

July 2016

A Membership Newsletter

A Message from President of ACE

by Donna Mayer Todd

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

Gene and I saw this quote in mid-May when we visited the Camp Helen State Park in Panama City, Florida. I immediately thought not of local government or community action or even teachers, who certainly can change the world. I thought first of the Ape Conservation Effort.

The thought has remained with me that this small group of committed folk in the Ape Conservation Effort organization has and is still working to change the world through our mission to help save the great apes. It is exciting to think of what our organization has accomplished and

hopefully will this year, and recognize it as a world changing effort. Raising and distributing over \$145,000 in 10 years has certainly helped. Spreading awareness of the great apes' conservation situation certainly helps. We are hoping to spread the word to some new people through our Acro for Apes, Bingo for Bonobos, Gorilla Golf, and Apes in the Arts events.

We are very excited to be planning to host Karmele Llano Sanchez for a talk about orangutans and the work of International Animal Rescue (IAR) on August 30, 2016. Dr. Sanchez is the founder and Programme Director of IAR Indonesia, a group to which we have donated. They rescue and rehabilitate stranded or illegally sold orangutans, many of whom are infants. They were also very active in saving orangutans during the fires in Borneo last year. Please plan to come and bring a friend!

ACE is also currently working to create an education packet that any of us could use to speak to small groups ranging from young children to adults. We plan to have that ready for 2017. If you would like to be more active in ACE, there is something for you to do. There is always something for thoughtful committed citizens to do.

Acro for Apes Is A New Fundraiser for ACE

by Lori Kirkland

Acro for Apes Workshop will be a new and fun fundraising event! AcroYoga is a type of partner movement that combines the healing and balance of yoga with the art and joy of acrobatics. And the Acro community in Atlanta is growing, so ACE decided to get with some of the instructors to continue our groups in an

evening of basic acromove (no experience necessary!!) and an opportunity to get our message about the ape conservation out to a wider audience. There will be light snacks and drinks.

This event will be held at InTown Tumbling in Atlanta, on August 1, 2016, from 7:30 - 9 (because we know how bad traffic is). We will advertise for tickets in July in all of our normal places. This will be a really cool opportunity to come try something "out of the box" and help spread the word about apes and why we need them in the world! See the event flyer at the end of the newsletter!



photo by: www.atlantaacro.com

For more information about acroyoga see:
www.atlantaacro.com, or on facebook - AcroYogaAtlanta.



photo by: Zoo Atlanta
Laura Mayo

Laura Mayo Joins Project Chimps

Laura Mayo, former assistant curator of primates at Zoo Atlanta and ACE member, has become the supervisor of chimpanzee care at Project Chimps.

The following article by Ameena Schelling explains Project Chimps, appeared in www.thedodo.com on May 3, 2016.

Hundreds of Chimps Who Grew Up In A Lab Are About To Be Set Free

"More than 200 chimps who spent their lives in a lab are about to have their first taste of freedom. Among their number will be Hercules and Leo, two chimps who have been the focus of a years-long battle by Jane Goodall and other advocates to free them.

The New Iberia Research Center - a University of Louisiana research facility that has long attracted criticism for its

extensive chimp research program - has agreed to release its population of 220 chimps into the care of Project Chimps, a new sanctuary that just announced its creation on Tuesday.

"We're making history here," Sarah Baeckler Davis, president of Project Chimps, said in a statement. "It's an unprecedented collaboration and a momentous occasion for chimpanzees."

It will be one of the largest chimp releases in history, and the first time that a private research program has agreed to release all of its chimps - reflecting a significant change in public acceptance of chimp experimentation.

"There is one 1-year-old, that's the youngest, and they go up through grandmas and grandpas," Baeckler Davis told The Dodo. The oldest is 50. Most of the 220 chimps were born into New Iberia's breeding program; the oldest ones were likely taken from the wild. "It's a whole new world for these guys," Baeckler Davis added.

The chimps' new home will be on an expansive 236-acre property in Blue Ridge, Georgia. The sanctuary can currently house around 100 animals, and Project Chimp is building up the

property to house more - it hopes to hold around 300 chimps eventually.

