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Lights Before Christmas Opens November 17 at the Toledo Zoo

TOLEDO, Ohio –Toledo Zoo’s *Lights Before Christmas* presented by KeyBank has become “THE” holiday tradition in Toledo and northwest Ohio. KeyBank and Toledo Zoo invite everyone to kick off the 2017 holiday season at the tree-lighting ceremony on Friday, November 17 when the award-winning “Big Tree,” an 85-foot Norway spruce decorated with more than 35,000 energy-saving LED bulbs, will light up the night sky. (Between 5:30 and 6:15 p.m.)

If you can’t make it out to the Zoo for opening night, tune in to WTOL 11 & Fox 36 as their evening news teams will be broadcasting live from the Zoo from 5 – 7 p.m.. Additionally on opening night, the Zoo will serve as a drop-off location for Lucas County Children’s Services Toy Drive. Toys may be dropped off at both Zoo entrances.

The tree-lighting ceremony is the kickoff of the six-week long *Lights Before Christmas* display that features over one million lights and more than 200 illuminated animal images. Other traditions continuing at *Lights* this year include: the Winter Village sponsored by Kroger, complete with Ice Slide and Bumper Cars on Ice. New this year, visit with Santa in his re-tooled workshop in the Arctic Encounter®, Dancing Northern Lights sponsored by St. Luke’s Hospital and Scenes of Wonder, a new 3D light installation that uses the Carnivore Café as a canvas to tell a Christmas story like never before! And it would not be *Lights* without the Zoo’s famous hot chocolate, homemade fudge and baked goods!

Lights Before Christmas will be open November 17 – December 31, 2017. The display will be **closed** Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve night, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day. Hours of operation for *Lights Before Christmas* are 3-8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 3-9 p.m. Friday and Saturday. *The Zoo will close one hour after last admission to allow guests to finish their visit.*

Toledo Zoo members receive free and unlimited Monday-Thursday *Lights Before Christmas* visits plus one free weekend (Friday – Sunday) visit. Visitors can save \$1 per ticket by ordering online at toledozoo.org/lights.

Come enjoy all the season has to offer at the 2017 edition of *Lights Before Christmas* presented by KeyBank at your Toledo Zoo!

The Zoo is open daily at 10 a.m. and is located on the Anthony Wayne Trail (US 25), four miles south of downtown Toledo. For more information, please visit toledozoo.org or call 419-385-4040. Lucas County residents are admitted free of charge on non-holiday Mondays from 10 a.m. - noon. Valid ID showing proof of residency is required. *Submitted by: Kim Haddix*

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