

## News Release

From: Marshfield Parks and Recreation Department

Re: Death of Wildwood Zoo Grizzly Bear

Date: September 22, 2011

Release-

Ms. Grizz, the Grizzly Bear at Wildwood Zoo, has been a resident of the Zoo since 1975. She travelled to Marshfield from Southwick Wild Animal Farm in Blackstone, MA. At the age of four years old, she was already over 400 pounds when she arrived in a large empty oil barrel!

During her life at Wildwood Zoo, Ms. Grizz has become a favorite of zoo visitors and staff alike. She is the longest-lived animal to have called our zoo home, and is remembered fondly by multiple generations of Zoo patrons. This last spring, Ms. Grizz was thrown a birthday party to celebrate a memorable milestone, her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday!

In recent years, Ms. Grizz has exhibited increasing signs of her advanced age. Over the past several months, Zoo staff and the Athens Veterinary Clinic have monitored Ms. Grizz as her health and quality of life has substantially declined. After much consideration, the difficult decision was made to intervene on her behalf. On September 21, 2011 under the supervision of veterinary and city of Marshfield staff, Ms. Grizz was humanely euthanized.

The health and wellbeing of the exhibit animals at Wildwood Zoo has been top priority of zoo staff since its inception, and will continue to remain so in the future. While Ms. Grizz will surely be missed at Wildwood Zoo, this choice was made in her best interest. Zoo animals live substantially different lives than their wild counterparts. Often they are protected from natural causes of mortality that would prevent them from ever reaching Ms. Grizz's age.

There is no immediate plan to replace Ms. Grizz. The City and Wildwood Zoological Society are currently working with a consulting firm to design a new Grizzly Bear Exhibit. The new exhibit will provide future bears with a substantially larger, more natural home. Plans to include expanded enrichment and large natural surface areas will contribute to the mission of providing the best possible quality of life for Wildwood Zoo exhibit animals. The new enclosure will provide visitors to Wildwood Zoo a premier opportunity to view bears in a stimulating and attractive environment.

The City would like to thank its residents and zoo visitors for their past and future patronage and support.