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Evidence the zebra debuts at Noah's Ark Saturday

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After an ordeal, which has received widespread attention, the newest addition to a local non-profit animal shelter will be formally introduced to the public this weekend.

Noah's Ark Animal Rehabilitation Center and Children's Care home in Locust Grove will host the debut of Evidence the zebra Saturday at noon.

The animal was initially discovered by the center April 8, after suffering injuries along Interstate 75 in Butts County. Evidence had apparently been hit by an automobile, and required surgery at the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine.

Following the zebra's recovery, he was brought to live at Noah's Ark in May.

Diane Smith, assistant to center director, Jama Hedgecoth, says staff members at the center are excited to give Evidence an opportunity to meet local residents. She says in addition to creating a buzz in Henry County, the zebra's story has generated interest nationally and internationally.

As an example, Smith points to a book at the shelter titled "I'm Evidence." The illustrated work details the animal's trials and triumphs over the last several months. "I would guess a third of our orders for the book have come from out of state," she says. "Some have come from as far away as Washington State."

Donations have also reportedly been made, in support of Evidence, from people in California and Scotland.

Smith says the zebra has "touched a lot of lives," a factor which contributed to the decision to hold the debut. "People were so concerned about him, and showed such support," she says. "We want to thank them by letting them come out and see him."

During the festivities at the Ark, copies of the "I'm Evidence" book will be available, for \$10. A cake will also be on display in the zebra's honor, along with souvenirs featuring his picture.

Smith says the debut is being looked at as "a celebration."

"[Evidence] has come this far, and survived all he's been through," she says. "We give God all the glory for that."

After the debut, Evidence will live in Noah's Ark's wildlife habitat, and will be able to visit with the public during regular hours at the shelter.

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