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Carolina Raptor Center Reopens With New Entrance, Interactive Exhibits

HUNTERSVILLE, NC (November 18, 2009) – Carolina Raptor Center reopened on November 18 at 10 a.m. The facility had been closed for two weeks to update the organization, programs, and exhibits in advance of the Center's 25th Anniversary Friends & Family Picnic, a members-only celebration on Saturday, November 21 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The revitalized venue includes a new front entrance with an aviary displaying raptors that live at the Center; a new live bird exhibit featuring Clemente, a vulture who paints; and the introduction of two rare African eagles. During the 25th Anniversary event, the African eagles will provide flight demonstrations and the Center's new Ferruginous hawk will be named.

Carolina Raptor Center President and CEO Joy Braunstein said that the reopening is the first step in Carolina Raptor Center's plan to restructure its business model and programs for future viability. The changes are being made partially in response to a decline in revenue during the economic recession, but also because the aging facility was due for a refurbishment.

Over the next year, the Center will continue updating exhibits and programs to be even more exciting and interactive, plus develop more meaningful volunteer opportunities and community outreach. Braunstein said, "We want to both educate and entertain visitors so they not only enjoy their time with us, but leave with a better understanding of how raptors benefit our world."

Braunstein continued, "Raptors are an integral part of our environment and ecosystem, naturally controlling overpopulation of rodents and pests. Helping people learn more about these magnificent birds and how humans affect their future is what Carolina Raptor Center represents. The more we allow people to interact with the birds and have meaningful volunteer opportunities, the stronger we become as a center and a community."

Incorporated in December 1981 and based in Huntersville since November 1984, Carolina Raptor Center has been dedicated to the care and successful release of injured and orphaned birds of prey, including hawks, owls, harriers, eagles, falcons and vultures. The center houses more than 20 species of raptors, most too injured to return to the wild, plus cares for approximately 700 injured or orphaned raptors annually at its Jim Arthur Raptor Rehabilitation Center where the birds receive treatment, recovery and eventually, release.

Carolina Raptor Center is located at 6000 Sample Road in Huntersville, N.C. near Latta Plantation.

Fall/winter (October 1-March 1) hours are Wednesday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Sunday 12:00 – 5:00 p.m. Admission is \$8 adults, \$7 seniors, \$6 children, and free to children under five when accompanied by a parent. Membership starts at \$30 and includes free admission to the Center throughout the year. Programs include adopt-a-bird, summer and home school camps, raptor keeper for a day, professional consulting, release-a-raptor and bird handling workshops, plus other close-encounter adventures. For more information, visit the Center's website at www.carolinaraptorcenter.org.

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