

Illinois Launches Three Year Millennium Celebration

Program Announced at Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism

SPRINGFIELD, IL (March 1, 1999) – The Illinois Bureau of Tourism announced today its statewide millennium program, "Illinois: The Celebration of A Lifetime." The program is designed to showcase the heritage and spirit of Illinois and encourage residents and visitors to join in the statewide celebration.

Donna Shaw, State Tourism Director, discussed the state's millennium program, during a Millennium panel discussion at the Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism. Joined by Stephanie Madden, of the White House Millennium Council, and Dorothy Coyle, Acting Director, Chicago Office of Tourism, Shaw emphasized the synergies between the city and state's millennium program and the theme of National Millennium Program - "Honor the past, imagine the future."

"Most people see the millennium as a one-time celebration on New Years Eve 1999," said Shaw. "Our program gives residents the opportunity to explore their heritage and will encourage visitors to come to Illinois and participate in our celebrations."

This year, Illinois will work to educate the industry on how to participate in the millennium program. The state will "millenniumize" its website and toll-free number, and distribute "How-To Millenniumize" kits. Illinois residents and visitors will get a taste of the upcoming millennium this summer, as they enjoy a practice champagne toast with Korbel Champagne (the official champagne of the Millennium) at Korbel's Illinois Millennium Practice Party in July.

As Illinois rings in the year 2000, The Illinois Bureau of Tourism will broadcast a satellite feed of the breathtaking New Year's Eve laser show at the state capital - so the entire state can join in the celebration. Continuing the celebration throughout the year, every month will be full of statewide Millennium events and festivals. From the Kankakee Flower Festival to Harvard Milk Days, visitors and residents will have fun celebrating the unique heritage of every Illinois city. Even children will have the opportunity to commemorate this milestone by participating in millennium-themed essay contests and reading programs throughout the year.

As the 20th century comes to a close, the year 2001 will be a year to commemorate Illinois' place in history and its contributions to the future. Illinois will tie together the three years of celebration with a legacy event which will leave the state and entire country with a gift for the new millennium.

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), parent agency of the Illinois Bureau of Tourism, works to enhance economic development climate for the citizens of Illinois.