



*News From*

# **Maggie Brooks**

## *Monroe County Executive*

**For Immediate Release**

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### **BROOKS INTRODUCES VISITING WHITE TIGER**

*Laska begins his summer-long stay at Seneca Park Zoo*

County Executive **Maggie Brooks** today introduced Laska, a striking 500-pound, 10-year-old male white tiger, at Monroe County's Seneca Park Zoo. The Zoo will be Laska's home through Labor Day.

*"As we welcome Laska to his summer-time home, we also kick-off another great season here at the Seneca Park Zoo,"* said **County Executive Brooks**. *"The rarity of a white tiger, like Laska, will make this up-close exhibit a truly impressive and memorable experience for everyone who visits."*

This summer will be the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the Zoo's Visiting Animal program, which provides the public an opportunity to view an animal that is not currently exhibited at the Zoo.

*"We are very happy to be able to show people this interesting color variant of the Bengal tiger,"* said **Larry Sorel**, County Zoo Director. *"We do, however, want to remind the community that we are still committed to our Amur tiger conservation work through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Tiger Species Survival Plan."*

A white tiger is characterized by icy blue eyes, a pink nose, pink paw pads and white fur marked with chocolate brown stripes. They originate from Bengal Tigers and are a result of both parents having a recessive gene for white coloration. White tigers last visited the Seneca Park Zoo in 1999.

*"Ten years ago, when a white tiger last visited, we had record attendance and people were enamored with this majestic feline,"* said **Rachel Baker August**, Executive Director for the Seneca Park Zoo Society. *"We are sure that Laska's presence this summer will captivate our visitors young and old."*

This summer, McDonald's is the Corporate Sponsor of the Zoo's Visiting Animal Exhibit.

*"McDonald's of the Greater Rochester Area is proud to partner with the Seneca Park Zoo for the 2009 Visiting Animal Exhibit,"* said **John Buono**, President of the Rochester McDonald's Operators Association. *"We are always eager to support community projects that bring additional enjoyment to families visiting the Zoo."*

Prior to transport, the Zoo was notified that the female white tiger, which had been expected to accompany Laska, was pregnant and unable to travel. This is the reason for Laska's solo visit.

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