



# Springfield Park District

www.springfieldparks.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ZOO TO HOST BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR GIBBON

*[Springfield, Illinois]* – The Henson Robinson Zoo will host a birthday party for Jari, the white-handed gibbon on Saturday, November 22 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. Jari's 1<sup>st</sup> birthday celebration will include kids' activities and games, zookeeper lead group visits to Jari and Kimmy and cake will be served courtesy of Specialty Cakes. In addition, the local American Association of Zookeepers (AAZK) chapter will be selling Jari t-shirts and all proceeds will be donated in support of sustainable palm oil and the preservation of gibbon habitats in the wild.

Visitors are invited to bring birthday gifts in lieu of admission. Items on Jari's wish list include: NutriGrain bars (any flavor), Graduates by Gerber (lil crunchies, puffs, yogurt melts), sugar free pudding, dog toys, kong toys, plastic frisbees, giggly wiggly balls, sleigh bells, cow bells, and gift cards for Petsmart, Shop 'n Save, Target or Walmart. An online wish list can also be found at [http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/3CO1867RRSP8K/ref=topnav\\_lists\\_2](http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/3CO1867RRSP8K/ref=topnav_lists_2).

Jari arrived from the Jackson Zoo in Jackson, Mississippi in October to be housed with the zoo's resident gibbon, Kimmy. Since the young gibbon's arrival, the pair have been slowly introduced and are getting along very well. The transfer was made on a recommendation of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Lar Gibbon Species Survival Plan (SSP).

White-handed gibbons, *Hylobates lar*, are listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Native to the evergreen forests of Indonesia and Malaysia, the white-handed gibbon lives off a diet of mainly fruits and leaves. These animals are important seed dispersers with some plant species relying solely on the gibbon for dispersal. The main threats to the wild gibbon population are hunting and habitat loss.

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