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Contact: Jim Bartoo
833-1534 Ext. 126
jbartoo@nashvillezoo.org

Zoo's Attendance and Membership Increase for Eighth Straight Year

A total of 546,429 guests visited Nashville Zoo in 2007, a 3% increase from 2006 and an all-time high attendance record for the Zoo. Zoo memberships also increased by 13% to 22,017 households representing approximately 110,000 people.

Last year's attendance is the result of several factors, including new exhibits, a heavy television advertising campaign and enhanced special events.

"We continue to open new exhibits and host special events that our visitors enjoy," states Zoo President Rick Schwartz. "Both the African wild dog and Eurasian lynx exhibits have been popular with our guests as well as our January 5K run, which sold out, and our six-night Halloween event, *Ghouls at Grassmere*, broke its own attendance record this year."

In May, Nashville Zoo opened an exhibit with four, female African wild dogs. Generous support from the Kathryn and David Brown family led to the opening of a Eurasian lynx exhibit in November.

With a 56% increase in attendance since 2000, Nashville Zoo will spend the coming year focusing on improving visitor amenities to meet the increasing crowds. The Zoo recently completed drastic enhancements to the Unseen New World entrance area, including an enlarged plaza, a new pedestrian bridge and a new food concession and seating area.

A new public restroom on the main animal trail will open in time for the spring season. Additionally, comprehensive expansion is underway in the parking area, including a designated school bus lane and staging area for students, an enlarged ticket booth plaza and two new parking lots that will double the parking capacity. "We continue to try to make new and innovative additions to appeal to our first time guests and to bring back our loyal supporters and members," states Schwartz.

The design phase of two exciting new projects is now complete. Construction has begun on the Zoo's future Caribbean flamingo habitat which will not only add a beautiful and popular species to the animal collection, but the exhibit itself will improve the overall water quality throughout the park. A new amphitheater and pavilion project is also in the works that will host corporate events, music concerts and live entertainment. The Zoo's Development Department is seeking funding sources for these projects. For more information, contact the development office at ext. 128.

Nashville Zoo is accredited by the prestigious Association of Zoos and Aquariums, assuring the highest standards of animal care and husbandry. The Zoo is a non-profit organization located at 3777 Nolensville Road and is open every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. The mission of the Nashville Zoo is to inspire a culture of understanding and discovery of our natural world through conservation, innovation and leadership. For more information about Nashville Zoo, please call 833-1534, or visit our website at www.nashvillezoo.org.

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