New Iberia plans to send the first 10 animals to Project Chimps in June, which will slowly integrate small groups of chimps into cohesive family groups over the next few years. Baeckler Davis said the sanctuary hopes to create an environment that mirrors wild chimps' fluid social structure. "So they'll come together at certain times and then split off," she said.

While all of the chimps have their own stories, Hercules and Leo are probably the best known. Last month, Goodall released a video statement in conjunction with the Nonhuman Rights Project pleading for New Iberia "to release them to sanctuary so that they can live out the rest of their lives in dignity." "There can be no good reason to prolong their lives of servitude," she said of Hercules and Leo at the time. "So please, I beg of you, do the right thing."

In a statement on Tuesday, Goodall congratulated Project Chimps and New Iberia on their agreement, which she called an "historic achievement for chimpanzees." "I am 100 percent in support, and

Two Successful ACE Fundraisers at Kennesaw State University

by Miriam "Mik" Chari

I am a senior at Kennesaw State University and a member of the Ape Conservation Effort. I wanted to share with everyone a couple events we had at KSA last school year to fundraise for ACE. I really enjoyed being a part of these events and was happy to see the support and enthusiasm of the Kennesaw State community as well!



photo by Miriam Chari
Endangered chimpanzee

The first event was held in the Fall 2015 semester. One of my classes was a community engagement colloquium taught by Dr. Mary de Chesney. The focus of the course was to promote and implement Kennesaw State's commitment to educating students on community work. We were given a few options for an end-of-term project one of which was to hold a fundraiser for an organization and/or cause which we supported. I thought of ACE immediately and together with my project-partner, Erica Batista,

started making plans to host a bake sale. In addition, Dr. de Chesney asked for suggestions on speakers to talk to the class. I asked if the class could invite a speaker from ACE and Dr. de Cheney was very enthusiastic about the idea. Laura Mayo was kind enough to offer her time to come to KSU despite still recovering from her surgery. On September 14, Laura gave a wonderful presentation on ACE and the dangers that are faced by the wild populations of great apes.



photo by Miriam Chari
Mik and friends staffing the bake sale

The bake sale was held on October 5 and we set up at a variety of locations on campus including in front of the Commons (the cafeteria) and at the Lifelong Learning Center. Dr. de Chesney set up a separate sale in the faculty lounge area of the Prillaman Health Science building to increase our presence on campus as well. Between all the locations we were able to raise \$102.35 which was all donated to ACE!



photo by Miriam Chari
Yum - love the ape cookies!



photo by Miriam Char
Temptations at the bake sale

The second fundraiser was through the Kennesaw State Pre-Veterinary Medical Association (PVMA). In the 2015-2016 school year, I was the secretary for the club and was helping to organize the PVMA's annual fundraiser. The president of the club, Kyndal Hammontree, asked the group to think about animal-related organizations for which we could raise money. When I suggested ACE, the leadership of the PVMA agreed that this would be a great organization to support.

We decided to do a two-day fundraiser on March 21-22 from 8:00 am to noon both days. The PVMA was thrilled to learn that the Dunkin Donuts located at 2475 Dallas Highway in Marietta, GA would show their support for the KSA

am glad this dream is coming true," she said.

Goodall isn't the only well-known figure to pledge her support to the chimps. A number of other celebrities have also been involved, including Green Day's Billie Joe Armstrong, actress Judy Greer, singer Pink, celebrity cook Rachael Ray (who sponsored the sanctuary's kitchen), tattoo artist Kat Von D and tennis star Serena Williams.

But for Baeckler Davis, the most important thing is that these chimps will finally have somewhere to retire in peace. "It's the project of a lifetime for all of us," she said. "I definitely get teary when I allow myself to think about its magnitude."

Project Chimps will eventually host private educational tours - and there will be webcams for people who can't visit in person."

ACE is thrilled for Laura's new adventure and excited for the 220 chimps who will come to live in the mountains of Georgia.

PVMA and ACE by generously donating eight dozen doughnuts. We are truly thankful to the owners and staff who made this event possible and successful! We raised \$138.40 and were happy to see 100% of the profits go to ACE!

I hope to continue these events in my senior year at KSU and to raise awareness of the plights that the wild great apes face. Even though the total dollar amounts that were collected were not huge, I felt very encouraged by the interest and enthusiasm that I saw from the Kennesaw State faculty, staff, and students about the Ape Conservation Effort. I look forward to continuing to spread the word about the great work that is done by ACE through its support of so many deserving organizations who are dedicated to saving great apes in the wild.



