NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
ADAM J. BELLO
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Seneca Park Zoo

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES NEW MALE GIRAFFE AT SENECA PARK ZOO

Kendi, a 1-year-old male, joins Rochester's Tower to receive expert care and training before continuing on to Canada

ROCHESTER, NY — County Executive Adam Bello and Seneca Park Zoo are pleased to announce the safe arrival of a male Masai giraffe named Kendi from The Greenville Zoo. Kendi is at Seneca Park Zoo on a recommendation from the Masai giraffe Species Survival Plan (SSP) and will ultimately be transferred to an Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA)- accredited facility in Canada once he completes the necessary training and testing here at Seneca Park Zoo.

> "Protecting animals like Kendi means working with our AZA partners to ensure animals receive the care they need in an environment that appropriately supports them," **said County Executive Adam Bello.** "By welcoming Kendi on his way to Canada, we are a small part of Kendi's journey, but a large part in the species survival plan. We're proud to work with the wider AZA community on this collaborative effort."

This transfer is connected to Seneca Park Zoo's recent identification by the SSP as an expert training and holding facility for Masai giraffes. Currently, there are more male Masai giraffes in the United States than can be accommodated long-term, while several Canadian facilities need male giraffes. The Seneca Park Zoo will help train and transport Masai giraffes to accredited facilities in Canada, supporting long-term species survival, because of the staff's expertise and excellence in giraffe care.

> "We're excited to welcome Kendi to Seneca Park Zoo and proud of the role AZA's Masai Giraffe Species Survival Plan has identified for us," **said Zoo Director Bob Lee**. "The expertise of our Animal Care and Veterinary teams has made Seneca Park Zoo a trusted place to help prepare young giraffes for future moves within the AZA community. Kendi will remain with us as long as needed to support his development and training, while contributing to the long-term sustainability of Masai giraffes."

"For giraffes to cross the border into Canada, they need testing for multiple contagious diseases. Giraffes can contract some illnesses which not only affect other zoo animals but can also affect exposed cattle. Requiring proof of these tests helps to ensure that contagious animal diseases are not spread across borders," **said Zoo Veterinarian Christopher McKinney, DVM, MS.** "In addition to standard intestinal parasite testing and blood testing to evaluate red and white blood cell counts along with electrolytes, protein, liver and kidney health, we also perform a blood test for Brucellosis. The other required test is tuberculosis (Tb). Each of these tests must be performed twice to confirm the result, and there are standardized time intervals between the tests."

"Training for Kendi will start immediately," **said Assistant Curator Lindsay Brinda**. "The speed with which training proceeds will depend on how soon he acclimates, which varies drastically with individual giraffe."

The Zoo expects that Kendi will be out on habitat immediately with the rest of the tower. However, that is subject to change as the welfare of Kendi and the other giraffe is paramount. Kendi, whose name means "loved one" in Swahili, was born on June 7, 2025. Staff at the Greenville Zoo describe him as curious and independent.

For more information, and to purchase tickets in advance and save $2, visit senecaparkzoo.org

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Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.

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