

## Zootopia presents New Kids for old kids

By DAVID HINCKLEY  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

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One of the rituals of being a parent these days is finding a way to get concert tickets for your kids to see their favorite pop stars.

But there could be an interesting twist with the WHTZ (100.3 FM) "Zootopia" show May 17 at the Izod Center: Some parents may want to score tickets for themselves.

The reason is that Zootopia will be the first stop on a reunion tour for New Kids on the Block, the heartthrobs of their own youth.

It's been 14 years since the group's last concert.

"I can see mothers and their daughters having a competition for who can scream the loudest," jokes Tom Poleman, senior vice president of programming for Z100's parent Clear Channel. "The moms for New Kids or the daughters for Miley Cyrus."

Cyrus is the contemporary headliner for Zootopia this time around, and between her and New Kids, the station pretty much has its audience bookended.

But just in case, the lineup is also scheduled to include the Jonas Brothers, "American Idol" winner Jordin Sparks, One Republic, Simple Plan, Sara Bareilles, Gavin McGraw, Ferras and more.

The annual Zootopia has sometimes lagged a little behind its winter cousin, the December "Jingle Ball," as a hot ticket. Not this year.

"With this lineup, it sold out immediately," says Poleman, noting the ticket frenzy just a few months ago for Cyrus' solo concerts.

Like other all-star shows, Zootopia has evolved from a concert into a full-fledged event. The concert itself starts at 7:30, but there will be a free pre-show concert in the parking lot, noon-6 p.m., with Bareilles, Flyleaf and Metro Station.

Autograph sessions will be available, and with this large captive audience roaming around, there will naturally be booths, merchandising and food.

Part of the proceeds from the show will be donated to dosomething.org, a 16-year-old nonprofit formed to encourage community among young people.

One reason the show has such a strong lineup this year, suggests Poleman, is the 10-year rule.

"Every 10 years it seems like we cycle around to where there's great mainstream pop music for everyone," he says. "Like 10 years ago with the Backstreet Boys and Britney."

**AWARDS:** WHTZ got more good news recently when the trade magazine FMQB gave the station its career achievement award in the contemporary hit station category and also gave Poleman the career achievement award for programmers.

"The award for the station I see really as belonging to everyone who's worked there over the years," says Poleman. "It recognizes the pioneers like Scott Shannon and Steve Kingston who built it in the earlier days."

His own award, he says, "absolutely blew me away. I was in a category with legends, with people I learned from when I was starting. I didn't think I had a chance in the world. So it's very exciting."

Z100's sister station WLTW (106.7 FM) scored the same double in the adult contemporary category, with both the station and program director Jim Ryan winning career achievement awards.

Ryan is stepping down from the program director post next month after a decade-long run in which Lite-FM was consistently the top station in the city and the most profitable station in America.

Other FMQB awards went to Paul (Cubby) Bryant, now morning man on WKTU (103.5 FM), as contemporary hit music director and to Tony Mascaro of WPLJ (95.5 FM) as music director in the hot adult contemporary format.

WQHT (97.1 FM) won the rhythm station career achievement award, and WHTG (106.3 FM) won for best modern rock station in a secondary market.

WHUD (100.7 FM) also hit a double in the adult contemporary secondary market division, with awards going to both the station and program director Steve Petrone.

**MORE GUESTS:** As Air America looks for a permanent 3-6 p.m. host, its guest hosts will include Ronald Reagan Jr., Roseanne Barr with Johnny Argent and Joy Behar from "The View." Air America is heard locally on WWRL (1600 AM).