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A N N U A L  
R E P O R T



Photo by Arnie Spencer

C H E Y E N N E M O U N T A I N Z O O

## President's Message

As President and CEO of Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, I spend a lot of time thinking about organizational success and what it looks like. More importantly, I've been focused on what organizational success *feels* like. I've come to realize success is not solely defined by the bottom line but also by an organization's culture and its employees.

Employees who love coming to work and who enjoy working together as a team are key to an organization's success. When great employees and a culture of trust, respect and teamwork come together with financial security, it allows an organization to focus more energy on achieving its overall mission.

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo arrived at a pivotal mission milestone last year. The combination of a strong financial position and a dedicated staff rekindled our fire to focus on conservation in a whole new way. We have committed to finding strength in our numbers, reaching as many people as possible with our conservation message. Did you know that each year over 50 million people visit an AZA-accredited zoo or aquarium? That's more people than the combined attendance of all professional football, basketball, baseball and hockey games in a single year! At Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, we saw record attendance of 468,039 people last year – incredible numbers for a community of 600,000 people. This begs

the question, "What kind of lasting impact can we leave with all of these guests?"

For years we've been serving the mission of connecting people with animals. Certainly, conservation has been a key component of that mission. But part of our focus now will be on *how* we connect people with wildlife. Creating lifelong memories will be important. And challenging our guests to be part of environmental solutions will be critical.

Throughout this report you will see this vision come to life. Programs such as our Defining Moments, Natural Encounters Animal Shows and Quarters for Conservation illustrate our desire to not only be a more fun and exciting destination, but a place where with every visit you'll know you are making a difference for wildlife.

Bob Chastain  
President & CEO

Photo by Arnie Spencer



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## Our Mission

Providing a crucial link between people and nature in a complex and changing world.



## Our Vision

**Every Kid, Every Time.** Every kid of any age will have an experience for a lifetime with every visit.

## A Legacy of Caring for Animals

When philanthropist Spencer Penrose founded the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in 1926 to house his growing collection of exotic animals, he hardly could have imagined the recreation and education impact the institution would have, much less the conservation footprint it would leave.

From breeding endangered species to collaborating with conservation partners around the world, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo is a leader in the global battle to preserve vanishing animals and fragile habitats.

For instance, the Zoo is a leader in the endangered black-footed ferret breeding program, which saw 19 kits born at the Zoo last year. We also had great success with our Wyoming toad program, producing and releasing to the wild nearly 4,000 tadpoles!

Recognized internationally for our extensive involvement in a management program for species survival, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo participates in more of these programs – 30 in all – than any zoo of similar size. For many species, zoos are the last refuge, so careful management of zoo populations is critical to their survival.

## Connecting People with Wildlife

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo feels strongly about engaging the community to help us achieve our conservation goals. That places greater responsibility on us to connect people with wildlife – and to inspire guests to want to make a difference.

The Zoo's vision, that every kid, of any age, will have an experience for a lifetime with every visit, is sparked by the belief that positive memorable experiences and close encounters with animals can create **DEFINING MOMENTS** for people of all ages. Touching a baby wallaby or feeling a giraffe gently take a cracker with its long purple tongue may change a guest's perspective about wildlife, and inspire caring and stewardship for the natural world.

Thus was born the inspiration for **THE VISION PROJECT**, which seeks to inspire caring attitudes that lead to environmentally responsible behaviors. The project will



Photo by Ashley Arimborgo

fill the Zoo with activities and experiences that engage visitors, stimulate their curiosity and, at a deeper level, touch them in ways that create a life-long connection with nature. Some of these activities will build on existing opportunities, while many will be completely new and/or unexpected. For instance, a child might be invited to help a keeper brush a pony or

feed melons to a hippo. The Vision Project also will focus on outstanding customer service, making a Zoo visit as comfortable, convenient and rewarding as possible.

