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# News Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date:** December 21, 2010

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467-4311

## GREENVILLE ZOO SPIDER MONKEY RECOVERING FROM SURGERY

*Local veterinary office donates surgical and medical services*

**Greenville, S.C.** – One of the Greenville Zoo's oldest residents Selma, a 36-year-old spider monkey, is recovering in the zoo's animal clinic from ovariectomy surgery performed by Dr. Dermot Jevens, Diplomate ACVS last week. Selma's surgical and medical procedures were donated to the Greenville Zoo by Upstate Veterinary Specialists.

"Selma is doing very well with no complications from her surgery thus far," said Dr. Heather Miller, Deputy Director for Animal Health for the Greenville Zoo. "She is a wonderful patient and is making a speedy recover despite her 36 years."

Selma was originally diagnosed with a gastrointestinal tumor that was successfully removed approximately one year ago. In 2010, she was continuously monitored via abdominal ultrasound conducted by Dr. Katrina Toshach, Diplomate ACVIM of Upstate Veterinary Specialists. Dr. Toshach had noted uterine and ovarian enlargement that was still fairly mild in August, so it was decided to continue monitoring as Selma was not showing any signs of discomfort. During the last month, however, zoo staff noticed Selma was suffering from abdominal distension and discomfort. Dr. Miller conducted an ultrasound at the zoo and noticed that her uterus and ovaries were continuing to increase in size, and on December 3, were twice their normal size. Since her surgery, Selma has been

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monitored under the care of Dr. Miller at the zoo.

“We are truly fortunate to have formed a partnership with Upstate Veterinary Specialists who have been a tremendous help with Selma over the course of the past year,” said Dr. Miller.

The zoo is currently in the process of raising funds for renovations to its existing animal medical clinic. Brew in the Zoo and events held throughout the zoo’s Summer Zoobilee helped raise \$41,000 toward the clinic. The zoo will continue efforts over the next year to hit its fundraising goal of \$188,000.

Selma is one of three brown-headed spider monkeys at the zoo. Mojo, an 8-year-old male, was the latest to join the Primate Exhibit as a companion to Jasmin, a 13-year-old female who is also Selma’s granddaughter. Greenville Zoo officials hope Mojo and Jasmin will eventually result in a successful breeding match.

### **ABOUT SPIDER MONKEYS**

Spider monkeys are native to the tropical forests of Central and South America. They are unique in the animal kingdom with their disproportionately long arms and legs as well as their prehensile tail. They live in the upper layers of the forest canopy and eat primarily fruits, but will occasionally consume leaves, flowers and insects. Recent studies on primate cognition studies indicate that spider monkeys are the most intelligent New World monkey.

### **About the Greenville Zoo**

Accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), Greenville Zoo is rated one of the best tourist attractions in South Carolina, attracting over 270,000 people annually. Operated by the City of Greenville, the 14-acre facility features wildlife from around the world including giraffes, monkeys, giant tortoises and elephants. Visitors can also enjoy one of the zoo’s most popular exhibits, the Reptile Building, which is home to a variety of lizards, frogs, turtles and snakes.

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, visit [www.greenvillezoo.com](http://www.greenvillezoo.com) or become a fan on Facebook.