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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GREENVILLE ZOO ANNOUNCES CELEBRATION OF 50 YEARS

Zoo kicks off year-long festivities with naming of colobus monkeys

Greenville, S.C. – The City of Greenville, Greenville Zoo and Friends of the Zoo today announced a year-long 50th celebration that will feature a Summer Zoobilee filled with birthday celebrations, a historical look back and gala to benefit the zoo's clinic.

The zoo officially kicked off the festivities with the announcement of the winning names for the colobus monkeys. The 1-year-old male was given the name Dayo which means “joy arrives” in Swahili. The zoo's newest addition, a 2-month-old male, was given the name Kumbe which is an expression of surprise in Swahili. The “Name the Babies” contest winners were selected by zoo staff, and each contest winner received a gift basket valued at over \$300.

As part of the Greenville Zoo's celebration of 50 years, the zoo will continue its birthday festivities throughout its Summer Zoobilee scheduled for June 21 – August 14. Each week of the Zoobilee will focus on a specific Greenville Zoo animal or exhibit, providing visitors with the opportunity to learn more about the zoo's history and its residents through special events, birthday celebrations and zookeeper talks.

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“We are excited to celebrate this milestone with the local community who has truly played a significant role in the overall success of the Greenville Zoo,” said Greenville Zoo Director Jeff Bullock. “Greenville should be extremely proud of the zoo it helped create.”

Groundbreaking of the Greenville Zoo began nearly 50 years ago in Cleveland Park and opened to the public with mostly indigenous animals including bears, deer, bobcat, foxes, ducks and prairie dogs. Today, the Greenville Zoo is rated one of the best tourist attractions in South Carolina, attracting over 270,000 people annually to its 14-acre facility filled with wildlife from around the world. A timeline featuring major Greenville Zoo events is also included on the last page.

The Greenville Zoo is open seven days a week, except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. The zoo's hours of operation are from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and the gates close at 5 p.m. For more information about the Greenville Zoo and its celebration of 50 years, visit www.greenvillezoo.com or become a fan on Facebook.

Major events in Greenville Zoo history

1957–1960

- Greenville City Council approves plans for a new zoo
- Groundbreaking and construction begins on zoo

1962

- 26 monkeys arrive at the zoo
- Large monkey dome constructed

1963 – 1970

- Walkways are paved, chimpanzee building is constructed and fencing is put in place around the zoo
- Zoo adds additional animals including a kangaroo, sea lions, otters, a macaw and two leopards

1971

- Joy I, the elephant makes debut at the zoo

1977

- Joy II, the elephant, arrives at the zoo

1981

- First lion cubs born at the zoo (male and female twin cubs)
- Zoo now houses 70 animals in 11 display areas
- Site expands from 5 to 14 acres

1984-1986

- Zoo closes for construction. Phase includes upgrades of the animal habitats.

1986

- Zoo reopens with new education center, reptile building housing 30 exhibits, gift and refreshment center, South American area and waterfowl lagoon
- First official Boo in the Zoo

1988

- Friends of the Zoo announces Jump for Joy campaign to raise \$100,000 to renovate the exhibit for Joy, the elephant
- Red pandas added to Asian area
- Australian area opens

1989

- Lion cub twins born at the zoo

1992

- Rare white Bengal tiger and rare white alligator arrive on loan for public viewing

1996

- Friends of the Zoo launches a \$2.5 million capital campaign to fund orangutan and leopard exhibits

2002

- Cub Kingdom preschool playground opens at the zoo

2003

- New Asian Encounter exhibit opens to the public
- Bornean orangutans (Mia and Chelsea) arrive at the zoo

2005

- Four male lion cubs are born at the zoo

2006

- Baby orangutan and three rare red pandas are born at the zoo
- First Sippin' Safari event held to raise money for the giraffes
- Joy II gets a new companion, Lady Bird

2008

- Masai giraffe exhibit opens - features two giraffe, Autumn and Walter

2009

- Male colobus monkey born at the zoo

2010

- A second male colobus monkey is born at the zoo
- Greenville Zoo celebrates 50 years