

What is Salisbury: City Park packs big punch

Written by Cindy Robinson Staff Writer

Mar. 26, 2014 |

delmarvanow.com

SALISBURY — The Salisbury City Park, spread out over 95 acres, offers lots of small-town charm to the city.

The centerpiece of the park is the Salisbury Zoological Park, which covers 14 acres and offers about 27 exhibits, including jaguars, flamingos, bison, bears, spider monkeys, alpaca, ocelots, river otters and alligators.

A favorite exhibit is the Andean bears. The zoo family lost a favorite member of its animal family when Poopsie, a long-time resident of the zoo, died last year at age 37. At the time, Poopsie was the oldest Andean bear in captivity.

A new female Andean bear is now on breed loan from the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.

An estimated 300,000-plus visitors flock to the zoo each year, Director Ralph Piland said. And that number is approaching the annual number of visitors to the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore.

Piland said the zoo is one of only about five remaining zoos in the country where both admission and parking are free. Yielding to increasing economic pressures in cities today, more zoos are finding it necessary to charge admission to help fund operation costs.

Plans for the zoo include the second phase of the new wallaby exhibit and the opening of an animal health clinic.

Other park highlights:

- For five weeks each summer, the Salisbury Community Band gathers in the historic bandstand, near the picturesque white bridge, and performs for visitors relaxing on blankets and in lawn chairs.

The bandstand, built in the 1930s, has undergone at least two renovations; the last was completed just in time for the 2004 summer concert season.

- The park is also home to the Winter Wonderland of Lights, a free, colorful, animated holiday light display situated along the river. Each Christmas season, visitors can walk among the lighted displays for an up-close look.

