

ILLINOIS INSITES

October/November 2000

As the leaves change and begin to fall, Illinois landscapes provide the perfect backdrop for the fairs and festivals that line the streets all over the state. To make sure your vacation is memorable, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism has compiled a list of amazing sights and events to visit this season.

If you have any questions, require further information, or would like slides to accompany your stories, please call the Illinois News Bureau at 312/240-2605 or contact us via email at sarah.mathay@edelman.com.

Visitors requiring additional information should call Illinois' Travel Information Center at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit the Illinois Tourism Web site at www.enjoyillinois.com.

CHICAGO

Chicagoween – October 1 – 31

- Check out Chicago's all encompassing Halloween celebration! Throughout October, many of Chicago's most popular destinations are transformed into ghoulish havens. The Chicago Cultural Center, the Shedd Aquarium and many others become a Halloween wonderland. At Daley Plaza, those who dare can try walking among the gnarly trees, listening to stories and fortune-tellers and decorating pumpkins. Call ahead for a map so you don't miss any of the scary sites. 312/744-3315

Magnificent Mile Lights Festival – November 18 – 19

- The Magnificent Mile comes alive with more than one million lights this weekend. Join Mickey Mouse and other Disney entertainers as they hit the switch to light up Michigan Avenue then stay for a spectacular fireworks display. Between hunting for bargains along this famous street where shoppers can stroll through the Winter Walk, explore the life-size gingerbread house and meet Mr. and Mrs. Claus. 312/642-3579

CHICAGOLAND

St. Charles Scarecrow Festival – October 13-15

- More than 100 scarecrows made by local residents and businesses will be peppered throughout town this weekend in St. Charles. Children and their parents can even take part in the scarecrow-making fun. And there's more to see than just scarecrows- live musical entertainment, dozens of free children's events and activities plus an

impressive selection of arts and crafts will be available. Be sure to stop by and see why the American Bus Association voted this festival one of the Top 100 Events in North America for 2000. 800/777-4373

Stuff some fun into your weekend. Aurora, just south of St. Charles, offers fun for everyone. Begin your trip at Blackberry Farm Pioneer Village, a 55-acre village complete with a working farm, authentic depot, old-time carriage collection, petting zoo and historical demonstrations. If this is too much to explore on foot, don't worry, you can take a train or wagon ride to see it all. Move forward a century to the present at SciTech. This hands-on science center offers fun activities with more than 200 exhibits that explore light, magnetism, motion and chemistry. To put some 'Sweetness' into your weekend, visit Walter Payton's Roundhouse Complex where you'll find retail shops, courtyard entertainment, eateries and a microbrewery. To close out the day, try your luck at Hollywood Casino's Aurora Riverboats. St. Charles and its surrounding areas offer numerous hotels and motels to fit any budget. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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The Haunting of Apple Valley – October 13-29

- If you love to get spooked, head to Mundelein to explore Quig's Orchards this October. Wander through the haunted barn, jump on board a haunted hayride and roast marshmallows at one of the fire pits. If the kids aren't old enough to get really spooked, try the Pumpkin House- a less scary version of the real thing made just for the smaller specter hunters. While you're there, don't forget to pick out your own pumpkin or stop in their Halloween shop for tricks and treats. 847/566-4520

'Fall'ing into a fun weekend. To keep exploring, head to Libertyville, just east of Mundelein. At Lamb's Farm, you can enjoy the Country Inn Restaurant, petting zoo, miniature golf course, country shops and the area's largest pet shop. Go back in time on Main Street Libertyville, a turn-of-the-century downtown with great restaurants, museums, shopping and a park. Get a jump-start on your list at The Holiday Shoppe. Located in an historic Victorian home, this year-round shop features gifts and collectibles from around the world. End your day with a visit to Mickey Finn's Brewery, Lake County's oldest brewpub. Mundelein and the surrounding areas offer accommodations to fit any style and budget. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Long Grove Countryside Christmas – November 17 - December 25

- Begin the holiday season the old fashioned way. Carolers singing the seasons' favorites and Victorian buildings outlined in lights enhance the holiday atmosphere while you stroll past the dozens of antique and specialty shops in Long Grove. Take a carriage ride through a covered bridge, enjoy live music on the weekends and call ahead to check when Santa is available for breakfast or lunch. 847/634-0888

