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News Release

Outdoor Friday Movie Series to resume May 12 at Wilson Park

'Star Wars' doubleheader, five other movies planned for May through July

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (May 9, 2017) — The 2017 Outdoor Friday Family Movie Series will resume Friday in Arkansas City with a "Star Wars" doubleheader at the Wilson Park rotunda, 701 N. Summit St.

The recent blockbuster hit, "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story," will play at 7 p.m., preceded by another showing of the Wilson Park Master Plan flythrough video. "Star Wars: A New Hope" follows "Rogue One."

"We are excited for this chance to show these films back to back in the way they unfold chronologically," said Public Information Officer Andrew Lawson. "Together, they tell a complete story."

Five additional movies are planned every other Friday night through July 21, culminating in a sequel event to last year's very popular showing of "Finding Nemo" and free admission at Paris Park Pool.

All movie nights will begin promptly at 7 p.m. This year's staggered "every other week" schedule will allow for movies to be postponed until the following Friday in case of inclement weather.

And later this year, the movie series will hit the road for the first time with a special outreach event in Newkirk, Oklahoma. The date, time, location and title of the movie showing are yet to be determined.

A minimum of four movies are planned for this fall, including one in conjunction with the National Night Out kickoff party for the second straight year, for a total of 16 movies to be shown for free in 2017.

"We are so appreciative of the generous sponsors who make these wonderful events possible," said City Manager Nick Hernandez. "If you are interested in being a sponsor this fall or a nonprofit who would like to serve concessions, please call myself or Andrew Lawson at 441-4415 to discuss pricing options."

"Rogue One" is sponsored by the Ark City Public Library and "Star Wars" by Rogers Family Dentistry.

About the Outdoor Friday Family Movie Series

For immediate release

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The 2015 Outdoor Summer Movie Series was a huge success in the debut season for the new V.J. Wilkins Memorial Stage at the rotunda, with particularly large crowds viewing “Big Hero 6” and “Frozen.”

The projection equipment, sound system and stage all were made possible by a grant received three years ago from the V.J. Wilkins Memorial Foundation, in order to promote arts throughout the city.

A special fall showing of “Inside Out” drew more than 300 people to the rotunda in November 2015, despite colder temperatures. Plans were launched then for more autumn showings in 2016.

Various weather conditions impacted attendance often last spring and summer, but the season’s highlight undoubtedly was in June 2016, when more than 700 people packed Paris Park Pool for a special doubleheader, consisting of “Finding Nemo” and “Jaws,” during a free swim-in night at the pool.

During the last three years, the City of Arkansas City has shown a wide variety of movies, including:

- ’80s classics — “Back to the Future,” “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off,” “Ghostbusters,” “Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade” and “Three Amigos!”
- Classic Disney films — “The Fox and the Hound,” “The Jungle Book,” “Mary Poppins” and “Pete’s Dragon”
- Disney animated features — “Big Hero 6,” “Frozen,” “Zootopia” and “Moana”
- Disney live-action remakes — “Cinderella” and “Maleficent”
- Disney-Pixar animated collaborations — “Finding Nemo,” “The Good Dinosaur” and “Inside Out”
- Marvel Cinematic Universe films — “Doctor Strange”
- Other animated films — “The Lego Movie,” “The Lorax,” “Minions” and “The Secret Life of Pets”
- Summer blockbusters — “Jaws,” “Jurassic Park,” “Jurassic World,” “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” and “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows”

The Outdoor Friday Family Movie Series only has been possible with the assistance of many generous donors, including:

- Civic and service clubs such as the Arkansas City High School KAY Club, the Kiwanis Club, and the Optimists and Soroptimists of Arkansas City;
- Local businesses such as Ark City Daily Bytes, Ark Valley Credit Union, Community National Bank & Trust, Elite Advertising, Grass Clippings, Mitch Reichle—Farm Bureau Financial Services, Munson Insurance, Plumber Bob’s, RCB Bank, Reedy Ford, Rogers Family Dentistry, The Stock Exchange Bank, Union State Bank, and WB Meats;
- Governmental entities such as the Arkansas City Convention and Visitors Bureau, Arkansas City Public Library, and City of Arkansas City;

- Nonprofit organizations such as the Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, the Fraternal Order of Police, Newman's Quest and the Young Professionals of Cowley County.

For more information on becoming a sponsor for an upcoming movie, call Andrew Lawson at (620) 441-4415 or email alawson@arkansascityks.gov.

About the Wilson Park Master Plan

In 2015, the City of Arkansas City was awarded a \$33,500 grant from the V.J. Wilkins Memorial Foundation to develop a master plan for Wilson Park and the vacant City-owned lot just to the north.

The scope of the plan included looking at the potential for a cultural events center and possibly expanding the park into the recently vacated hospital property at Birch Avenue and First Street.

A steering committee of citizens and affiliated representatives was formed to direct the process.

The Wilson Park Master Plan steering committee members are:

- City Commissioner Charles Tweedy III — originally appointed as a planning commissioner;
- Jill Wineinger — Arkansas City Beautification and Tree Advisory Board vice chair;
- Pam Crain — Arkansas City Convention and Visitors Bureau tourism specialist;
- Kristi Old and Brittany Carder — Arkansas City Farm and Art Market coordinators;
- Blanche Schmidt — Arkansas City Public Library Board of Trustees president;
- Angie Bruce, Richard Hensley and Dr. Nick Rogers — citizens at large.

Also present at most of the meetings were V.J. Wilkins Foundation board members Otis Morrow and Karen Zeller, as well as Hernandez and Lawson.

LK Architecture, of Wichita, was retained by the City to assist with developing the master plan and related materials. The architects who worked on the project were Jeff Best, director of landscape architecture; Aaron Smith, design architect; and William Wells, landscape architect.

The steering committee met four times in 2015 — on Sept. 29, Oct. 14, Nov. 2 and Dec. 7 — to discuss and develop the master plan. The plan was finalized at a meeting June 6, 2016, for presentation to the Wilkins Foundation last July in Denver, Colorado. A rollout planning meeting was held March 13.

The Wilson Park Master Plan has been rolled out throughout March and April at a variety of community events, including Arbor Day, Cowley's Outdoor Market, the Cowley County Health and Safety Fair, the Cowley Home and Outdoor Living Festival, and a Chamber of Commerce coffee.

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