Apes in the Arts Will Be November 5

by Lori Kirkland

The development of this year's Apes in the Arts event is progressing very, very nicely! The Apes in the Arts Committee met for the first time in late May and brainstormed a whole bunch of cool ideas: Moveable walls to present the art, cute little circus games to pass the time, where the money from the event should go and more! An awesome announcement is that the super cool Antonio Raimo, of Antonio Raimo Galleries LLC, agreed to frame all of our wonderful pieces!!!

The art work is starting to flow back in, and below is one of them to show how the artist used the paint strokes of the ape and complete the picture. The ape artist is Bornean orangutan Satu, and human artist is Carol Haile. We can't wait to see what the other artists have done with the other ape art. We are still open to ideas of catering and DJ, so please, please, please email us at

fundraising@apeconservationeffort.org.



photo by: Lori Kirkland
Original art by Satu



photo by: Lori Kirkland
Finished art
by Satu and Carol Haile

The date for the event is November 5, 2016, at The Space in Smyrna, GA, 6:30 - 8:30 pm.
www.thespaceatl.com
and on facebook:
www.facebook.com/thespaceatl.



As the date gets closer, we will start advertising for tickets on our website, Facebook, Twitter, etc. There will be aerial performers like there were last year, as well as light food and beverages while the silent auction is going on. So Save the Date and come out for an evening of fun and support an awesome cause!!!

ACE Helps Sanctuary Great Ape Residents

by Laura Mayo

For the past few years, a zookeeper friend from The Toledo Zoo loads up a van with donations from her zoo and heads south to pick me up in Atlanta. Her van is usually jam packed, but we manage to squeeze in a few donations from ACE members! We then head to Florida on a mission to deliver the donations to our wonderful friends at The Center for Great Apes

www.centerforgreatapes.org.

The Center for Great Apes is a sanctuary for orangutans and chimpanzees who were taken from various inappropriate housing situations for great apes - most are ex-pets (held by private owners in usually very poor conditions) and some are from the entertainment industry (held in very poor housing areas and treated inappropriately in order to be included in film and tv shows). The animals at CGR are the lucky ones - they are treated with the utmost respect and love they deserve and will live the rest of their lives in peace.

We are lucky enough this trip to also get a tour (and to drop off some of our donation pile) of Save The Chimps www.savethechimps.org, another wonderful sanctuary in sunny Florida! Save The Chimps is the largest chimpanzee sanctuary in the world, capable of housing 300 chimps! A lot of their chimpanzees have come out of the laboratory world. The chimps at STC will live out the rest of their lives living in the serenity that the facility and the staff affords them.



photo: Laura Mayo

Packing the car with donations

Sanctuaries rely on donations and private funding to care for their animals, so the donations given to them from ACE were taken in with much excitement! We could see the excitement on the faces of the staff when they saw the piles of fun, but I know the "ape smiles" on the faces of the orangutans and chimpanzees were even bigger!

Thank you to those of you who donated - very much appreciated!!



photo: Laura Mayo

Car overflowing with donations? Can the driver see?

In Search of the Mystery Apes of Bili Forest

by Richard Engel and Aggelos Petropoulos

Bili, Democratic Republic of Congo - Great discoveries often spring from the tiniest of clues: a footnote in a dusty manuscript, a gap between stars or an odd-shaped mound in the desert. The journey to solve the mystery of the Bili apes started when Karl Ammann read a scientific article about some old skulls that were gathering dust at a museum.

This was in the mid-90s and Ammann, a Swiss-born photographer and conservationist, learned that the skulls at the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren, Belgium, had come from a remote part of northern Congo. The skulls had been discovered by Belgian colonizers who gained international infamy a century ago for brutalizing the native

population as they extracted ivory and rubber.

To Ammann, the skulls were a puzzle. They were classified as gorilla skulls, but were said to have been collected from an area that had no known gorilla populations. Were there gorillas there? Could this be new species of apes altogether?

Determined to find out, he set off for the northern tip of the Congo. "This was the ultimate adventure," Ammann said. "It was in a part of Africa that nobody really knew anything about, even in colonial times."

