

Safari Niagara earns CAZA accreditation

Fort Erie - Oct 16, 2009

Tell a friend Safari Niagara has passed the test for inspectors from the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA).

The Stevensville animal park has complied with all aspects of the CAZA accreditation process and has fully demonstrated that it meets the requirements for accreditation. Accordingly, its application has been approved by the CAZA accreditation commission.

It is the first time the family-owned and operated zoo has been given full membership in CAZA, meaning Safari Niagara now has the tools to become more involved in CAZA's efforts. Safari Niagara opened to the public in 2002 and began the process for CAZA accreditation in 2007.

"It was a tough but extremely rewarding experience," said Safari Niagara general manager Tim Tykolis. CAZA was formed in 1975 as a national, not-for-profit organization to promote the welfare of animals and encourage the advancement of conservation, education and science while fostering public engagement in the preservation of our natural heritage. It employs a comprehensive and demanding set of standards that apply to all aspects of the operations of a zoo or aquarium, and these standards must be met by all facilities applying for membership in the association. CAZA's accreditation standards are among the highest in the world. CAZA's accreditation commission is responsible for administering these standards, and all applicants must provide a complete set of documentation to the commission, followed by a detailed on-site inspection by a team of CAZA experts.

Safari Niagara's accreditation was awarded Oct. 3 at CAZA's national conference held in Edmonton.

Lana Borg, the park's manager of animal care, attended the conference and was on hand to accept the certificate.

"It was an amazing moment and extreme honour," she said. "It was the culmination of our team at Safari Niagara working side by side to achieve the ultimate milestone and embarking a new beginning in our connection to the natural world."

As a member of CAZA, Safari Niagara joins the ranks of a national network of 26 zoos and aquariums dedicated to supporting CAZA's mission, which includes using their members' expertise to bring the reality of animals and their threatened environment to people in a way that raises awareness and motivates positive action to ensure the future of the world's wildlife.

Safari Niagara, which closed for the winter this past weekend, is home to more than 400 animals, birds and reptiles.