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**Carolina Raptor Center Closed for Two Weeks to
Restructure and Update Organization and Programs for 2010**

HUNTERSVILLE, NC (November 3, 2009) – On Tuesday, November 3, Carolina Raptor Center will close for two weeks, reopening on November 18. Scheduled to celebrate its 25th anniversary at a members only picnic on November 21, the Center will use the time off to update its organization, programs, and exhibits including two rare African eagles.

Carolina Raptor Center President and CEO Joy Braunstein notes that the Center has experienced a sharp decline in revenues this year, prompting the need to restructure its business model for future viability and update programs to be more inviting. She explains, “Like many organizations across the Carolinas and nation, we’ve been impacted by economic conditions. Sadly, that means we will lose several individuals who have helped Carolina Raptor Center thrive over the years. However, our reorganization will strategically position us to succeed in the future, and allow us to streamline our services and create even more exciting, interactive programs for the public.”

She continues, “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 trims its staff with the coming reorganization. “Like any responsible company, we plan to reset and retrain our organization to assure a sustainable business model,” Braunstein emphasizes. “We look forward to enhancing our exhibits and each visitor’s experience with more hands-on programs and extensive volunteer opportunities. It’s all about ‘edutainment’ – educating and entertaining visitors so they not only enjoy their time with us, but leave with a better understanding of how raptors benefit our world.”

Braunstein mentions that because Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools budget cuts have limited school support, Carolina Raptor Center will consider new ways to enlighten children and to redesign its portfolio of school programs. In the meantime, how can the community help the organization? Braunstein states, “The primary reason we are closing for two weeks is to restructure our organization to provide a better experience for the public. But I won’t lie – donations would certainly help. One mutually beneficial way people can help is to become CRC members. And, if they join by November 21st, they can attend our members-only upcoming Friends & Family Picnic and meet our new African eagles which will prompt a renovation of our eagle habitat. That night, we’ll also name our new Ferruginous Hawk.”

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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