Do you hear what I hear? For great gift-giving ideas, head north to nearby Gurnee Mills, the Midwest's largest value retail and entertainment mall. With more than 200 manufacturers to choose from, you'll find something for everyone on your list. Take a short drive to the Gluntz Family Winery in Grayslake, Illinois' oldest family winery. They offer daily tours of the winery and tastings of some of the best wine that Illinois has to offer. Long Grove and the surrounding areas have overnight accommodations to fit any style. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

NORTHERN

Annual Cider Festival – October 1

- Start the season by celebrating one of the best parts of fall in the town of Union. See a cider pressing demonstration with antique tools, wander through the antique tractor show, enjoy unusual tractor games and learn how things were done more than a century ago with pioneer demonstrations and period craftsmen.
815/923-2267

The pumpkins are ripe for the picking. Fiorello's Pumpkin Patch in Caledonia is only a short drive from Union. Visit the haunted house, solve the corn maze or find your perfect pumpkin, then head to nearby Belvidere. With more than 20,000 square-feet of antiques, Funderburg Antique Wholesalers and Home Place Antiques houses everything from knickknacks to furniture. Pick up a map for a self-guided tour of Belvidere Cemetery where you'll come across the Frank Lloyd Wright Pettit Memorial Chapel. To end your evening, catch a live performance or attend an event at the Community Building Complex. Union and its surrounding areas have accommodations to meet the needs of all travelers. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Autumn at the Arboretum – October 14-15

- If you want to see some of Illinois' most breathtaking flora, head to Klehm Arboretum & Botanical Center in Rockford to hike through 150 acres of forestry. Guided tours highlight the rare and unusual trees, shrubs and flowers found here. For more action, take a horse-drawn wagon ride or stop inside to explore the children's activities and boogie down to the music. Once everyone has worked up an appetite, be sure to try some of the local specialties. 815/965-8146

Experience Illinois' Second Largest City. Rockford's Riverfront Park Museum is a great place to spend the day. Here you'll find the Discovery Center Museum, where you can explore scientific principles on sound, water and weather just to name a few. You'll also find the Rockford Art Museum, which features an impressive collection of 19th and 20th Century American art. At the Midway Village and Museum Center, you can experience the life, work and celebrations of a rural, turn-of-the-century town. Visit one or all of the 24 authentically restored homes, shops and businesses. To take a piece of history home with you, visit one of Rockford's 30 antique shops or two antique malls. Wrap-up your evening at the Best Western Clock Tower Resort/Dinner Theater which features popular, toe-tapping musicals. Rockford has a variety of hotels and motels to fit any style and budget. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Victorian Christmas Walk – November 19-December 20

- The first weekend of this festival begins with the lighting of the square in Woodstock. Throughout the celebration, you can enjoy the best activities the season has to offer. Celebrate Santa's arrival with a parade, take a carriage ride around the square, enjoy the music of carolers in Victorian dress and hunt for bargains in the specialty stores in this historic area. 815/338-2436

Making it a Merry Weekend. Woodstock offers more than just their historic square. Check out tonight's performance at the Woodstock Opera House and Performing Arts Center and stroll through the Christmas tree display in their community room. For something really different, the Chester Gould/Dick Tracy Museum is a great place to stop in and reminisce about one of the most famous comic book detectives, as well as his creator. The Merchants Antique Mall is a great resource for unique gifts. Its two floors are home to 25 dealers, so you're sure to find something for the antique buff on your list. Woodstock and its surroundings offer numerous choices for your overnight accommodations. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

CENTRAL

Shelbyville Scarecrow Daze – October 6-8

- This festival kicks off Shelbyville’s Fall Color Tour, bringing the season’s best activities together. You can literally try to find the needle in the haystack, solve the straw maze, win the pumpkin-painting contest, finish the scavenger hunt and take a trolley ride through Shelbyville to spot the scarecrows. To appease your appetite, be sure to try all of the local specialties at the food booths. 217/774-4723

Hit the hay and stay for some fun. Don’t let the scarecrows stop you from exploring the rest of Shelbyville. Take in the fall colors of Lake Shelbyville at Eagle Creek State Park or a show at the Chautauqua Auditorium. Shelbyville is also home to one of the five remaining covered bridges in Illinois, the Thompson Mill Covered Bridge. Nearby Pana offers glimpse into early life on the prairie at the Stone Coal Log Cabin Village. Original log cabins teach visitors what life was like over a century ago. To learn about a different kind of life, head to Moweaqua to the Coal Mine Museum to discover the world of coal mining. Shelbyville and the surrounding areas have overnight accommodations to fit any budget. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Indian Summer Festival – October 7-8

