



For Immediate Release
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Mascot candidates selected for St. John's Children's Hospital

SPRINGFIELD – A St. Bernard dog and a pair of kangaroos will face off in a contest to see who will be elected the St. John's Children's Hospital mascot. The candidates were among more than 250 nominees submitted by area students.

Children are invited to vote for their favorite candidate online at www.sjchildrens.org from October 28 – November 5. Voting also will be held during Zoolie Ghoulie, Henson Robinson Zoo, from 2 p.m. – 6 p.m. on October 28 and 29; and Barnes and Noble Booksellers, 3111 S. Veterans Parkway, from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on November 4 and 5. Voting booths will be provided by the Sangamon County Clerk's Office. The winning mascot will be announced on November 7.

Bernie, a St. Bernard nominated by Chloe Michael Young, a 1st grader at Iles Elementary School in Springfield, promises to teach kids to be on alert (like a good dog), to help those in need, to eat healthy food and always listen to parents and teachers.

C.J. and Joey, a pair of kangaroos nominated by Joe Dobbins, a 5th grader at Dubois Elementary in Springfield, are running on platform to encourage kids to jump into action (exercise), eat vegetables, be safe when traveling and spend time together as a family.

“This mascot campaign is a great way to introduce kids to the election process, while giving them a say in what type of mascot will represent their Children's Hospital. Over the course of the next several weeks, we hope there will be discussion among kids and their parents and teachers about the positive behaviors each candidate is advocating,” said Ann Early, child life specialist, St. John's Children's Hospital.

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Kids are encouraged to visit www.sjchildrens.org and request yard signs and bumper stickers for their favorite candidate.

The classrooms of Chloe and Joe will receive a \$250 Visa gift card that their teacher can use for supplies, decorations, etc.*

Nominations for the mascot contest were submitted by Springfield-area students. A caucus of child life specialists and pediatric clinical staff at St. John's Children's Hospital evaluated the nominations and recommended a slate of candidates to the St. John's Children's Hospital Operating Committee, which voted to accept the nominations of Bernie and C.J. and Joey.

Other nominations considered included Stuff-O-Scope (penguin), Pizza Bro, Safety Wonder Dog, Dr. Amanda (panda), Ima Healthy Monkey and Mr. Snuggle Wuggle (bear).

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St. John's Children's Hospital combines the faculty resources of SIU School of Medicine with the pediatric facilities and services of St. John's Hospital. The mascot election occurs one year after St. John's Children's Hospital was recognized by the National Association for Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions (NACHRI). The Children's Hospital Web site is www.sjchildrens.org.

** Editor's note: A gift card presentation to the teachers of both students will be held later in October. Details TBD.*