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



Photo by Tracey Gazibara

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

President's Message

Our passion for making a difference has taken on an accelerated momentum. Through a wide range of programs, we are reinforcing our mission, expanding our conservation efforts and building meaningful relationships. We will continue to challenge our guests to be a part of environmental solutions while still enjoying the Zoo as a fun and exciting destination that will most definitely present new experiences with each visit.

A destination is, by definition, an ending point. When we talk about the Zoo, we would like to focus on the journey. The journey is not static or passive. It is active. Something that unfolds, evolves, enlightens and entertains. Each day brings the reward of working alongside dedicated Zoo staff, our board of

directors and tireless volunteers. We could not continue this momentum without the generous support from our hundreds of donors and from the community at large. Together on this journey, we are realizing and shaping an exciting and strong future for Cheyenne Mountain Zoo.

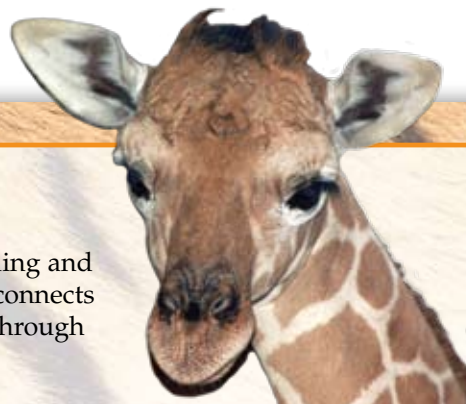
Bob Chastain
President & CEO



Photo by Tracey Gazibara

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.

Maintaining Momentum

Breaking attendance records, the Zoo saw over 540,000 guests move through the admission gate for the 2008–2009 fiscal year. Building upon the positive momentum gained with the opening of Rocky Mountain Wild in spring of 2008, the Zoo kept this solid visitor pace while also realizing milestones in wildlife conservation and community outreach.

The community took to Rocky Mountain Wild wholeheartedly, and the exhibit complex was soon a favorite of the Zoo's 15,000 members and new guests alike. Two areas that were constant comment generators were the mountain lion exhibit, Cougar Canyon, and Grizzly Falls viewing area. While the mountain lions demonstrated their natural behaviors, looking down at guests from tree logs and their comfortable nooks and shelves in the sculpted rock, grizzlies Digger and Emmitt put on a show all their own. Whether it was swimming, mock fighting, fishing or responding to their keeper's natural behavior training, these bears fascinated guests daily. Their exhibit space reinforced the Zoo's mission of strengthening that bond, that connection between people and wildlife.

The Zoo welcomed a number of new arrivals in 2008–2009 including a reticulated giraffe. Cheyenne Mountain Zoo has the most prolific giraffe breeding program in the world with 190 births since 1954. Among the most significant births was the arrival of an Amur tiger, one of the world's rarest species, with less than 400 reportedly living in the wild and a male Sumatran orangutan, another species critically endangered. A leader in the black-footed ferret breeding program, 18 kits were born last year. Recognized internationally for species survival, the Zoo participates in 30 Species Survival Plan programs. For many of these species, zoos are the last refuge, so careful management of zoo populations is critical to their survival.

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo's conservation efforts extend far beyond what guests see during a visit and now extend to the Central American country of Panama. As a founding member of the Amphibian Rescue and Conservation Project, the Zoo is partnering with renowned national and international conservation leaders to prevent impending amphibian extinctions. The project partners have collectively pledged to establish an amphibian conservation breeding center in Panama to house 15–20 species that are in jeopardy of being eradicated by the chytrid fungus, while at the same time conducting research to find a cure for this devastating fungus.

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo is taking its expertise and reputation of putting conservation "on the ground" into this Panama project. The Zoo's experience and subsequent results with endangered species speak for themselves with past successes to include a black-footed ferret breeding program, working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Mexican gray wolf program and a breed and release program for the critically endangered Wyoming toad.

