

Goodall to speak on battle between awareness, greed

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The StarPhoenix

Thursday, September 13, 2007



CREDIT: Richard Marjan, The StarPhoenix

Jane Goodall arrives in Saskatoon with Mr. H, who has travelled with her to 59 different countries. World-renowned primatologist Jane Goodall landed in Saskatoon on Wednesday -- cuddling her stuffed chimp named Mr. H -- for a whirlwind visit featuring a public lecture she will deliver tonight at 7:30 p.m. at TCU Place.

Mr. H is just a small reminder of the groundbreaking research Goodall has conducted over 47 years on the Gombe chimpanzee. Mr. H has ridden on the trunk of an elephant and on the back of a camel. He has been cuddled by thousands of African and Japanese children and even had a snuggle with former Russian President Michael Gorbachev.

Goodall's lecture will tackle issues such as deforestation, climate change and pollution, as well as an update on the Gombe chimpanzee from her last visit with them in July.

The lecture will point out what our society is doing right in the world and what it's doing wrong, according to Goodall.

"It's a race between a growing awareness and corporate greed. Who can say where the two lines will meet," she said.

Geology professor Ryan Walker is part of the organizing committee that brought Goodall to Saskatoon. He has been involved with the Jane Goodall Institute for about 11 years.

"The world is full of noise and nonsense, but if you read her books and listen to her talk, you can grab onto what's important," he said.

He says she touches people of all ages.

"She did some of her best stuff when she was in her mid-20s, alone, in East Africa -- in a time when people just didn't do that," he said.

Goodall may touch people of all ages, but her hope lies with the youth.

"We need a critical mass of young people who understand that this world's not about making money," Goodall said.

Saskatoon youth have responded to Goodall. More than 300 high school students signed up for a day-long workshop today put on by the Jane Goodall Institute Roots and Shoots program. The students will pick a pressing issue relevant to Saskatoon and then create action plans to take back to their communities.

"Not all is lost. We just have to change. It's not just something I can do -- it's something everybody can do," she said.

Goodall started the Jane Goodall Institute in 1977 to promote sustainable livelihoods and wildlife preservation. The institute also aims to encourage new generations of active citizens around the world.

The Roots and Shoots program started in 1991 and more than 10,000 Canadian youths have been involved to date.

Prior to the lecture, the college of arts and science is hosting the Out of Africa reception in the Grand Regal Salon at TCU Place from 5:30 p.m. to 7p.m. The reception will feature the Enije African Drum Ensemble.

The Goodall activities coincide with the University of Saskatchewan Alumni and Friends Centennial Homecoming and are sponsored by the college of arts and science.

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