



News From

# Maggie Brooks

## Monroe County Executive

For Immediate Release  
Thursday, April 16, 2015

### TWO AFRICAN ELEPHANTS JOIN ZOO'S HERD

*Moki and Chana, 33-year-old females, find permanent home in Rochester*

It is with great pleasure that **County Executive Maggie Brooks**, along with officials from Seneca Park Zoo and the Seneca Park Zoo Society, announces the arrival of two female African elephants to Seneca Park Zoo. Moki (moe-key) and Chana (channah) were born in Zimbabwe in 1982. They come to us from Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens in Jacksonville, Florida.

*“Seneca Park Zoo is a world-class destination and a true treasure of Monroe County,”* said **Brooks**. *“One reason the Association of Zoos and Aquariums recommended that these magnificent animals live at Seneca Park Zoo is because of its first-rate elephant exhibit and excellent African elephant program.”*

Dr. Jeff Wyatt, the Zoo's Director of Animal Health and Conservation, was with the elephants on their journey from Jacksonville.

*“There is always an inherent risk in transporting any animal, but we took every precaution to ensure a safe trip,”* said Wyatt. *“Health records for Moki and Chana indicate that they are in good health and neither were sedated during the journey.”*

*“The elephants were in a climate-controlled animal transport semitrailer driven by one of the nation's expert animal movers. I, along with additional animal care staff, followed behind.”*

The Zoo's resident elephants, Genny C and Lilac have fascinated Seneca Park Zoo guests for more than three decades since their arrival in 1979. The addition of Moki and Chana to the group will add to both the visitor experience and the Zoo's successful efforts in promoting elephant conservation. These iconic animals are a flagship species within the Zoo's collection. Current estimates suggest there are approximately 450,000 left in their natural range. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists them as vulnerable.

*“Modern zoos and aquariums are more than entertainment destinations: they are environmental organizations with a mandate to educate and inspire their visitors to act on behalf of animals to save them from extinction,”* said Pamela Reed Sanchez, Executive Director of the Seneca Park Zoo Society. *“One of the ways we can measure our success in this area is through the donations our visitors make while they are here, which the Zoo Society then invests in international efforts such as the International Elephant Foundation (IEF).”*

-more-

Two African elephants have joined the Zoo's herd

Genny C and Lilac moved from their old exhibit in the Zoo's Main Building to a state-of-the-art facility in what would become *A Step Into Africa* in 2006. A splash pool was added in 2008 and additional stalls and other enhancements to allow for better management of multiple elephants in 2012. The total investment to the elephant habitat totals nearly \$7.5 million.

*“For the first time since Genny C and Lilac were calves, they are meeting — and living with — other elephants,”* said Larry Sorel, County Zoo Director. *“We have a strong program with fiercely dedicated staff and wonderful animals. I am confident our talented team will work tirelessly and do everything necessary to ensure we have a well-adjusted group.”*

Seneca Park Zoo will be hosting a press conference next week. At that time, all members of media will receive updates on the elephants and how they are acclimating to their new home. Until then, follow the County Executive and Seneca Park Zoo on social media for information. Look for the hashtag #BIGnewsforSPZ.

###

***Media Inquiries, contact:***

*Seneca Park Zoo Communications at 336-7201*

*Monroe County Communications at 753-1080*