**NATURAL ENCOUNTERS ANIMAL SHOWS** is one such new experience. It involves keepers sharing stories about an animal while the animal exhibits species-specific behavior.

In this program, the staff is training animals to display natural behaviors that would ordinarily help them adapt and survive in the wild. A grizzly might be taught to dig for berries with its huge claws or to find fish in its pool. Red river hogs might share their repertoire of grunts, squeals, snarls and snorts to demonstrate their extensive communication vocalizations. All training is done with positive reinforcement.

Positive training creates a stimulating environment for the animals, providing them the opportunity to use their senses and adaptations, and increasing their motivation to engage in naturalistic behaviors. But the mental and physical enrichment to the animals is only one benefit of the program. These exciting new animal shows enable the Zoo to initiate meaningful and memorable experiences for visitors, providing a more enjoyable and educational Zoo experience, which in turn inspires caring and stewardship for the natural world.



Photo by Jay Weston

## Saving Species, Saving Spaces

Empowering the community to make a difference for the preservation of wildlife was the impetus behind **QUARTERS FOR CONSERVATION**. The Zoo is contributing \$0.25 from each admission (\$2.50 from each family membership) to

expand its wildlife conservation work regionally and around the globe. With every visit, guests receive a quarter "token" and get to vote for one of six conservation projects that inspire them – snow leopards in Central Asia, African lions in Kenya, orangutans in Borneo, Mantella frogs in Madagascar, endangered butterflies in Colorado or Andean bears in Ecuador.

Funding for each project is determined by how many votes it receives. We hope to raise \$100,000 in the first year to not only help save imperiled species, but also for long-term preservation of their wild habitats.



Photo by Tracey Gazibara

## Milestones to Build Upon

Attendance at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo climbed to 468,039 visitors in fiscal year 2007-08, a new record for America's only mountain zoo. And while milestones were being made in wildlife conservation, community outreach programs were continuing to expand, new partnerships were being forged and capital projects were progressing.



Photo by Jenny Kerchner

The most significant capital undertaking was completion of the **ROCKY MOUNTAIN WILD** exhibit complex. Headlines touted the occasion, but no reaction meant more than the countless exclamations of delight and wonderment on opening day. Grizzlies fished for trout only inches from where guests stood watching. Mountain lions appeared to stalk visitors from above,

separated only by a glass canopy. River otters captivated crowds as they swam in their pond, specially designed to maximize viewing opportunities. And "The Loft" thrilled guests by offering up-close encounters with smaller animals while providing fun, hands-on opportunities to explore emerging alternative energy technology.

One objective of the new exhibit complex was to educate visitors about the diverse human uses that impact the Rocky Mountain landscape by including interpretive displays that focus on the land's multiple uses. Thanks to the input of stakeholder groups representing hunters, ranchers, the mining industry, motorized and non-motorized recreation users and environmentalists, we are able to engage visitors in understanding and appreciating the interests of a wide array of Rocky Mountain user groups.

Enhancing the visitor experience remains a priority. **THE LODGE AT MOOSE LAKE** provides a flexible 4,000 sq. ft. venue for hosting corporate gatherings, private parties and other memorable celebrations. We added 120 parking spaces to our south lot, significantly easing traffic snarls on busy weekends. Construction commenced on **THE MOUNTAINEER SKY RIDE**, an open-air, chairlift style ride over the Zoo that offers spectacular vistas of Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado Springs and the plains to the east. And thanks to a generous grant from the RNR Foundation, the Zoo embarked on a total redesign of its website.

Special exhibits like Budgie Buddies continue to contribute to the Zoo's unique family experience, as do events such as Teddy Bear Days, EarthFest, Fiesta Latina, Boo at the Zoo and Electric Safari, ensuring attendance by diverse audiences.