There were also the legends. When Ammann first reached the Bili forest in 1996, local hunters told tales of giant apes who howled at the moon, killed lions and were immune to poisonous darts. Ammann uncovered an ape skull of his own during that first trip to the area, a discovery that only made his explorer's itch grow stronger.

"This was a once in a lifetime opportunity," he says about the decade he spent traveling in and out of the Bili-Uele forest complex, a 12,000-square-mile expanse of tropical forest, its dense green canopy interrupted by vast islands of savannah. "We had to ferry equipment through

rivers on boats," Ammann recalls. "We even built an airstrip."

He found traces of the so called "mystery apes," but the apes themselves remained elusive. It's virtually impossible for a human to keep up with an ape as it moves through the vines, thorns and underbrush. It didn't help that the forest is also home to armies of aggressive ants and swarms of bees that are attracted, in the dry season, to the moisture from humans' sweat and eyes.

Ammann's obsession with the mystery apes attracted attention in conservation circles. He raised money and recruited scientists and volunteers who traveled to the Bili forest to join the effort. American primatologist Cleve Hicks arrived in 2004.

"It was fascinating," Hicks says of the mystery. "There was even speculation that maybe these apes were a hybrid between chimpanzees and gorillas, a new species of great ape, or something else."

Hicks set out to solve the mystery once and for all. With a team of local trackers, he hiked through the Bili forest for weeks at a time. Traveling with few provisions and often sleeping under a fruit tree in order to spot the apes when they came to feed

in the morning, he says he contracted malaria 25 times.

Four years ago, Hicks and a team of scientists set up motion detecting cameras and finally managed to capture clear images of the Bili apes. DNA tests, meanwhile, confirmed that the apes were in fact chimpanzees, not a new species. The mystery had finally been solved, but Hicks' first-hand observations showed that these chimps displayed some very unique behavior.

"They have a different diet, different culture," Hicks says. "They often nest on the ground, like gorillas do and they use the longest tools we have seen in Africa to dip for ants or honey."

Hicks also found that there are many more chimps in Bili than he thought. He claims they are part of the biggest population of wild chimps in the world. Some of the chimps were in areas so remote that Hicks believes they have never encountered humans or been hunted during their lifetime.

"That's why they have no fear of humans, just curiosity," he says. "In fact, they seem like the boss when you get there. They are like 'who are you to come into my kingdom?'"

But the world is now closing in on these chimps' hidden kingdom.

For two decades the Democratic Republic of Congo had been one of the most lawless and bloody warzones in the world. The International Rescue Committee calculated that more than 5 million people have died in the country's civil war. Officially that war, which spilled across national borders, ended over a decade ago but violence continues to plague the Congo. Neighboring countries, including South Sudan, the Central African Republic and some rebel-held areas in northern Uganda still see regular and vicious eruptions of war and violence.

The depths of the forest, which protected the Bili apes for so long, also makes for a great hiding place for humans on the run. Poachers and rebels from Ugandan rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have infiltrated the Bili forest, where they hunt the protected wildlife and prey on local villagers, whom they often kidnap.

The Lord's Resistance Army gained considerable international attention in 2012 when a group of American activists posted an online video about the war crimes of the group's leader, Joseph Kony. The video, which focused on

Kony's enslavement of child soldiers, has been viewed more than 100 million times on YouTube.

In 2011, President Barack Obama sent 100 Special Operations troops to advise and assist the region's armies fighting the LRA. The deployment is part of the U.S. military's general expansion across Africa.

The LRA rebels presence in the Bili forest is part of the reason that the International Division of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has decided to spend \$341,464 to support conservation programs there since 2010. Last year the service, which is part of the Department of the Interior, teamed up with the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), a nongovernmental conservation organization, to sponsor park ranger patrols through the forest. The rangers, part of the national Congolese force, are expected to protect the wildlife while helping to secure the area from rebels. "Before the rangers, this was a lawless area," says AWF Primatologist Jef Dupain who leads the current efforts. "Nobody was doing any kind of protection, nor implementation of security."

To help train the rangers, AWF hired a team of

highly trained graduates of Israel's special forces community from a company called Maisha Consulting. Nir Kalron, a former elite commando who head the company, was in Bili recently teaching Congolese rangers everything from how to safely detain poachers to surviving a firefight. "This is Wild West," Kalron says of the Bili forest. "They are doing much more than preserving the forest. In essence, they are national security (forces)."

