



August 29, 2018

Meigs County Fair Directors
Sent via email: debbie@themeigscountyfair.com

Dear Fair Directors,

Concerned attendees of the 2018 Meigs County Fair have notified animal welfare experts about a vendor that had a capuchin monkey dressed in clothing and chained to a leash. We have video footage of this monkey jumping onto people's shoulders for photo opportunities. Although the monkey may seem cute and harmless, there are a number of serious concerns about this practice.

It is harmful for monkeys to be handled by the public. Encouraging contact between humans and exotic animals is dangerous to all involved, and very frowned upon by authorities. It is not in the best interest of monkeys to be present at public events as this is frightening to them. What may be most concerning to you is the liability involved - disease can be transferred and people can be bitten or scratched if the animal reacts suddenly (which is highly likely. Primates can never be domesticated.)

Forcing monkeys to perform and interact with humans gives the world a very inaccurate message about these complex and intelligent animals. Trained primates are torn from their mothers *years* before they would naturally separate, and their life of training and handling denies them opportunities to lead a healthy species-typical life, and instead leads to social disorders, self-injurious behavior, depression, and aggression.

It is unhealthy for monkeys to wear clothing. Wearing human clothes and diapers can cause monkeys to develop skin ailments and permanent disfigurement.

We see evidence of these dangers every day in the monkeys living in our sanctuaries, many of whom started their lives in entertainment. The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) is a coalition of nine of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent care for over 730 rescued primates. So you may learn more, our advocacy position statement on the use of primates in entertainment is attached.

An increasing number of attractions have forsworn the archaic use of monkey entertainment, including the Northport Firemen's Fair (NY) and the Alachua County Fair (FL) and a lengthy list of minor league sports teams. If you pledge to no longer hire monkey entertainers, we would be happy to publicly commend your fair for its consideration of animal welfare (with your permission, of course. This can also be kept private.) NAPSA urges you to follow the compassionate lead of your peers and reconsider scheduling acts that harm animals, for the good of the animals and public perception of your event.

Sincerely,

Erika Fleury
Program Director



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 is a coalition of nine of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our member sanctuaries, we care for over 730 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:

["The Use of Primate "Actors" in Feature Films 1990–2013," Brooke Catherine Aldrich](#)

["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](#)

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

["Opposition to the Use of Nonhuman Primates in the Media," International Primatological Society](#)

["Atypical Experiences of Captive Chimpanzees \(Pan Troglodytes\) Are Associated with Higher Hair Cortisol Concentrations as Adults," S.L. Jacobson et al.](#)

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