

www.centerforgreatapes.org

STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

From: Patti Ragan, Director, Center for Great Apes

Date: June 27, 2009

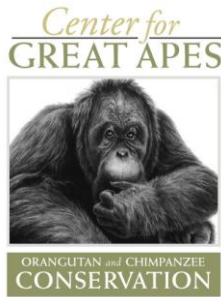
Patti Ragan, Director of the **Center for Great Apes**, issued the following statement in response to the numerous inquiries regarding **Bubbles**, the chimpanzee formerly owned by pop star Michael Jackson. This statement is intended to provide clear information to the most frequently asked questions from the media during this time of intense interest.

Bubbles, the chimpanzee formerly owned by Michael Jackson, has been cared for by the Center for Great Apes (CGA), a sanctuary for chimpanzees and orangutans in need of lifetime care, since 2005. When Bubbles became too large to be handled by Jackson, he lived his earlier years at the California compound of Bob Dunn, Michael Jackson's animal trainer. In 2005, Dunn retired from the business of working chimpanzees and orangutans and sent all his apes, including Bubbles, to the Center for Great Apes in Florida.

The Center for Great Apes is a private, non-profit sanctuary that provides an enriching, healthy environment where apes, previously owned as pets or worked as entertainers, can live the remainder of their lives in large, naturalistic environments with others of their own species.

The success of CGA is dependent on donations in order to care for the 42 chimpanzees and orangutans that live at the sanctuary. It costs an average of \$43 a day (or \$16,000 per year), to care for a single great ape at the refuge with apes having a life expectancy of 50 years or more. All support for the care of Bubbles has come from our members and individual contributors who care about the welfare of our primate residents.

Anyone who wishes to participate in the care of Bubbles and the other apes at CGA can make donations online at www.centerforgreatapes.org .



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The sanctuary provides a safe haven for these great apes and is dedicated to maintaining a peaceful environment at the sanctuary. Therefore, the Center is not open to the public as an attraction or zoo. Donors and members of the sanctuary provide financial support for the care of the apes, and at the discretion of the Center director, may be invited to visit the sanctuary to see their support at work. Membership information may be found at www.centerforgreatapes.org.

Responses to Frequently Asked Questions from Media

BUBBLES & RESIDENTS

Bubbles was born at a biomedical research facility in Austin, Texas in 1983. While still an infant, he was purchased for Michael Jackson by animal trainer Bob Dunn. There are 42 resident apes (28 chimpanzees and 14 orangutans) at the Center for Great Apes. Profiles on each ape are available at www.centerforgreatapes.org.

FUNDING

It is unknown or undecided if any specific support will be provided for Bubbles by Michael Jackson's estate or family. To this date, all donations for his care have come from the Center for Great Ape's supporters. We depend on donations in order to care for all our animals in need.

VISITS

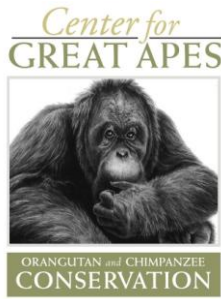
Michael Jackson expressed the desire and intention to visit Bubbles residing at the Center for Great Apes in Florida, but due to his schedule and activities had not yet had a chance to do so. It is not known if his children ever met Bubbles before he arrived at the Center's Florida sanctuary.

ACCESS

As a private non-profit sanctuary, the Center for Great Apes' priority is maintaining a safe haven and peaceful habitat for the apes. Therefore, the sanctuary is not open to the public as an attraction.

At the discretion of the sanctuary director, CGA donors may be invited to visit the sanctuary to see their support at work.

Center for Great Apes has an educational outreach program, but **no** animals are ever taken off grounds for lectures and presentations.



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IMPORTANT: Media wanting to come to the sanctuary to photograph the sanctuary and its apes must make prior arrangements and must be pre-approved by the Board of Directors. All requests must be submitted on a Media Request Form. Media and general public will not be allowed into the sanctuary if they arrive without prior arrangements.

PHOTOS:

- Sanctuary photos are available to the press by request to: center@centerforgreatapes.org
- Portrait photos can be purchased from photographer Dr. Joe Zammit-Lucia at: joezl@zmatheson.com. (NOTE: A portion of these funds will be donated back to the Center for Great Apes)
- Media wishing to come to the sanctuary to photograph the sanctuary and its apes must make prior arrangements and must be pre-approved by the Director (via a Media Request Form). Media and general public will not be allowed into the sanctuary if they arrive without prior appointments.

The Center for Great Apes

The Center for Great Apes, founded in 1993, is one of only 10 chimpanzee sanctuaries in North America. The sanctuary was established to provide a suitable home for chimpanzees and orangutans that are in need of care for the remainder of their lives. The great apes at the Center have arrived from the entertainment & advertising industry, roadside zoos, and private pet owners. They have backgrounds in circuses, biomedical labs, movies, and television. Most of the apes were admitted to the sanctuary by request of their owners and some are learning to live with their own species for the first time in their lives.

*The Center for Great Apes is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
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the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission.*