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MEDIA CONTACT:

Kelly Thompson
Marketing & Development Coordinator
Office: 325-437-4692
E-mail: kelly.thompson@abilenetx.com

Zoo acquires two young camels
Public asked to help name the two females

The Abilene Zoo has two new camels!

The three-month-old female dromedary camels are new to the zoo from a Texas camel farm. The duo will go on exhibit and do daily walkthroughs of the zoo this spring. The young animals are still growing, but they currently stand at about 5 feet tall and weigh 170 pounds. The camels currently are in quarantine, a requirement for all animals new to the zoo.

Meanwhile, the pair need to be named, and the zookeepers have a list of potential names for the public's consideration in a citywide naming contest:

For the first female camel consider these three possibilities:

- Kalahari: the name of a desert in southern Africa that means "thirstland" or "salt pans."
- Dakota: the name of a Native American tribe and the location in North America where the oldest camel fossil in North America was found (South Dakota).
- Bahati: a Swahili word that means "good fortune."



For the second female camel these are the name possibilities:

- Yasmin: Swahili word for "jasmine."
- Sahara: the name of a desert in north Africa.
- Malika: Swahili word for "angel."

The naming contest winners will be drawn from the ballots cast for the top names in each group. Those two winners will be awarded a special one-on-one interactive experience with the camels.

To cast a ballot in the contest, pick your favorite name out of each batch of three and submit a ballot in the Zoo Store, or email your favorites and include your contact information in an email to abilenezoo@abilenetx.com. The contest ends Feb. 22.

The Abilene Zoo is home to more than 900 animals from 250 species. The zoo is open 7 days a week (closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day) from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Last admittance is 4 p.m. Tickets are \$6 for adults, \$3.50 for children ages 3-12, \$5 for seniors aged 60+. Members are admitted free. Memberships start at \$30. www.abilenezoo.org. 325-676-6085. This summer, the zoo will be open every Thursday until 9 p.m.

Mission Statement: The Abilene Zoo is a place of learning and adventure, where families make memories, share the joy of discovery and become inspired to preserve wildlife.