Photo by Tracey Gazibara



Photo by Jenny Kerchner

Meaningful Connections

With the introduction of new animal shows, guests of the Zoo see natural behavior training and reinforcement. Guests learn that each animal has an important role in their own environment and that their day-to-day lives are richer from the training they receive at the Zoo.

The mental and physical enrichment to the animals, while significant, is only one benefit of the program. These exciting 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.

Learning On and Off the Mountain

The Loft, the brand new education building located at the entrance to Rocky Mountain Wild, houses the Zoo's collection of outreach animals, but more importantly provides the opportunity for kids of all ages to care for the animals. With the introduction of new home school programs and the reintroduction of family opportunities, the natural world is showcased through an abundance of learning adventures expertly designed to inspire action.

Through camps, classes, field trips, WildNights, and other unique animal encounters, over 41,000 participants received memorable Zoo experiences.

Thanks to continued support from Central Bancorp, the ZOOMobile outreach vehicle made appearances at dozens of schools and community gatherings, extending to Denver and its surrounding areas. As a result, over 30,000 people that may never have experienced a trip to the Zoo were afforded the opportunity for up close and educational animal encounters.

Photo by Tracey Gazibara



The Future is All about Change

One question often heard from Zoo guests is, "What can we do to make a difference for conservation?" Cheyenne Mountain Zoo strives to be a conservation organization that engages the community to help us achieve our goals. And challenging our guests to be an active part of environmental solutions is critical to making that happen. The truth is, they are empowered to make a big difference for the preservation of wildlife every time they visit the Zoo!

One of the Zoo's most innovative programs, *Quarters for Conservation*, completed its inaugural year and cultivated over \$100,000 from Zoo guests for designated conservation programs, one quarter at a time.

Each of the projects selected for funding are spearheaded by Zoo staff members. The wildlife conservation projects selected for funding in 2008–2009 included:

- African lion conservation in Kenya
- Andean bear conservation in Ecuador
- Wild orangutan survival in Borneo
- Endangered butterflies in Colorado
- Mantella frog conservation in Madagascar
- Endangered snow leopards in Central Asia

The top vote getter in the program's first year was the snow leopard project. Two additional projects were selected for supplemental funding: hippo protection in Virunga (Africa) National Park and African wild dog conservation. Ongoing Zoo conservation programs—black-footed ferret, Wyoming toad, mountain tapir, okapi and Mexican gray wolf—also received *Quarters for Conservation* funding in 2008–2009.

More Milestones to Build Upon

Through the diligent work of a team of staff members and our independent web development team, enhancement of the Zoo's web site brings a fuller picture of the Zoo to web users. From a more approachable, intuitive design, to the ability to relate more and better information, as well as activities to curious and demanding web users, the newly refurbished web site was a step into the future for the Zoo. In addition, the increased use of social media outlets such as blogs, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter has brought the Zoo off the mountain and into the worldwide electronic community. News from Cheyenne Mountain Zoo no longer needs to linger as it awaits dissemination, but is instantly at the fingertips of members and others interested in America's only mountain zoo.

