

# Kick Up Your Heels in Kansas City

*America's heartland will host the Junior National Hereford Expo July 9-16.*

by *Kindra Gordon*

**G**rab your cowboy boots, your hat and of course your best Hereford T-shirt, and plan to head to Kansas City as the city known for barbecue and jazz hosts the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE). The event will take place July 9-16 with the theme "Kickin' It In Kansas."

More than 1,200 head of Hereford cattle will be showcased during the event by 700 Hereford youth and their families. It will be a full week of cattle shows, camaraderie and leadership activities — and Kansas City offers the perfect backdrop for a little summer fun as well.

## **Keep cool**

July can be sizzling hot, but Kansas City offers ample options to keep cool starting with the **Schlitterbahn Kansas City Waterpark**. The park is Kansas City's only river tubing adventure. It had its first full season of operation in 2010 and will feature six brand new attractions in 2011 – a Boogie Bahn surf ride, three water slides, a record-breaking rapids river and a whitewater tube chute. The park also features an uphill water coaster, the world's longest "tidal wave" river, beaches and a giant hot tub.

Another "cool" place to be is the **Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun** theme park located off the east loop of I-435 in Kansas City. New for

**KICKIN' IT IN KANSAS** JNHE

2011 JUNIOR NATIONAL HEREFORD EXPO  
JULY 9 - 16 • KANSAS CITY



The view from atop Quality Hill, located on the west side of downtown Kansas City includes (l to r): the American Hereford Association bull, American Royal Complex, Kemper Arena and the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange Building in the former stockyards in the West Bottoms.

2011, Snoopy – everyone’s favorite beagle – will take center stage inside a new theme park at Worlds of Fun. Planet Snoopy will feature more than 20 rides, shows and attractions devoted to pint-sized play. There will even be daily meet-and-greet opportunities with Charlie Brown, Lucy and the rest of the PEANUTS gang. How cool is that?

And, if you’d like to be transported to the Arctic, make sure you visit the **Kansas City Zoo**. It recently added the Polar Bear Passage to its exhibit expansion. It is the largest polar bear exhibit between Chicago and the West Coast and includes a 140,000 gallon 65 degree pool. The Arctic playground is home to Nikita: a 4-year-old, 750 lb. polar bear. The \$11 million project is the latest in a long line of improvements at the 200-acre Kansas City Zoo, which is the 10th largest in America. Other recent additions include Tropics, a new indoor rainforest exhibit, and the African Sky Safari, which is an aerial tram ride that provides a breathtaking view of the zoo’s 17-acre savannah.



### Other favorites

As the home of the international headquarters for Hallmark, Kansas City’s **Crown Center** complex showcases the history of the world’s largest greeting card company amidst an array of shopping, dining and entertainment venues, making it a destination with something for the whole family to enjoy.

The **Hallmark Visitors Center** celebrates the Hallmark story in a display of 14 remarkable exhibits – there’s a timeline exhibit that reflects various eras and trends in America, a collection of imaginative Christmas trees, as well as the chance to visit with Hallmark designers and see the process used to create and produce greeting cards. There’s even a free card-making session where children can explore and create using scrap material from Hallmark’s manufacturing processes.

Near Crown Center is another adventure land – **Union Station**. Built in 1914, it is the second-largest train station in the nation, after New York City’s Grand Central Terminal. Today, it houses an assortment of unique shops, movie theaters, restaurants and Science City interpretive center, which features more than 50 hands-on science activities. Kids can search for fossils at a dig site, solve a mystery in the crime lab and track a tornado — for starters.

Visitors can also climb aboard Union Station’s permanent local history exhibit, **The KC Rail Experience**. It tells the story of how railroads shaped a city, a region and a nation. Visitors will see historic rail cars and artifacts and hear stories from ghosts of Kansas City’s railroading past.

Other Union Station highlights include experiencing a massive movie in the Vic & Helen Regnier Extreme ScreenTheater, the region’s only 3D projection system with a screen five stories tall. Or, journey through space and discover the wonders of the universe inside the Gottlieb Planetarium.

Last, but not least, be sure to enjoy some Kansas City ‘cue. That shouldn’t be hard to do, as Kansas City has more barbecue restaurants per capita than any other city. Well-known joints include Gates and Arthur Bryant’s. **HW**



**For more information:**  
[www.schlitterbahn.com/kc](http://www.schlitterbahn.com/kc)  
[www.worldsoffun.com](http://www.worldsoffun.com)  
[www.kansascityzoo.org](http://www.kansascityzoo.org)  
[www.crowncenter.com](http://www.crowncenter.com)  
[www.unionstation.org](http://www.unionstation.org)

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KANSAS CITY CONVENTION & VISITORS ASSOCIATION

## Kansas City’s Cattle Connections

Located in the “heart of America” where the Kansas and Missouri Rivers meet, Kansas City enjoys a central location that made it an historic gathering point for pioneers heading West. Once the railroad was established, the Kansas City Stockyards helped the city grow as it became a hub where western ranchers and eastern buyers met to trade cattle.

Interestingly, one of Kansas City’s historic districts — The Plaza — is a popular shopping area known for its many ornate fountains. Many started as simple drinking troughs for livestock in the late 1800s and have become sculpted pieces of art through the years.

Today, Kansas City is still a hub for the cattle industry; it hosts the American Royal livestock exposition each fall and is home to the office of the American Hereford Association. **HW**

