

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ZOO PASSES ATTENDANCE BENCHMARK ***More than 400,000 have already visited the Zoo in 2008***

FRESNO, Ca. – On Saturday, October 25 while Fresno Chaffee Zoo animals munched on pumpkins during the annual Halloween enrichment event, the 400,000th visitor for 2008 passed through the Zoo's entrance. It is the first time Fresno Chaffee Zoo has exceeded 400,000 visitors in at least 15 years.

The Zoo expects over 415,000 visitors before the end of the year, up more than 100,000 people just two years ago. In 2007 398,820 people visited the Zoo which was a 28% increase over the 311,247 visitors in 2006. In 2008 Zoo membership sales also surpassed 10,000 households.

"This community loves their Zoo and we continue to see a remarkable level of support," said Zoo Director Lewis Greene. "A day at the Zoo is affordable family fun that creates memories that last a lifetime."

Zoo officials attribute some of the increase in attendance to the popular attraction *Stingray Bay: A Touching Experience* which opened in the spring of 2007 and again in 2008. *Stingray Bay* will continue to operate on weekends through January and expanded hours during the holiday school break. Daily operations will resume on March 7, 2009.

Fresno Chaffee Zoo is open every day of the year from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. General admission during regular Zoo hours is \$7 for adults, \$3.50 for children 2-11 and seniors 62+, and children under 2 and Fresno Chaffee Zoo members are free. The mission of Fresno Chaffee Zoo is to provide a fun, unique and up-close experience that strengthens the bond between people and wildlife. The Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

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