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News Release

For Immediate Release

Park Board Begins Centennial Celebration at History Museum

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board begins a year-long observance of its 100-year anniversary Sunday afternoon with the opening of The History Museum's new exhibit.

"Sun, Sports and Summer Fun: A Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Springfield-Greene County Park Board," opens at a free reception Sunday, Dec. 2, 1-4 p.m. at the museum's new facility at 155 Park Central Square. Past and present Park Board members, staff and patrons are invited to celebrate the exhibit's opening.

"2013 is going to be an exciting year for the Park Board, as we celebrate our first 100 years and broaden our vision for the future," said Bob Belote, Director of Parks. "It's entirely appropriate that we begin our centennial celebration by inviting the community to look back on the Park Board's early days, and we are indebted to the History Museum for giving us this opportunity."

The then-named Springfield Park Board was established May 22, 1913, after Springfield voters overwhelmingly approved a mill tax for establishment and maintenance of free public parks and playgrounds. The Park Board took over maintenance of Washington and Lafayette (both est. 1869) and set about planning new parks. Within the next 30 years, the Park Board had added what are now considered Springfield's Historic Parks. Tremendous growth took place from the 1950's to the present. The name changed to the Springfield-Greene County Park Board in 1996, when voters approved expansion of the system beyond city limits. The Park Board now counts 102 sites and many more facilities within its system.

The History Museum exhibit focuses on the ten Historic Parks: Dickerson Park Zoo, Doling, Grant Beach, Fassnight, Lafayette, Phelps Grove, Sequiota, Silver Springs, Smith and Washington. It also includes artifacts from the Doling History Museum, the Springfield Softball Hall of Fame Museum and private collections.

Sunday's opening reception is free. Regular museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 12 and under.

The Park Board will continue with its centennial celebration throughout 2013, including traveling exhibits, historic parks tours, a community input campaign and a 100th birthday party.

For more information on The History Museum, call 417-864-1976. For more information on the Parks centennial celebration, call Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, at 417-874-2176 or 417-224-5510.