

SWOOSIE

The Honorable Dave Heineman
Governor of Nebraska
Lincoln Office, State Capitol
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

1 page via fax: 402-471-6031

Dear Governor Heineman:

As a native of the great state of Nebraska, I was saddened to learn from my friends at PETA about the tragic deaths of three chimpanzees—Reuben, Jimmy Joe, and Tyler—who escaped from their cage and were shot dead at Zoo Nebraska on September 10. What concerns me now, however, is the fate of the surviving chimpanzee, Ripley. Zoo Nebraska Director Ken Schlueter has transferred Ripley to an unsuitable facility in Missouri that breeds and sells exotic animals and tears baby animals away from their mothers. Ripley is likely consumed with heartbreak over the loss of his companions. He desperately needs to be relocated to a sanctuary where he will be provided with lots of space, a nurturing environment, and special care by experienced caretakers for the rest of his life.

Would you please use your considerable influence to encourage Zoo Nebraska to do the right thing by retiring Ripley to a sanctuary? It is the only humane and compassionate choice in this situation.

Although he is still just a teenager, Ripley has had a difficult life. He was discarded by the entertainment industry once he became too big and strong to perform on TV and in movies. Zoo Nebraska then profited from Ripley for years, and now, because of human carelessness, Ripley has lost his three companions.

I understand that many of Ripley's family members, including his father, and companions he knew before arriving at Zoo Nebraska have been retired to a wonderful sanctuary that has agreed to accept Ripley. It is only right that Ripley also be given the opportunity to retire with dignity with the comfort of friends and family. Zoo Nebraska owes him that.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you. I can be reached immediately through Lisa Wathne at PETA at 206-367-0228 or LisaW@peta.org.

Regards,



Swoosie Kurtz

SWOOSIE

Mr. Dan Curran
Nebraska Department of Tourism
PO Box 98907
Lincoln, NE 68509

1 page via fax: 402-471-3026

Dear Mr. Curran:

As a native of the great state of Nebraska, I am writing to ask the Nebraska Department of Tourism to remove Zoo Nebraska from the list of state attractions on your Web site.

According to media reports, on September 10, four chimpanzees at Zoo Nebraska escaped after zoo workers failed to properly lock the chimpanzees' cage after cleaning it. The chimpanzees confronted zoo visitors, and at least one of the animals—possibly all four—walked into the town of Royal, where they attempted to enter businesses and where one chimp allegedly chased a teenage boy into his home. When the animals tried to enter the building where zoo visitors and employees had taken refuge, three of the four chimpanzees were shot and killed. Ripley, the surviving chimpanzee, was transferred to an unsuitable facility in Missouri that breeds and sells exotic animals and tears baby animals away from their mothers.

Several wonderful sanctuaries have offered to take Ripley, including a facility where Ripley's father and companions he knew before arriving at Zoo Nebraska are living. After seeing his friends gunned down around him, it is only right that Ripley also be given the opportunity to retire with dignity and with the comfort of friends and family. Yet despite pleas from many animal protection organizations and even renowned primatologist Jane Goodall, Zoo Nebraska has refused to retrieve Ripley from Missouri and transfer him to a more appropriate facility.

Zoo Nebraska's lack of professional standards endangered the lives of zoo visitors and the citizens of Royal, resulted in the deaths of three chimpanzees and has stranded Ripley in a dismal situation. Surely you agree that Zoo Nebraska is not a facility that the Nebraska Department of Tourism should endorse in any way. Won't you please let me know that Zoo Nebraska has been removed from your Web site?

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you. I can be reached immediately through Lisa Wathne at PETA at 206-367-0228 or LisaW@peta.org.

Regards,



Swoosie Kurtz

SWOOSIE

Ken Schlueter, Director
Zoo Nebraska
P.O. Box 26
Royal, NE 68773

1 page via fax: 402-893-5151

Dear Ken,

I was saddened to learn from my friends at PETA about the tragic deaths of three chimpanzees—Reuben, Jimmie Joe, and Tyler—who escaped from their cage on September 10. What concerns me now, however, is the fate of the surviving chimpanzee, Ripley, whom you have transferred to a facility in Missouri that apparently profits from breeding exotic animals and tearing baby animals away from their mothers in order to hand-raise them and show them off to the public. I can only imagine the heartbreaking fate that Ripley, who is already traumatized, faces at this facility.

It is my understanding that Ripley was torn from his mother's arms as a baby in order to be trained for TV and movies and was then abandoned by the entertainment industry once he became too big and strong to reliably perform. Now, after seeing his friends gunned down around him, he has been sent to live among strangers at a facility that removes babies from their mothers and exploits animals by renting them out for birthday parties and other affairs. I understand that many of Ripley's family members, including his father, and companions he knew before arriving at Zoo Nebraska have been retired to a wonderful sanctuary that has agreed to accept Ripley. It is only right that Ripley also be given the opportunity to retire with dignity and the comfort of friends and family.

It deeply disheartens me to imagine Ripley, who has been through so much already, trapped in a desolate cage, far from family and friends.

Please, do the right thing and retire Ripley to a sanctuary. It is the only humane and compassionate choice in this situation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Swoosie Kurtz". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Swoosie Kurtz