President’s Message

It's hard to believe another year has gone by. When I look back at how the Zoo has grown and what we’ve achieved this year, I couldn’t be more appreciative of our supporters and more proud of our staff. Our staff’s professionalism and dedication to our conservation mission is remarkable, and their unwavering commitment to providing a high level of care for our animals and quality experience for our guests gives me hope we are truly making a difference in Colorado Springs and around the world.

With the recent passing of our magnificent male African lion Elson, his impact on both conservation and the community became abundantly clear. Elson arrived at the Zoo in 1995 from the Kapama Reserve in South Africa. At that time, many lions in U.S. zoos were a hybrid of Asian and African lions. African born, Elson’s genetics were quite valuable to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Species Survival Plan program, ensuring genetic viability in the future. In 2000, Elson was introduced to Angie, who was also wild-born, and soon they welcomed their first litter of cubs. Elson and Angie went on to have four litters, a total of 13 cubs, now living in zoos across the country. His offspring are an important contribution to the African lion population in AZA-accredited zoos.

Elson was a magnificent ambassador for his species. He was a strikingly beautiful animal who inspired the admiration of staff and guests. Every morning and evening, Elson’s incredible roar would reverberate through the Zoo. He was also a great father to his cubs, patient and playful, and undeniably the leader of his pride. After his passing, I understood the impact he had on our staff, but I was overwhelmed by the many comments we received and what he meant to our guests, young and old.

Elson’s legacy will not only live on through his cubs and grandcubs across the nation, but also in the hearts of our staff and guests. We hope all the animals in our care at the Zoo will have a similar impact on our guests, and inspire caring and respect for the natural world.

– Bob Chastain
President & CEO

Our Mission
A leader in conservation, captive breeding and animal care, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo connects people with wildlife and wild places through experiences that inspire action.

Our Vision
Every Kid. Every Time. Goosebumps!
Every kid, of any age, will have an experience for a lifetime with every visit.
A Record Year!

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo welcomed a record 574,209 guests this year! More than 60 percent of our guests came from right here in the Pikes Peak region, 22 percent visited from other areas of Colorado, and the remaining 17 percent came to the Zoo from outside Colorado. We are also proud to report 15,163 local households held a Zoo membership.

Of more than 200 zoos accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Cheyenne Mountain Zoo is one of only nine operating without tax support. We couldn’t do it without the tremendous support we receive from our community! Volunteers provided the Zoo with more than 24,000 valuable service hours this year. And, our dedicated group of 106 active docents provided 15,066 volunteer and interpretive service hours. Thank you for supporting your Zoo!

Did You Know?

This past September, the Zoo celebrated the distinction of accreditation by the AZA through 2015. We underwent a detailed application process and rigorous on-site inspection by a team of trained professionals to ensure the Zoo meets animal care, veterinary program, conservation, education, and safety standards. The Zoo passed with flying colors! In fact, the AZA accreditation review team commented that Cheyenne Mountain Zoo had one of the best inspections they had seen. Fewer than 10 percent of the approximately 2,400 animal exhibitors licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture are AZA-accredited.

At the end of 2010, the Zoo welcomed a six-year-old female Mexican gray wolf named Weeko (meaning beautiful girl). Weeko joined our 10-year-old male, Masadi (meaning moon), in Rocky Mountain Wild. She was sent from the California Wolf Center on a breeding recommendation as part of the AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP). Weeko and Masadi immediately showed signs of comradeship and we hope to welcome wolf pups in the near future.

The Zoo’s famous reticulated giraffe herd went green in February! The growth in attendance means more people are feeding the giraffes. Nutritional research indicated it was time for us to cut back on the starchy treats, so romaine lettuce was added to the feeding experience as a healthy alternative to the traditional giraffe crackers. The giraffes still occasionally get crackers, but mixing in a little salad offers the giraffes a healthy variety throughout the day.

