

# Oh, Bucky, Where Art Thou?

## THE SAD TALE OF A CAPTIVE CHIMPANZEE

**B**ucky was born on October 16, 1992, in a place where no chimpanzee should start his life—in a now-defunct laboratory known as the Laboratory for Experimental Medicine and Surgery in Primates (LEMSIP). Although chimpanzees are no longer imprisoned and experimented on at LEMSIP, Bucky still endures a life that hasn't gotten much better. He spends his days "warehoused" in a cage at Working Wildlife, an exhibitor facility in California licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). How he also happened to be hauled around for use in commercials and a German television series called *Our Charly* is a sad tale indeed.



PETA first discovered Bucky living in a steel cage in the dingy, windowless basement of Buckshire Corporation, a USDA-licensed animal dealer in Perkasio, Pennsylvania. Bucky had been given to Buckshire by LEMSIP as part of a breeding agreement. In other words, baby chimpanzees were torn away from their mothers and given to Buckshire if Buckshire allowed LEMSIP to use its chimpanzees as breeder stock.

One of Bucky's first "jobs" was in 1993, when he was just 7 months old. He was leased to Bette and Joe Naud of Lancelot Link Chimps in Florida,



renamed "Billy" and carted around the country to fairs and carnivals where people paid to have their photos taken with him. It was certainly no life for a chimp, but at least he had the company of two other chimpanzees, Annie and Bubba, who had also been leased from Buckshire.

By the time PETA investigated Buckshire in 1994, Bucky, Bubba and Annie had been returned to the dealer. Poor Annie had contracted tuberculosis, most likely from being handled by a human with the disease, and she was relegated to a windowless shed for "quarantine." She remained in a 3-foot-by-3-foot cage until she died several years later. Since Bucky and Bubba had been exposed to Annie, they were no longer allowed to travel and were each kept alone, in single, undersized cages.

PETA's undercover video of Bucky shows him in an almost catatonic state. His bright eyes have been reduced to a blank stare and he rocks constantly. An October 1994 USDA inspection report reads: "The juvenile chimp Bucky exhibited a continuous rocking motion and self-clasping during the inspection. These are considered to be abnormal behaviors."

PETA's undercover investigation into Buckshire led to USDA charges against the facility for, among many other violations, failure to provide the minimum-size cages (a mere 5-foot-



**Bucky was used in the German TV program *Our Charly* until he became unmanageable**

by-5-foot!) to the more than 40 chimpanzees in its basement. Buckshire began selling the chimpanzees who were still "marketable," and Bucky was sold to Steve Martin's (no relation to the famous actor) Working Wildlife in Frazier Park, California.

Bucky was shipped to Germany in 1996 to film the *Our Charly* TV series. He was, by this time, 4 years old and on the verge of becoming unmanageable. He has since been replaced in the show by a younger chimpanzee who will, inevitably, be replaced by others in time, as long as the *Our Charly* series exists. The description of *Our Charly* is ironic: "Berlin veterinarian Dr. Philipp Martin and his wife...live a quiet and peaceful life....Everything changes abruptly when, one day, Charly turns up at Dr. Philipp's practice. The young African chimpanzee had managed to escape from a gang of animal smugglers and, after roaming through the city, finally got to the

Martins' house." It's all fun and games on the series as Charly turns the family's life upside down with his antics. Unfortunately, animal "actors" such as Bucky live for decades in the real world after they are no longer usable—consigned to small cages, basically see-through boxes. The real life "Charly," Bucky, is very much still a prisoner, not a happy-go-lucky escapee.



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### Help Bucky find a happy ending!

• Write to the U.S. secretary of agriculture to ask for a prohibition on the use of chimpanzees and other great apes in commerce and a prohibition on private ownership of the animals.

The Honorable Ann M. Veneman  
Secretary of Agriculture

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20250  
E-Mail: [agsec@usda.gov](mailto:agsec@usda.gov)

• Write to ZDF Network officials in Berlin, Germany, and tell them to stop supporting the greedy animal-dealer industry with shows such as *Our Charly*.

ZDF  
Postfach 40 40  
D-55100 Mainz  
Germany  
Tel.: 011-49-6131-701  
Fax: 011-49-6131-702-788

• Write to PETA to find out how to seek an ordinance prohibiting the sale or ownership of exotic animals in your local area.