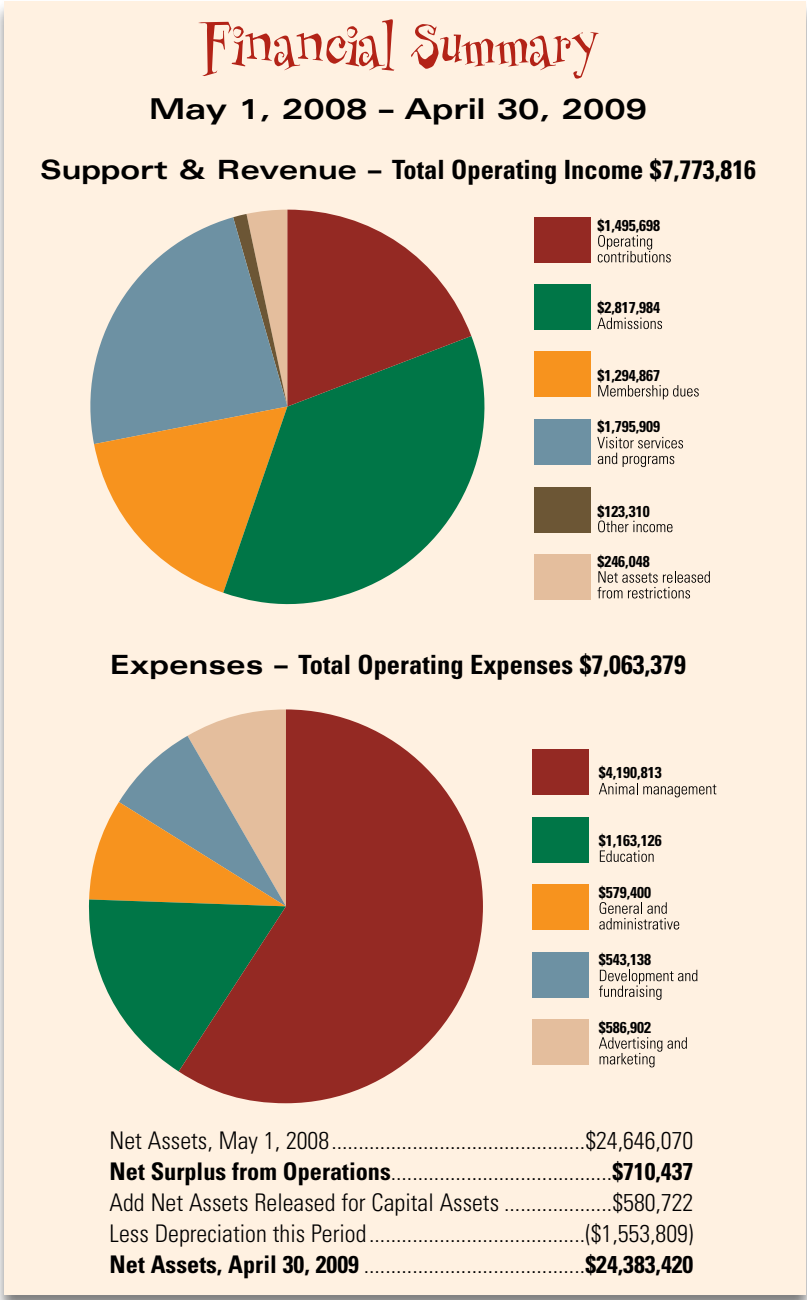
With information flying through the air, it was only appropriate that the Zoo also initiate a means of flying up the mountain—literally. The Mountaineer Sky Ride, an open-air, chairlift-style ride over the Zoo that debuted in May of 2008, delighted thousands of riders through its first 12 months of operation. With a series of activities and promotions on tap as it flies into the next fiscal year, the Sky Ride's niche in the Zoo landscape is destined to mature and flourish—branded as its own unique attraction and community event venue.

Rethinking Tradition

The identity of a cherished Zoo event came into a rebirth with the initiation of Winter Wildland. As the premier holiday lights gathering in our region, the iconic Electric Safari had been a lights-centric event for nearly two decades, growing from a simple display of a few thousand holiday lights to a presentation of hundreds of thousands of lights. Santa Claus was on hand, stationed in a big chair in his log cabin. The Zoo's animal collection was almost an afterthought.

In reinventing the event, the Zoo's mission of connecting people with wildlife and wild places guided the planning. An on-grounds workshop

for children was developed to make animal enrichment items that Santa would assist with and then deliver to select exhibits. By taking Santa out of his cabin, and putting him into the active role of delivering "gifts" (enrichment) to animals, he interacted with guests, and became an active, conservation-minded role model to kids and families. Cheyenne Mountain Zoo embraced its mission and reinvented its iconic holiday event, which went from a visit to a picturesque locale with beautiful light displays to an invigorating trip through the Zoo, seeing and learning more about many of the Zoo's animal residents.



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 2008 through April 2009:

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