



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fort Wayne Zoo Honors Service Members with Military Appreciation Weekend

Fort Wayne IN – In honor of Flag Day, the Fort Wayne Zoo is proud to host Military Appreciation Weekend this Saturday, June 13, through Sunday, June 14, offering free admission to all active duty and retired military personnel in honor of their service and sacrifice. Military personnel can also bring up to three guests with them when they visit this weekend at no additional charge. All visitors to the Zoo will be given the opportunity to plant a provided small flag outside of the Zoo's Wild Things Gift Shop in our "Field of Honor" to help commemorate our service men and women.

On Sunday, June 14, the Zoo will open early at 8:40 a.m. with a Military Appreciation Ceremony at 8:50 a.m. just inside the main entrance. The event will begin with a warm welcome from Zoo Director and CEO Rick Schuiteman, followed by a flag presentation by the National Guard Honor Guard, the Fort Wayne Police Honor Guard and a few of our local veterans from the VFW Post 857, as well as the heartfelt rendition of the National Anthem performed by Amelia Clark and Molly Resner.

"Showing our appreciation towards the dedicated and brave service members in our community, along with their families, is an honor," said Rick Schuiteman, "We are truly looking forward to giving everyone a day of connection, celebration, and fun at the Zoo." Rick Schuiteman will be available for interview and further comments after the conclusion of the Military Appreciation Ceremony on Sunday.

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About the Fort Wayne Zoo: The Fort Wayne Zoo is northeast Indiana's largest tourist attraction, hosting more than 650,000 guests annually. The Zoo is home to Red Panda Ridge named #6 in USA Today 10 Best Zoo Exhibits for 2024. In 2021, the Zoo was voted Visit Indiana's "Summer Bucket List Top Attraction" and is consistently named one of the nation's Top Ten Zoos for Kids by national media outlets.

The Zoo is a conservation leader, investing nearly \$275,000 annually in local, regional, and international efforts to protect wildlife and their habitats. The Zoo cares for more than 1,500 animals and participates in 41 cooperative species survival plan programs and 42 taxon advisory groups, which are critical to supporting threatened species.

As a self-supporting facility, the Fort Wayne Zoo receives no tax dollars for daily operations, unlike most accredited zoos where those dollars fund approximately 40% of their annual operating budgets. The Zoo's mission is made possible thanks to support derived from admissions, memberships, donations, group picnics, special ticketed events, and other visitation-related activities.