Overcoming the Barriers
to the Retirement of Old and New World
Monkeys from Research Facilities


Commentary by:
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MedicRes Conference, 2014

**Background - Author**
- Student Researcher/ Research Specialist
- Worked with 97 rhesus monkeys 1999-2004
- No primate retirement programs exist in Wisconsin
- Realized other researchers were retiring monkeys

**DO THE UPRIGHT THING:**
SUPPORT PRIMATE RETIREMENT!

[Image: Primate Retirement Program logo]
The Need for More Monkey Sanctuaries

- C.H.I.M.P Act est. 2010 - federal funding to retire chimpanzees
- Limited space at the existing eight monkey sanctuaries – stories of researchers getting turned away due to lack of space

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Background – Progress at Primates Incorporated

- Established nonprofit organization in 2004
- Raising funds to construct a primate sanctuary in Wisconsin
- After a lot of hard work, networking, and fundraising, we are debt-free owners of 17 acres of land in Westfield, WI
- $30,000 raised toward our goal of $450,000

More info: www.primatesinc.com
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Methods

- Created list of challenges (barriers) in the laboratory when discussing the notion of retiring monkeys after their research
- Asked various forums for input:
  - Laboratory Animal Refinement and Enrichment Forum (LAREF)
  - Primfocus form (all-topic primate forum)
  - Primate Sanctuaries Forum
- Sent survey to sanctuary directors
- Compiled barriers; asked all participants for solutions

Retirement Success Story

Pearly Sue
OPR Coastal Primate Sanctuary
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**Barriers**

**Comments from research community**
- High demand – need to reuse the monkeys
- Fear of Being “Labeled”
- Cost and convenience – cheaper to euthanize than to send to a sanctuary
- Trust issues – prefer term “retire” over “rescue”

**Comments from sanctuary community**
- Do not want to cause more breeding
- The sanctuaries are already filled with pet monkeys, they don’t have the time or resources to help them
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How to Overcome the Barriers (Justify Primate Retirement):

Turn to Literature from Laboratory Community:

**Improve Morale**
American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS) document:
*Cost of Caring: Human Emotions in the Care of Laboratory Animals*

Multiple Species of Animals:
“Allow homes to be found for research animals suitable for adoption (after soliciting institutional and IACUC approval). Consider designating technicians to serve as primary contacts” (p. 3)

Kindness Ranch retires multiple species of animals (no primates)
Retirement Success Stories at the Kindness Ranch

Casper

Antoinette and Simone

More info: kindnessranch.org

--retiring monkeys is costly and challenging - cannot be placed in people’s homes
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How to Overcome the Barriers (Justify Primate Retirement):

Network

- Communicate with researchers who do have a program in place
- Create retirement protocol to standardize process
- Read about retirement success stories
- Open line of communication with accredited monkey sanctuaries – only eight nationwide
- Save time and approach NAPSA for advice: innovative primate sanctuary accreditation organization – help ensure accountability and transparency
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**Monkey Sanctuaries**

- Jungle Friends Primate Sanctuary – Florida
- Born Free Primate Sanctuary – Texas
- Wildlife Rehabilitation and Rescue – Texas
- Retirement Sanctuary for Laboratory Animals (RSLA) – Texas
- Black Beauty Ranch – Texas
- Primate Rescue Center – Kentucky
- Mindy’s Memory Primate Sanctuary – Oklahoma
- OPR Coastal Primate Sanctuary – Washington

*Up and coming primate sanctuaries:*
- Peaceable Primate Sanctuary in Indiana – already have waiting lists
- Primates Incorporated – Westfield, WI
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How to Overcome the Barriers (Justify Primate Retirement):

Planning

- Develop confidentiality clause with the sanctuary if needed
- Sanctuary will need funds to cover one year of care and habitat construction
- May also require vasectomy, health records, physical, and transportation
- Request funds in grant proposal or university’s foundation or other resource
- Or host private fundraising event – donations are tax-deductible if donated directly to the future sanctuary that will accommodate the monkeys
Questions?

Journal article is available at:

www.primatesinc.com/resources

Select “articles” and download for free courtesy of J.A.A.W.S.

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Retirement Success Story
George
OPR Coastal Primate Sanctuary