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News Release

For Immediate Release

Zoo Attendance Surpasses 200K for 6th Year

Dickerson Park Zoo announced yesterday that 2009 attendance totaled 213,176 visitors.

The series of 200,000-plus attendance years began with 2004 when Dickerson Park Zoo opened a major expansion funded by the voter-approved quarter-cent sales tax for Greene County Parks. The expansion included the popular elevated giraffe viewing/feeding deck; “Tropical Asia” region with Asian elephants, tigers and gibbons; the addition of gray wolves and mountain lions to “Missouri Habitats”; and an exhibit for black and white colobus monkeys.

Zoo Superintendent Mike Crocker attributed the attendance trend to several factors. “The zoo is very family-friendly,” he said. “We provide an outdoor experience that has great kid-appeal and an aspect of education along with it.”

Although Dickerson Park Zoo saw its overall operating budget reduced in 2009 as part of reductions throughout the City of Springfield, Crocker noted the reductions were absorbed mostly in areas that did not directly affect the visiting public: “We tried very hard to maintain the quality of our guests’ experiences.”

Annual zoo attendance is calculated by combining daytime guests and attendance at three evening events – Halloween SPOOKTACULAR, the annual Friends of the Zoo picnic and Dreamnight at the Zoo.

For more information, contact: Melinda Arnold, Public Relations Director, 417-833-1570 (office) or 417-848-0162 (cell); marnold@dickersonparkzoo.org.