

Seneca Park Zoo, 2222 St. Paul St., Rochester

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Medical doctors, veterinarians team up for animal exam

Dara, the Zoo's 11-year-old orangutan, will receive echocardiograms as part of a Great Ape Heart Healthy program

Rochester, NY — August 17, 2011 - Monroe County's Seneca Park Zoo is eager and honored to be partnering with Dr. Karl Schwarz from the University of Rochester Medical Center for a procedure that will take place at **9 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 18.**

Dara, the Zoo's 11-year-old Bornean orangutan, will receive a trans-cutaneous echocardiogram (external) and trans-esophageal echocardiogram (internal) as part of a Great Ape Heart Healthy program.

"We've learned over the last 10 years that Great Apes are at risk of heart disease," said Jeff Wyatt, the Zoo's Director of Animal Health & Conservation Science and Professor & Chair of the Department of Comparative Medicine at the University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry. "Procedures like the one we are performing on Dara help us determine if there are patterns and/or changes in the heart muscle of great apes."

This is the third procedure of its kind the Zoo has performed. In 2000, Jiggs, Dara's father, had it done. In 2007, Kumang, Dara's mother, underwent the procedure. Both Jiggs and Kumang were found to be heart healthy and the Zoo expects the same outcome for Dara.

The plan is for Dara to return to her enclosure in the Zoo's Main Building on Thursday following the procedure. Seneca Park Zoo remains the home of the only Bornean orangutans in New York State.

Please join us at 9 a.m. this Thursday to watch as this procedure takes place in the Zoo's Animal Hospital. Wyatt, the Zoo's veterinarian, will be available to answer questions following the procedure.

Please note: The Zoo does not open until 9:30 a.m. for members; 10 a.m. for the general public. This procedure is open to media only. Gates will open at their regular time and if the procedure is still going on, visitors may watch.

Seneca Park Zoo is owned and operated by Monroe County. The Seneca Park Zoo Society is a not-for-profit organization which has, since 1957, provided education, fundraising, special events and public relations support to Monroe County's Seneca Park Zoo. The Society offers various levels of membership to the Seneca Park Zoo, which includes discounted and/or free admission to more than 170 zoos and aquariums across the country. For additional information, visit www.senecaparkzoo.org.