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NEWS RELEASE

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REID PARK ZOO CAROUSEL UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Construction is underway on an exciting new improvement at Reid Park Zoo: a carousel featuring hand-carved endangered species from around the world. The carousel is scheduled to be completed next week, and will debut at ZOOcon, the Zoo's annual gala fundraiser, on Friday October 16th.

The American-made carousel features representatives from 30 different animal species including an elephant, a lemur, a dolphin, and even a giant anteater. Each animal was painstakingly fabricated by craftsmen at Chance Rides, an amusement company based in Wichita, Kansas. The carousel will be topped by a safari-themed thatched roof.

"This carousel is a tremendous gift made possible by the Reid Park Zoological Society," says Zoo Administrator Jason Jacobs, "It's going to provide an exciting new focal point for guests entering the Zoo, and a fun new activity for families to enjoy together. And, as a bonus, it'll finally allow us to say 'yes' when someone asks if they can ride an elephant."

Reid Park Zoological Society organized a fundraising campaign to help bring the carousel to Tucson in which sponsorship was sought for individual animals. Although many animals have been sponsored there are a few species still available, including a rhinoceros, a sea turtle, and a red panda. "Sponsoring a carousel animal is such a fun way to show your support for the Zoo," says Nancy Schlegel, President of the Reid Park Zoological Society, "Imagine being able to bring your children or grandchildren to the Zoo to ride 'their' carousel animal."

Media is encouraged to come to the Zoo during open hours today to gain images or video of the carousel construction. The carousel will cost \$3 for each rider with proceeds going towards improving the Zoo; guardians may stand on the carousel alongside children at no charge.

Reid Park Zoo is open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. The public can call 791-4022 for directions and admission information, or visit the Zoo's website www.reidparkzoo.org.

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