

October 16, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Zoo's SPOOKTACULAR Opens Oct. 19

An eerie alien crash landing, a vintage carnival and the prehistoric forest are only a few of the sights planned for guest to the 29th annual Halloween SPOOKTACULAR, presented by Simmons First National Bank at Dickerson Park Zoo. SPOOKTACULAR will open Friday, Oct. 19, from 6:30-9 p.m., and continues through Halloween night (open nightly, regardless of the weather).

Halloween SPOOKTACULAR is the largest on-grounds fundraising event for Friends of the Zoo, and proceeds benefit the zoo's conservation education programs and field conservation support. Simmons First National Bank returns for a second year as the event's presenting sponsor; and Hy-Vee is the candy sponsor, providing top-quality brand-name "fun-size" candy treats for children age 12 and younger.

New themed decorations for 2012 include:

- Simmons First National Bank Candy Land
- Creepy Castle
- Angry Zoo Birds
- Vintage Carnival, with games for the kids (a duck pond, prize wheel and ring toss).
- Prehistoric Forest
- Sideshow Scientist
- An all-new maze

The zoo's Outback Corral petting zoo will tell the story of "Yesterday's Zoo," a children's book by Shane DeRolf. The residents of Yesterday's Zoo are animals that are now extinct, and the story encourages children to help keep their animal friends of today out of Yesterday's Zoo.

Returning favorites include hundreds of jack-o'-lanterns, hand-carved by area school children, Totem Village and the Monster Mash Dance Party at the Titus Express train station. Guests will also enjoy an up-close visit with our Hometown Heroes, representatives from local law enforcement agencies and public safety departments.

Children's activities include free carnival games and candy treats (for children ages 1-12). Children are encouraged to wear costumes; however, costumes are not required.

Tickets are \$7 at the gate for everyone age 1 and older. Beginning mid-October, discounted advance tickets can be purchased for \$6 each at McDonald's restaurants in Springfield, Ozark, Nixa, Republic and Willard. Children younger than age 1 are admitted free. Friends of the Zoo

members receive discounted admission at the gate (\$3 per person). For an additional \$2 per person, children and adults can take an after-dark ride on the Titus Express train.

Dickerson Park Zoo is open for daytime visits daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., weather permitting. Daytime admission fees are \$8 for adults and teenagers, and \$5 for children ages 3-12. Admission to Halloween SPOOKTACULAR is not included with daytime admission fees. For more information about the zoo or its events, visit www.dickersonparkzoo.org or call 417-864-1800.

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