*This article was copied from nbcnews.com
Dateline, May 7, 2016.*



Greetings from the Research Committee

By Gene Todd

In researching bonobo non-profit organizations, I have found two organizations headquartered here in the states.

My first contact was with Christina Eichmeier of Bonobo and Congo Biodiversity Initiative.

This group is very active in field research to better understand bonobos and what is needed to help them in their natural habitat. Created in 1997 by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, which provides for a major portion of funding. Their website can be viewed at www.bonoboconservation.com.

Next I spoke with Michael Hurley, the Executive Director of the Bonobo Conservation Initiative. This organization is active in protecting and rescuing bonobos in captivity and returning them to the wild along with education and reforestation. Michael also let me know that one of their board members is a media expert and live in Georgia. He said also that they would be open to providing us with whatever they could including visitation, time permitting. Bonobo Conservation Initiative receives their major funding from individual and organizations. Their website is www.bonobo.org.

I am excited that this year is going to be a great year, and I thank the Research Committee for all of their efforts.

Important Dates to Remember

Acro for Apes - August 1, 2016

International Animal Rescue fundraiser - August 30, 2016

Gorilla Golf - September 27, 2016

ACE General Meeting - October 15, 2016

Apes in the Arts - November 5, 2016

Looking Over Endangered Creatures

by Rebecca Phillips
'76,'81 DVM

Keeping a watchful eye in remote environments with aerial drones.

Stealing through the shadowed plantation, an orangutan stops to feed on the tender shoots of a palm sapling. An instant later, she crumples from a rifle shot, her baby crying out in fear. The infant is eventually rescued and spirited away to a rehabilitation center for release back into the wild.

"At one time there were 2,500 of these orphans in Borneo," says Chuck Pezeshki, a professor of

mechanical and materials engineering at Washington State University. "It's an enormous tragedy and the apes are now on the endangered list."

Pezeshki says the native rainforest favored by orangutans is rapidly being cleared to make way for lucrative palm oil estates. Forced to become scavengers, the displaced primates creep into villages seeking food where they are often killed and the babies sold as pets or left behind. Orangutan numbers have consequently fallen to half their 1950 level.

In an effort to help restore these populations, Pezeshki and his senior students in the Industrial Design Clinic are developing a radio tracking system to monitor the survival rates of reintroduced apes. Working in collaboration with ConservationDrones.org and U.K. biologist Serge Wich, the tracking device will be deployed in Borneo using a commercial quadcopter and video camera.



Quadcopter

generated a reserve fund which allowed Pezeshki to begin supporting nonprofits.

"The concept of us titheing and giving back is important," he says. It is also important to grant nonprofits the same customer standards they use for industry. In order to pass the class students must create a product the client can actually use.

Pezeshki's first nonprofit project was with Mobility Outreach International, a company that develops low-cost prosthetics for manufacture in Sierra Leone. "We made a prosthetic foot and ankle that could be built from recycled materials and repaired locally," he says.

Encouraged with results, Pezeshki sought out ConservationDrones.org in an effort to help orangutans. He soon signed on for a second project with Carrie Culp and the Painted Dog Research Trust USA in Seattle.



African Painted Dog

With large, spoon-shaped ears and showy calico coats, painted dogs were once a common sight throughout sub-Saharan Africa, but today are threatened with extinction from relentless hunting, habitat loss, road kills and disease. Pereshki says painted dogs are unique in caring for sick and elderly members of the pack. A "doctor" dog will

even be assigned as caretaker, regurgitating food, licking wounds, and staying with an injured animal until it recovers. Unfortunately, if one dog is caught in a snare trap, the whole pack stops, providing easy prey for shotguns.

For several semesters Pezeshki students have labored over the construction of an unmanned airplane that will improve scientists' ability to track and protect painted dogs in Zimbabwe. They want to build a low-cost radio telemetry drone able to fly over 120 kilometers and detect signals from collared dogs within a 2-kilometer range. The first step was to make it fly.

On a bone-chilling, blustery day last December, the team drove their fiberglass plane to Lewiston, Idaho, for its eleventh attempted test flight. Despite strong winds that afternoon, great cheers of delight and relief filled the air as the drone performed flawlessly.

