and injected with chemicals, germs and diseases on a daily basis.

Left: Chimpanzees enjoying their enriched sanctuary environment.



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For decades now, researchers have been testing our closest relatives with HIV/AIDS. Unfortunately for both parties, the HIV virus replicates differently in chimpanzee cells than in human cells, one of the slight differences caused by the 1% DNA variation between us.

From this arises two problems: there is still no known cure for the syndrome and now, many of these chimpanzees are no longer needed by the researchers. This has created a surplus of chimpanzees who will live well into their fifties, with no one to care for them.

There is not enough money currently available to build enough sanctuaries for the hundreds of chimps that are now in the biomedical labs.

Shirley McGreal, of the International Primate Protection League (IPPL) commented: "I hope that in fifty years there won't be primate labs, and probably there won't be, because by that time we'll have killed all the primates."

ChimpanZoo

The ChimpanZoo Conference, sponsored by the Jane Goodall Institute, coincided with the Roots & Shoots Day of Peace celebration.

According to ChimpanZoo's website, ChimpanZoo is a worldwide network "to increase public awareness about the plight of chimpanzees and to increase understanding of chimpanzee behavior; to assist zoos in their efforts to improve the habitats and conditions for captive chimpanzees; to facilitate the exchange of information on ways to enrich the lives of captive chimpanzees."

Many zoos in the United States have

business, and occasionally from biomedical research labs. Because these animals have often been brought up as actors or pets, or have lived in solitary confinement, they have not properly learned "chimp" behavior.

For this reason, caretakers at zoos need to take special precautions when introducing new animals to an existing group of chimpanzees, because they already have an established social hierarchy. New chimps can be attacked by the ones already in residence.

Over the years, zookeepers have learned a lot about animal social, behavioral, reproductive, and dietary needs, enabling them to improve conditions for the animals. More naturalistic enclosures and behavioral enrichment (ropes, trees, etc.) have replaced the barren concrete floors and fence cages that provided little to no stimulation.

Zoos have developed techniques using positive reinforcement to manage chimpanzees that require less human interaction. The goal is to let the chimpanzees live their lives as free of people as possible.

Sanctuaries

Animal actors only work until about six years of age, when they become too large and too risky to handle; then they live fifty more years, often discarded with no regard to their future care.

There are nine sanctuaries in North America (including Fauna Foundation in Canada). A speaker at the ChimpanZoo Conference, Sybil Urden from the Board of Directors of the American Sanctuary Association, said that "sanctuaries remain the only option for many animals when their usefulness as entertainment, research, breeding or working animals comes to an end."

It costs approximately \$15,000 to care for one chimpanzee for one year in a sanctuary setting. Multiply that by the chimp's life span in captivity, and you have a half-million to one million dollar commitment per chimp.

All of the sanctuaries in North America are overburdened and over capacity. Patti Ragan, director of the Center for Great Apes in Wauchula, Florida, claimed she never intended to take in more than fifteen animals, because they don't come with funding, and it is just too costly to care for them.

But she currently cares for 14 orangutans and 28 chimpanzees, lamenting, "How can I turn my back on them?"

Several sanctuaries have been established in Africa, but the need for shelter continuously increases as more animals are orphaned by the bushmeat trade or as villages encroach on their territory.

Several speakers at the ChimpanZoo conference, which took place in the heart of show biz country, decried the use of animals

What You Can Do

"It is up to us as individuals" to make a positive change, said Goodall. She kept coming back to this theme over the course of three days.

"I truly feel change," she said. "I know there is violence, poverty. But people in elite classes are looking for a new way to help these less fortunate."

Learn more, and get involved. Support your local zoos and sanctuaries, and offer help to organizations working in Africa.

For those readers interested in learning more, the following website addresses are provided.

Resources

- <http://janegoodall.org/>
- <http://chimpanzoo.org/>
- <http://www.rootsandshoots.org/>
- <http://bushmeat.org/>
- <http://www.releasechimps.org/>
- <http://ippl.org>



Jane Goodall in her natural habitat, with some dear friends.



Jane Goodall with author Katie Hall. Katie Hall, who grew up in Brentwood, is a senior at UC San Diego where she is majoring in Biological Anthropology and Spanish Literature. She has worked and played with primates almost her entire life and is currently researching bonobo socio-cognitive development at the San Diego Zoo.



Virginia Landau, Jane Goodall Institute, led the ChimpanZoo conference, entitled "War of the Worlds, Chimpanzee Protection vs. Chimpanzee Exploitation."



Susan Lutter of the Gorilla Foundation in Woodside, CA. The Gorilla Foundation studies Koko, an ape that has learned over 1,000 words in sign language.