In March, the first-ever red river hoglets were born at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo. The hoglets, a boy and a girl, weighed in at a little over two pounds at birth. The female, Safara (meaning fire), now weighs in at 25 pounds and the male, Akoni (meaning brave warrior), tips the scales at a healthy 45 pounds. The pair can be seen with their parents rooting and wallowing in African Rift Valley.

The Zoo continued to connect with the community in unique ways. Throughout the year, events such as Run to the Shrine, the Annual Plant Sale, Moonlight on the Mountain, Stargazing Series, Boo at the Zoo and Electric Safari grew attendance and helped introduce a more diverse audience to the Zoo.

Field Trip

Schools from every district in our region bring students to the Zoo to learn first-hand about animals, the environment and conservation. This past year, 12,000 students visited the Zoo with their class. In fact, the Zoo was named “Best Field Trip” in 2011 by the Gazette.

Our Zoo on the Move animal outreach program, sponsored by Central Bancorp, continues to travel throughout the community, connecting with people unable to visit Zoo grounds. This past year, outreach animals such as our popular red-tailed boa snake, striped skunk and opossum connected with 33,750 people! Outreach programs are presented to students in Title One schools and residents of adult care facilities through scholarship funds. To date, Zoo on the Move has visited 80% of Title One schools in our region.
The success of the Zoo’s Q4C program inspired 12 other zoos to begin their own for animals and the environment around the world, and good news travels fast!

Funds raised through Q4C contributed to conservation efforts around the globe. This year, a Zoo team led by President Bob Chastain traveled to the jungles of Panama as part of a global effort to save amphibian species on the verge of extinction due to chytrid fungus. The team was searching for the endangered *Atelopus limosus* harlequin frog, and collected one female, two males, and a juvenile. Until this trip, there was only one *Atelopus limosus* female and four males in captivity in the world. The female found by the team is especially important in creating a viable, sustainable population.

Q4C funds also supported a Zoo team to travel to Indonesia to investigate the palm oil crisis first-hand. Based upon the team’s findings, the Zoo is supporting companies who join the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).

Sustainable palm oil comes from a plantation committed to producing palm oil in a way that minimizes impact on wildlife, indigenous people, and the planet. To help support orangutans in the wild, the Zoo developed an online resource center to inform the public about the palm oil crisis and provide everyday choices that can make a difference. The Zoo also became a member of the RSPO, the first zoo in the world to join!

Q4C funds continue to support the Zoo’s work in our off-exhibit Conservation Center. For 20 years, the Zoo has been involved in the black-footed ferret recovery program. This past year, we had a very successful black-footed ferret breeding season, with 31 new kits born! Of this total, 20 kits and one adult black-footed ferret were released into the wild. With each successful breeding and release, the Zoo is contributing to the recovery of this endangered species.

The Zoo also cares for and breeds a collection of Wyoming toads, an amphibian now extinct in the wild. This past year, we paired seven female Wyoming toads and had five lay egg masses. We had over 3,000 eggs total, but experienced low fertility, as 1,600 eggs hatched. Of this total, 1,000 were released at Buford Lake, Wyoming. Twenty eggs from the genetically valuable pairing were held back and we have five toads for future breeding.

Because of your involvement in this program, Q4C is truly making a difference for animals and the environment around the world, and good news travels fast! The success of the Zoo’s Q4C program inspired 12 other zoos to begin their own Q4C program.

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<th>Support &amp; Revenue – Total Operating Income $8,869,141</th>
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<td>Operating contributions</td>
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<td>Visitor services and programs</td>
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<td>Other income</td>
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<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
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<th>Expenses – Total Operating Expenses $7,461,403</th>
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Net Assets, May 1, 2010: $23,847,728
Net Surplus from Operations: $1,407,738
Add Net Assets Released for Capital Assets: $3,394,448
Less Depreciation this Period: $1,207,861
Net Assets, April 30, 2011: $27,029,034

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 our generous friends. The following supported contributors gifted $2,500 or more from May 2010 to April 2011:

For more information, please contact:
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