- This festival provides the best of summer fun with the breathtaking colors of Springfield in the fall. Situated on the shores of Lake Springfield at The Lincoln Memorial Garden, this family festival offers food, crafts and live music. The kids won’t be bored either- there are also children’s activities that include a craft station and other fun games. 217/529-1111

Spring into a great weekend in Springfield. Now that everyone’s back to school, Springfield is the perfect place to learn while having fun- yes, it is possible! Start at the Springfield Children’s Museum where the whole family can learn about art, architecture, health, nature and science. See what social life was like in Lincoln’s time at Edwards Place, the hub of Springfield’s 19th century social and political life. You can learn about the Civil War firsthand at Camp Butler National Cemetery, once a Civil War training camp and Confederate prison. If you want to learn more about our president during the Civil War, you’ve come to the right place. Take a tour of the Lincoln sites on the Springfield Trolley Tours to see all of them in one trip. The town and its surrounding areas have numerous overnight accommodations to fit any style or budget. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Harvest Feast – November 4-5

- Ever wonder what a kid's life was like in the 1800s? At Harvest Feast in Petersburg you can try typical 19th century chores like corn shucking and making apple butter. You can also see what the women of the house did to prepare for an early 19th century Thanksgiving dinner. While in the village, keep your eyes open for the period craftsmen who demonstrate blacksmithing and candlemaking. A militia will be on hand to demonstrate weaponry of their time along with a complete reenactment to show battle maneuvers and procedures of the day. 217/632-4000

Plan a weekend on the prairie. In nearby Lincoln, you can learn more about the man himself. The Lincoln College Museum has a large collection of manuscripts, artifacts and other Lincoln memorabilia on display. The Postville Courthouse State Historic Site is a reproduction of the courthouse of where Lincoln served as a lawyer on the Judicial Circuit. If you want to learn more about 20th century history, visit the Heritage In-Flight Museum. The museum, which once housed German prisoners of war, is now filled with aircraft and other memorabilia dating back to World War I. After all that learning, hit the town at Thunderfoot Junction. The dance hall's Western flair is perfect for line dancing and they feature family nights so the kids can have a great time too. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

WESTERN

Shadows of the Blue and Gray – October 5-8

- Fire! This weekend is jam-packed with activities at this Civil War reenactment festival in Princeton. First, take time to meet President and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln and their special guests, President and Mrs. Jefferson Davis. Tap your toes to folk songs and ballads of the era and watch common tasks like butter-making and weaving that are considered lost arts today. To hear more about life over a century ago, gather 'round the storytellers to hear them spin yarns about the past. The Union and the Confederate troops meet on the battlefield as Infantry, Calvary and Artillery demonstrate tactical drills and battle formations. Other weekend special events include the Presidential Ball and a pancake breakfast. 815/875-2616

Continue your travels through time. To keep learning about the Civil War era, head to Historic Owen Lovejoy Homestead and Colton Schoolhouse. This 'station' is one of the most famous used in the underground railroad. The Bureau County Soldiers and Sailors Winged Monument was dedicated here in 1913 and its Angel of Victory is recognized as one of the largest winged monuments in the state. On your way out of town, be sure to drive across the Red Covered Bridge, the only remaining covered bridge in Illinois still

open for traffic. To catch up on the 20th century, head to nearby Wyanet to the Henry Thomas Museum where you can see antique artifacts from the city's history including antique china, furniture, record players, typewriters and photographs. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Christmas at Walnut Grove Farm – November 24-26

- Kick off your holiday season in Knoxville at this historic 1860's farm. Start your shopping in the barn where artisans from around the region feature their handmade crafts. You can find your Christmas tree and other trimmings from the farm's selection. Festive music, simmering food and a visit from St. Nicholas make the holiday scene complete. A horse-drawn wagon ride through the Walnut Grove completes your visit. 309/289-4770

'Nut'hing but fun. When you leave Walnut Grove Farm, continue to search for unique gift ideas in nearby Monmouth. Start at First Street/Market Place's specialty shops. Then move on to Western Stoneware/Pottery Barn, a 100-year-old pottery factory outlet. If you still have people to shop for on your list, try the Maple City Candy Company. This turn-of-the-century store has three floors of specialty items ranging from candy to body and bath needs. For a change of pace, visit the Wyatt Earp Birthplace Historic House Museum. Here you'll find Earp displays, period rooms, an adjoining O.K. Corral and a gift shop where you may find the perfect Christmas gift. Knoxville and the surrounding areas have numerous accommodations to fit any style. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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East Peoria Festival of Lights – November 25- December 31