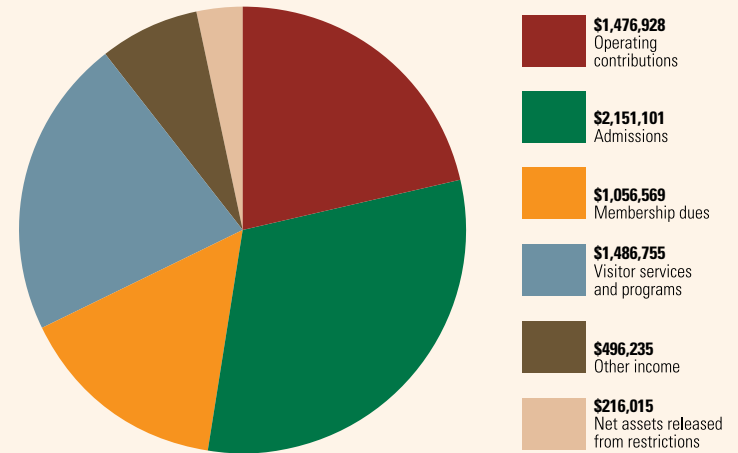
The natural world was showcased in an abundance of learning adventures including numerous camps and classes, field trips, WildNights and programs offering unique animal encounters. And the ZOOMobile outreach vehicle made appearances at dozens of schools and community gatherings thanks to continued support from Central Bancorp, bringing up-close animal experiences to audiences that may never have experienced a trip to the Zoo.

Our pledge to provide outstanding animal care, engage in meaningful conservation programs, offer quality learning adventures and provide an exceptional experience for kids of all ages are testament to our continued commitment to ensuring an ongoing tradition of outstanding service to our guests, our community and our natural world. Spencer Penrose would have been proud.

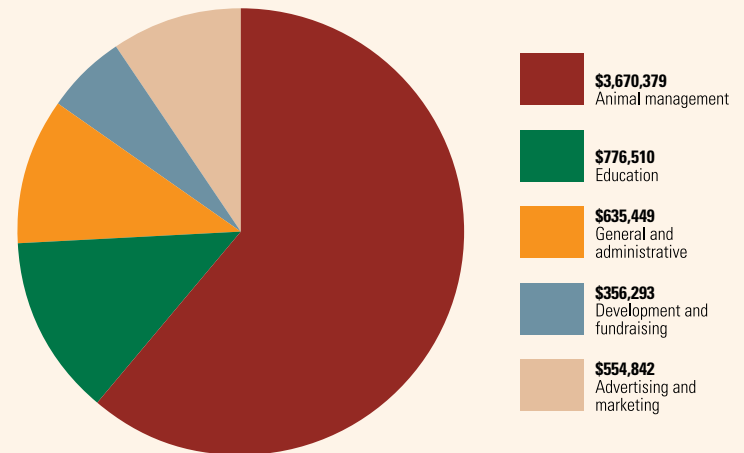
## Financial Summary

May 1, 2007 – April 30, 2008

**Support & Revenue – Total Operating Income \$6,883,603**



**Expenses – Total Operating Expenses \$5,993,473**



Net Assets, May 1, 2007 .....	\$18,780,435
<b>Net Surplus from Operations</b> .....	<b>\$890,130</b>
Add Net Assets Released for Capital Assets .....	\$6,008,839
Less Depreciation this Period .....	(\$1,033,334)
<b>Net Assets, April 30, 2008</b> .....	<b>\$24,646,070</b>



Photo by Jenny Kerchner

*Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, a non-profit 501(c)3, is one of a handful of accredited zoos in the nation that operates without local tax support, depending entirely on admissions, membership dues, donations and grants for funding. All gifts are tax deductible.*

# Supporting Our Cause

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo is grateful to all of our patrons who support our vision of inspiring caring and stewardship of the natural world. As a self-funded facility, our donors and sponsors are critical to our success. Although all gifts are deeply appreciated, space precludes us from individually acknowledging all of our generous friends. The following supporters contributed gifts of \$2,500 or more from May 2007 through April 2008:

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