



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Zoo to celebrate 50th anniversary with 10 cent admission

ABILENE, TEXAS – The Abilene Zoo will celebrate its golden anniversary July 9 by saving parents a little gold. Children ages 12 and younger will get in the gate for only a dime, just as they did on opening day in July 1966.

The zoo's 50th Anniversary and MusicFest will celebrate decades of making memories with a full day of musical performances, along with zoo keeper chats, an alligator bounce house, special guests, and even some highlights from the zoo's history.

“It's a day for the community to celebrate how far we've come and the people who made it possible,” said Director Bill Gersonde. “Abilenians are proud of what we've built here.”

The animals also will get in on the fun. Zoo keepers are creating treats, cakes and gift boxes to put out as animal enrichment that day.

At 10 a.m., Mayor Norm Archibald will declare it “Abilene Zoo Day” to mark the milestone, while the Abilene Chamber of Commerce Red Coats and families will dignify the day with a tribute. Birthday cupcakes will be handed out while they last.

MusicFest is made possible by a grant from the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council and the Texas Commission on the Arts:

- 9 a.m. Gates open -- Ballet Folklorico del Big Country, Plaza
- 10 a.m. Abilene Zoo Day Opening Ceremonies
- 10 a.m. Abilene Community Band in the Pavilion
- 11 a.m. The Piano Man in the Plaza
- Noon Allan Teel Jazz Band in the Pavilion
- 1 p.m. Key City Brass in the Plaza
- 2 p.m. Fraid Knot, contemporary rock in the Pavilion
- 3 p.m. Trombone Quartet in the Plaza
- 4 p.m. Gates close

About the Abilene Zoo:

Since its founding in 1966, the Abilene Zoo has stood as a place of learning and adventure, where visitors make memories, share the joy of discovery and become inspired to preserve wildlife. Situated on 16 acres in the award-winning Grover Nelson Park, the zoo has more than 1000 animals of 270 species from around the globe. The zoo is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Last admittance is 4 p.m. The zoo is open until 9 p.m. each Thursday all summer, with last admittance at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$4.50 for children ages 3-12, \$6 for seniors aged 60 and older. Members are admitted free. www.abilenezoo.org. 325-676-6085.

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.*