



Center for Great Apes
Wauchula, FL
Patti Ragan, Founder

November 24, 2015

Chimpanzee Sanctuary
Northwest
Cle Elum, WA
JB Mulcahy, Co-Director

Erinn Sowle
Suburban Ford
37000 Highway 26
Sandy OR 97055

Chimp Haven
Keithville, LA
Cathy Spraez,
President and CEO

Dear Ms. Sowle,

We write to you in response to Suburban Auto Group's "Trunk Monkey" ad campaign that involves a trained chimpanzee. When you use primates in advertising, you are giving the world a very skewed and inaccurate message about these complex and intelligent animals.

Chimps, Inc.
Bend, OR
Lesley Day, Founder

The entire lifetime of a primate is negatively affected when they are used in entertainment. As infants, they are removed from their mothers at a very early age – *years* before they would naturally separate. They are trained using methods that intimidate and inhibit their innate behaviors. Even then, the strength and unpredictable nature of these wild animals means that they can only be used for a short time as actors before they become too independent, unmanageable, and dangerous. Apes are then deemed useless to the entertainment industry, and sold into situations that range from uncomfortable to downright harmful. The lucky ones are able to spend the remaining 50 years of their life in a primate sanctuary.

Cleveland Amory Black
Beauty Ranch
Murchison, TX
Noelle Almrud,
Director of Animal Care

The chimpanzees used in these commercials were leased from notorious animal trainer Sid Yost, who was documented injuring the animals in his care – even hitting them with a mallet. Your campaign relies heavily on images of chimpanzee smiles, but these facial expressions are actually a reflection of chimpanzee fear. This is what your campaign is promoting.

Fauna Foundation
Quebec, Canada
Gloria Grow, Founder

Large corporations like Pfizer have responded favorably to outcry in response to ads showcasing performing apes, and have pledged to no longer engage in this practice. Innovative CGI replacements are proven to gain companies positive media attention in a more animal-friendly way. The top ten advertising agencies in the U.S. have all pledged not to use apes in their campaigns, with some forswearing the usage of nonhuman primates altogether. This is the prevailing culture of advertising, and in order to remain current, your dealership should consider doing the same.

Jungle Friends
Gainesville, FL
Kari Bagnall, Founder

Primate Rescue Center
Nicholasville, KY
April Truitt, Founder

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) was founded in 2010 by the directors of seven of the leading chimpanzee sanctuaries on the continent. We care for former ape actors in our sanctuaries, and we see how their lives have been damaged by their involvement in television and film. Attached is our advocacy position statement on this topic.

Erika Fleury
Program Manager

We hope you will reconsider the message Suburban Auto Group spreads with its advertising campaigns. The usage of ape actors is archaic, harmful and in poor taste.

Sincerely,

Erika Fleury
Program Manager



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*Erika Fleury
Program Manager*

Advocacy Position Statement Performing Primates

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) is opposed to the use of trained primates for entertainment. As experts in the field of primate care, we respectfully ask the public not to support public events featuring trained monkeys and apes.

While such performances may seem amusing on the surface, the primates used in these spectacles are poorly treated. Although the records of many animal rental operators are generally less than stellar, and training and housing conditions can be incredibly stressful (and often abusive), the simple fact that primates are forced to dress up and perform on cue in a terribly unnatural situation is reason enough to avoid such events.

The entire lifetime of a primate is negatively affected when they are exploited for entertainment. As infants, they are removed from their mothers at a very early age – years before they would naturally separate. They are trained using methods that intimidate and inhibit their innate behaviors. Even then, the intelligence and unpredictable nature of these wild animals means that they often can only be used for a short time as actors before they become too independent, unmanageable, and dangerous. Primates are then deemed useless to the entertainment industry, and sold into situations that range from uncomfortable to downright harmful. The lucky ones are able to spend the remaining years of their life in a primate sanctuary.

NAPSA was founded in 2010 by the directors of seven of the leading chimpanzee sanctuaries on the continent. In our member sanctuaries, we care for over 600 primates, many of whom were formerly used in entertainment. We see how primates are forever damaged by the work forced upon them, and we look forward to the day when such archaic practices are no longer permitted.

For more information:

["Apes in Media and Commercial Performances," Association of Zoos & Aquariums](#)

["Bengals Shocking Half-Time 'Cowboy Monkey' Has a Cruel History," The Dodo](#)

["Chimpanzees in Entertainment," ChimpCARE](#)

["Great Apes in Entertainment," Jane Goodall Institute Australia](#)

["Impact of Visual Context on Public Perceptions of Non-Human Primate Performers," K. A. Leighty et al.](#)