

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

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Zoo announces death of female Amur leopard

Rochester, NY – May 11, 2010 — Monroe County’s Seneca Park Zoo regrettably announces the passing of Nikita, the 17-year-old female Amur leopard who came to the Zoo from the Audubon Zoo in May of 2002. Nikita was one of the oldest Amur leopards in captivity. The oldest on record is 20.

According to Dr. Jessica Keen, a veterinary resident at the Seneca Park Zoo, the leopard suffered from chronic age-related kidney failure. The official cause of death will not be confirmed until we receive pathology results in about four to six weeks.

Nikita was born on July 16, 1992 at the St. Louis Zoo. Nikita was the last Amur leopard in the Zoo’s collection.

“Nikita was a rather shy feline who had a close relationship with her keepers,” said Larry Sorel, County Zoo Director. “Her long life was a testament to the high quality of care the animals receive here at the Zoo and she will be missed by our staff and many visitors.”

The Amur leopard is the most endangered big cat in the world and is on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s (IUCN) Critically Endangered Red List. There are only 25 to 35 Amur leopards left in their natural habitat.

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, check us out on the Web at: www.senecaparkzoo.org.