

Northern Explorer Month at Assiniboine Park Zoo

For immediate release: Winnipeg, January 31, 2017 – Assiniboine Park Zoo is excited to announce that Northern Explorer Month is back again for another year due to popular demand. Starting tomorrow, February 1, visitors can pay one regular admission fee and come the entire month of February for FREE! In addition, a variety of family-friendly activities and zookeeper talks are planned where visitors will learn about polar bears, climate change, and what actions they can take to positively impact the environment.

“We’re very excited to be bringing back Northern Explorer month once again and hope that we’ll see lots of visitors to the Zoo in the coming month”, said Gary Lunsford, Sr. Director, Animal Management & Conservation. “This is a great opportunity for us to engage the community to learn and care about northern species, their habitats, and what we can all do to protect them”.

To celebrate Northern Explorer Month, the following activities will take place at the Zoo from Wednesday, February 1st to Tuesday, February 28th:

- **Playtime in the Arctic** – Learning is so “Cool” at the Gateway to the Arctic building! Every Saturday and Sunday in February, there will be:
 - Animal Encounters with polar bears and seals (11 AM & 2 PM)
 - Crafts and hands on bio-fact tables (1 PM – 3 PM)
 - Storytelling (1:30 PM)
- **Northern Explorer Expedition** – Visitors can check out eight “Cool” spots around the Zoo, like watching the polar bears swim and snow leopards play, and submit their checklist to Wild Things Unique Gifts located at the Zoo entrance and receive their Northern Explorer prize!
- **Winston on Location** – Winston the polar bear mascot will be making appearances every weekend in February at the Zoo.
- **Heavy Horse Wagon Rides** – Take a horse drawn wagon ride from the McFeetors Heavy Horse Centre located inside the Zoo and enjoy the sites on a trail through the Assiniboine Park. Rides run Monday – Friday at 1 PM from the barn and are approximately 25-30 minutes. Tickets are \$10 per person and can be purchase at the Zoo entrance. Shorter rides within the Zoo are available on the weekends and run from 1 PM – 3 PM, tickets are \$3. Guests who arrive 15 minutes early can watch the horses getting ready for this charming experience.
- **Ways to support the Polar Bear Rescue Team all month long:**
 - Add \$2 to any purchase and funds raised will go to the Polar Bear Rescue Team
 - Purchase a *Sunshine Lollipops & Rainbows* chocolate polar bear sucker or reusable Assiniboine Park Zoo bag
 - Try our “Candied Polar Bear Popcorn” from the Tundra Grill and 50% of the proceeds will go to the Polar Bear Rescue Team

In addition to the Northern Explorer Month activities, the following special events are planned at the Zoo this month:

- **Saturday, February 4th: Kick-off with the Festival du Voyageur. Activities in the Winter Adventureland from 10 AM – 2 PM**
 - Leo, the Festival du Voyageur mascot, will be at the zoo greeting visitors and Official Voyageurs will be on site from 12 PM – 2 PM to take photos with guests
 - Visitors can participate in Voyageur Games and enjoy a sweet Festival du Voyageur treat at the maple taffy station
 - All visitors on this day will receive a coupon for 10% off regular priced admission to the Festival du Voyageur at Voyageur Park

- **Monday, February 20th, Louis Riel Day. Meet the Manitoba Moose players when they make a special appearance at the Zoo.** Full details will be released closer to the date.

- **Saturday, February 25th & Sunday, February 26th. Celebration in recognition of International Polar Bear Day (Officially Monday, February 27th)**
 - Have “Breakfast with the Bears” at the Tundra Grill located inside the Zoo (10 AM on Saturday & Sunday)
 - Conservation and Zoo Bear Trek. Visitors can join one of our Educators as they share the stories about our bears as well as conservation strategies. These free 45 minute tours begin at the Gateway to the Arctic building and go through parts of Journey to Churchill. (11 am & 1 pm)
 - There will be hands on bio-fact tables and an interactive art installation by Kal Barteski at the Gateway to the Arctic building

The Zoo is open 9 AM to 4 PM daily. Full promotion details and schedule can be found at assiniboineparkzoo.ca.

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For more information and interview requests, please contact:

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