

**LEHIGH VALLEY ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
ANNOUNCES CHANGES**

**Lehigh Valley Zoo Executive Director Leaving to Become President and Chief  
Executive Officer of The Living Desert in Palm Desert, CA**

**The State Theatre, Led by President and Chief Executive Officer Shelley Brown,  
Will Consult With Zoo Leadership on Long-Term Strategic Planning**

**Lehigh Valley, PA, May 4, 2009** – The Lehigh Valley Zoological Society Board of Directors announced today that Lehigh Valley Zoo Executive Director Stacey Johnson has accepted a position as President and Chief Executive Officer of The Living Desert in Palm Desert, Ca. Johnson will begin his new assignment in mid-June and will continue to lead the Lehigh Valley Zoo until then. Additionally, the board announced that the State Theatre Center for the Arts, led by President and Chief Executive Officer Shelley Brown, will consult with the Zoo to help develop a long-term strategy for success. The announcements were made by Fred Keller, Chairman of the Lehigh Valley Zoological Society.

“We congratulate Stacey on his new position and thank him for his tireless efforts over the past two-and-a-half years,” said Keller. “Zoo operations are in good hands thanks to his leadership and the wonderful staff he has developed.”

Lehigh County Executive Don Cunningham said, “Stacey has done a wonderful job in leading the zoo during the past two years and we want to wish him the best of luck in his new role at The Living Desert. We are pleased that Shelley has agreed to help the Zoological Society continue to build on that momentum and move to the next level.”

During Johnson’s tenure, he increased the Zoo’s animal collection – most recently adding the Jandl Penguin Pavilion and its African Penguins – modernized existing exhibits, expanded the Zoo’s involvement in The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and reached out to the community, media and government leaders. Additionally, he is credited with improving efficiency levels in the Zoo’s business operations.

“It’s an exciting time for the Lehigh Valley Zoo,” said Johnson. “It is with mixed emotion that I move on to The Living Desert. Attendance at the Lehigh Valley Zoo has increased by 86 percent over 2008, the penguins are a big hit, and more and more school kids are visiting here every day and having a great time while accidentally learning something.”

At this time, a director of the Lehigh Valley Zoo will not be named, but Zoo operations will not be affected by this announcement. The Zoo hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

“We are thrilled that The State Theatre has agreed to help us develop our long-term strategic plan,” said Keller. “Shelley Brown has a long history of helping non-profits manage their annual budgets, partner with community leaders and philanthropists, and increase their admissions.”

Brown has been instrumental in creating and executing its long-term strategic growth plan since 1992. Under her leadership, the theatre overcame early financial difficulties to become a regular stop for nationally-known headliner acts and Broadway shows.

“The State theatre and the Lehigh Valley Zoo are both valued community non-profits and we look forward to helping the Zoo plan for a strong and secure future,” said Brown.

#### The Lehigh Valley Zoo

The Lehigh Valley Zoo is located at 5150 Game Preserve Road in Schnecksville, PA. The Zoo is open year-round and is operated by the Lehigh Valley Zoological Society, a private not-for-profit organization. For more information about events and attractions visit [www.lvzoo.org](http://www.lvzoo.org).

#### **Media Contact:**

Jeff Vaughan, [jv@voncom.com](mailto:jv@voncom.com)

(c) 610-533-4264

(o) 610-351-8145