



June 12, 2019

Gina Durante and Heather Bonato, Co-owners  
Yoga Hive Philly  
Via email: [yogahivephilly@gmail.com](mailto:yogahivephilly@gmail.com)

Dear Ms. Durante and Ms. Bonato,

We recently learned that Yoga Hive Philly is planning a One Year Anniversary celebration on July 20th featuring “Yoga with Monkeys, Lambs, Bunnies and More.” Though the use of any animal for this purpose is troubling, the North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) respectfully asks you that you reconsider the inclusion of monkeys in this event due to animal welfare concerns.

**While it may seem amusing on the surface, encouraging the use of primates at public events is harmful and dangerous to all involved, and very frowned upon by authorities.** Though a promotional [Philadelphia Inquirer article](#) mentions that the monkeys will be contained “in crates” and not roaming freely, the very fact that they will be forced to attend this celebration is concerning. There is a reason why reputable sanctuaries never loan out their animals - because of the high risks of disease transfer and injury to both the animals and the humans. Primates can never be domesticated. Monkeys typically find public places frightening and stressful. Why would Yoga Hive Philly want to be associated with this?

NAPSA is a coalition of eight of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our sanctuaries, we care for close to 800 primates, many of whom were formerly privately owned as pets or entertainers. We see daily, lifelong effects of maternal deprivation from infant primates who were bred for training as entertainers, including social disorders, self-injurious behavior and depression. The monkeys potentially attending your event should be with their mothers and social groups instead of being exploited.

An increasing number of attractions have forsworn attractions with live monkeys, in response to protests, negative publicity and increased awareness about the harms of primates in entertainment, including the Alachua County Fair (FL), Brookhaven Fair (NY), Cecil County Fair (MD), Hudson Valley Fair (NY), Northport Firemen’s Fair (NY), and Uncle Sam Jam Fest (MI), as well as Minor League baseball teams the Hartford Yard Goats, the Lexington Legends, the West Michigan White Caps and the Williamsport Crosscutters, Atlantic League teams the Long Island Ducks, Sugar Land Skeeters and York Revolution, and Northwoods League teams the Kalamazoo Growlers and the Madison Mallards.

Your website mentions your “shared love for animals” and desire to improve the well-being of those around you, but including a crated monkey at a yoga event is the complete antithesis to this. Please reconsider this and if you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Erika Fleury'.

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 eight of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our member sanctuaries, we care for close to 800 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.