Pezeshki was impressed but says there is still work to be done. Although the drone is radio controlled for takeoff and landing, the flight path will be programmed through an automated Pixhawk system yet to be installed. He's confident they will ship a functional plane and tracking system by the end of the year. "The clock is running for these animals," he says. "So we persevere."

This article appeared in the *Washington State University Magazine*, Summer 2016 issue. Thanks to Debbie Wright for sharing it with ACE.



Did you know?

Congratulations to Tara Stoinski

Tara was recognized as one of thirteen women "doing extraordinary work in our community to make us and our city better."



photo by: Atlanta Magazine
Tara Stoinski

Thirty years ago, there were only about 240 mountain gorillas in Rwanda. Today, that number has doubled. And we have conservationists like Tara Stoinski to thank.

The forty-seven-year-old primatologist, who holds a master's degree in biology and a Ph.D. in psychology, is CEO and chief scientific officer of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, an Atlanta-based nonprofit that coordinates gorilla conservation efforts in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The organization, founded in 1978, boasts the world's

longest running and largest database of gorillas.

Stoinski oversees a 145-person staff in Africa, splitting her time between Atlanta and Rwanda, sometimes with her two elementary-age daughters in tow. "My job originally took me there because of the animals, but why I love working there is the people, our team," she says. "They are on the forefront of preventing this incredible species from sliding off the face of the earth."

That's not an overstatement. There are only about 900 mountain gorillas left in the world, a stat that triggers Stoinski's passions. She has published nearly 100 studies on that topic and others as part of her research with Zoo Atlanta, the Fossey Fund, Emory, and Georgia Tech.

She took on her current role about a year and a half ago, a bittersweet career move that came just after her husband, Andy, died of esophageal cancer. "That was one of the hardest things, not having him to celebrate it with," she says. "I really credit him with encouraging me to do this career and making it possible for me to do it."

She's bent on instilling this same confidence in her daughters, Payton and Rylee, who also want to be scientists. "When I hear young children, especially young girls, talk about wanting to be scientists, that means a lot," she says.

"Women Making the Mark", *Atlanta Magazine*, June 2016

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APE CONSERVATION EFFORT

6th Annual

GORILLA GOLF TOURNAMENT

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2016

REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 9:15 A.M. • SHOT GUN START AT 10:00 A.M.

BROOKFIELD COUNTRY CLUB

100 Willow Run • Roswell, GA 30075

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This event will be played like a golf-a-thon.
Each Participant must raise a minimum of
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Enjoy a day of
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Proceeds from the tournament will support The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International

For more information and registration visit wwwapeconservationeffort.org
Call 404-427-4998 or e-mail gorillagolf@apeconservationeffort.org



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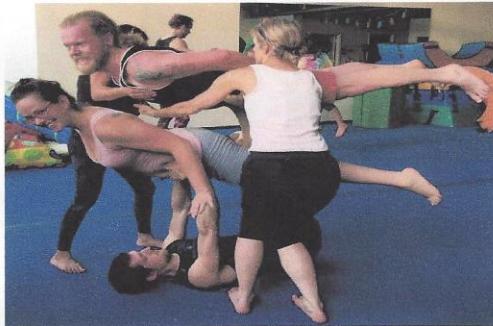


www.atlantaacro.com

ACRO FOR APES WORKSHOP!!!

80% of the ticket price will go to A.C.E to help aid in Ape Conservation.....

The other 20% will go to InTown Tumbling to help them to continue being awesome!!!!



TICKETS

\$20 in advance

\$25 at the door

Paypal:

info@apeconservationeffort.org

Come join us at InTown Tumbling on Monday: Aug 1, 2016

7:30pm-9:00pm

For a "First Flight" AcroYoga Workshop and hear the message of the

Ape Conservation Effort Organization: a Non-For-Profit group passionate about trying to save the great apes in the wild.



Light snacks and drinks will be provided for refueling.

There will be time after the workshop for mingling, more acro, and to ask A.C.E any questions!!!!

COME JOIN US FOR A FUN TIME AND AN AWESOME CAUSE!!!!

Ape Conservation Effort is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization

with a mission to help save great apes in the wild.