

ALAN CUMMING

June 1, 2017

Connie Braun Casey
President
Missouri Primate Foundation

Via e-mail: Chimparty@aol.com

Dear Connie,

Greetings from New York. I'm writing to you about a mutual friend: Tonka.

I worked closely with him on the 1997 film *Buddy*. My character had many scenes with him, and we developed a very close camaraderie during the months when we filmed. By the end of the shoot, his trainers let him groom me. It was a special friendship—one I'll always treasure. I hoped to see Tonka the following year at the film's premiere but was told that he was no longer manageable and had been "retired to Palm Springs." Over the past 20 years, I imagined him living out his post-Hollywood years on a sprawling sanctuary.

I just learned, though, that Tonka didn't end up at a sanctuary in Palm Springs but inside a cage in Festus, where he isn't able to have complex social relationships with other chimpanzees and doesn't have meaningful outdoor access to run, climb, or play.

Connie, even though we've never met, I believe in my heart that you feel great affection for Tonka and the other chimpanzees at MPF. But lifetime care for a dozen sophisticated, intelligent chimpanzees requires a team—and terrain where they can roam and socialize. As an old friend of Tonka's, I respectfully ask that you allow him and the chimpanzees at MPF to be sent to accredited sanctuaries where they can enjoy some semblance of the life that nature intended for them.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Kindest regards,



Alan Cumming