- The 'Parade of Lights' kicks off this month-long celebration in Peoria, which features more than one million lights. To get a better look at the 44 amazing floats, head to the Winter Wonderland where they are lit up for you to enjoy all over again. You can get in the spirit of the season by wandering through the enchanted forest, a narrated nativity scene and a marketplace complete with crafts and holiday sensations, featuring gingerbread houses and baked goods. 309/698-4711

'Yule' Like the Rest Too. Venture off the beaten path and explore the rest of Peoria. The Illinois Antique Center is home to more than 200 antique dealers and even features an art gallery on the top floor. The John C. Flanagan House and the Pettengill-Morrison House both feature an impressive collection of antiques other artifacts along with being excellent examples of 19th century architecture. To go someplace out of this world, stop

by the Lakeview Museum of Arts and Sciences. It features a renowned planetarium and countless other exhibits. To spice up your night, try the Peoria Players Theater or head to East Peoria to have a go at making a profit at the Par-A-Dice Riverboat Casino. Peoria offers quaint B&Bs and many great hotels for an overnight stay. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

SOUTHERN

Annual Fort Massac Encampment – October 21-22

- Visitors should be prepared for battle at this Revolutionary-era reenactment in Metropolis. Each day begins with the drum corps and raising of the flag. After you're dismissed, head off to a 19th century fashion show, sample era food or see what the period crafters are making. The weekend wraps up with soldiers demonstrating military tactics which can be seen in action during the mock battle. 618/524-4712

It's a bird, it's a plane! After seeing the heroes of the past, stop by the Super Museum in Metropolis to see a hero of the present. The museum has a collection of rare Superman memorabilia that includes the original costume worn by George Reeves, movie props and rare toys. Metropolis also offers big-city evening entertainment in a small town setting. The Players Theater features first-rate entertainment complete with state-of-the-art technology in this 350-seat theater. The Players Island Casino gives visitors a chance to try their luck on four casino decks aboard this riverboat. Metropolis and the surrounding areas have numerous accommodations to fit any budget. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Celebration of Christmas – November 17 – December 29

- Come to Alton to witness this spectacular holiday lights show! The memories of Christmas through the eyes of a child are captured in 100 displays featuring more than 1.5 million lights. You can admire dozens of Christmas trees decorated by local children, explore the petting zoo, visit Santa's house and take a horse-drawn carriage ride. 618/466-8858

The Sights and Sounds of Southwestern Illinois. After celebrating Christmas, let the rest of Alton amaze you! For history buffs, head to the Museum of Art and History where you can learn about local history, the Civil War, Robert Wadlow, Elijah Lovejoy and Mississippi steamboats. See how you measure up to the world's tallest man at the Robert Wadlow Statue or visit the monument erected to honor Elijah Lovejoy, the abolitionist editor who paid the ultimate price for his belief in an support of free speech. Then head to Lincoln/Douglas Square to see where Lincoln and Douglas held their last

senatorial debate. If its Christmas gifts you're looking for, head to Alton's Antique District, which boasts more than 60 antique dealers. If you're still in the mood to shop, head north along the scenic Great Rivers National Scenic Byway to Grafton. Grafton's Antiques District is situated on the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers and gives you a picturesque backdrop while you stroll through numerous antiques and specialty shops. Alton and its surrounding areas offer quaint B&Bs and many great hotels for an overnight stay. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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Holiday Farm Christmas Tree Tour – November 24-December 20

- Ring in the season a little differently this year at Holiday Farms in Anna. Take a horse-drawn wagon ride to survey which tree you want to take home. Snack on some homemade kettle corn while wandering through the gift shop to start your holiday shopping and pick out the perfect wreath to hang on the door. Be sure to help Santa by stopping by the petting zoo to feed the reindeer and letting him know what you want this year. 618/833-2845

“Tree-t” yourself to a great weekend. In nearby Alto Pass, the Alto Vineyard offers wine tastings in a scenic setting. In Cobden, just a short drive south, you can find Owl Creek Vineyard and Winery, which also features wine tastings along with tours and wine education classes. For a taste of history head to the Cobden Museum where you can examine items from the Civil War, World War I and II and Indian artifacts. If you still have shopping on your mind, try looking at the Shawnee Hills Barn where you can find a large variety of antiques. Cobden and its surrounding areas have numerous accommodations to choose from. To plan your weekend getaway, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), Bureau of Tourism works to promote Illinois as a travel destination, thereby enhancing the state's economic development climate and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Illinois.

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