

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ILLINOIS' SIGHTS AND ACTIVITIES AWAKEN SENSES**

*Plan a Weekend Getaway to Illinois and Enjoy the Luxuries of Spring*

**CHICAGO** (April 2000) – Spring has sprung! As your senses begin to emerge from winter hibernation, you'll find Illinois is the perfect place to let your senses run wild. See, hear, smell, taste and feel your way through this beautiful Midwestern state.

**Chicago, Hear All About It**

Your spring would not be complete without a visit to the **Chicago Botanic Garden** in Glencoe. The garden is constantly rotating the floral exhibits and sales throughout the spring months. *Tulip Mania: Five Centuries of Mystery and Madness* takes place April 14 to June 18. Listen to Anna Pavord, author of *The Tulip*, speak on April 14 and April 16. This event coincides with two other events at the Botanic Garden; *Spring Blooms* takes place from April 1 to May 31, and the *Antique and Garden Fair* takes place April 13-16.

If your taste runs towards fresh microbrewed beer and live musical entertainment, visit the *Spring Brewer's Festival 2000* in Downers Grove, May 19-20. Enjoy the Midwest's finest craft brewers of microbrewed beer, accompanied by the great food of local restaurants.

**-more-**

## **Spring Senses – Page Two**

Vernon Hills' **Cuneo Museum and Gardens** is the perfect choice for a spring destination. Cuneo is an 86-year-old mansion with gorgeous gardens and a conservatory. The mansion also features 17<sup>th</sup>-century tapestries, Oriental rugs and sculptures.

Evanston is home to the **Northwestern University Sculpture Garden and Galleries**. The Shakespeare Garden features flowers, herbs and different trees mentioned within the works of Shakespeare. A sculpture garden is also featured on sight at the Mary and Leigh Block Gallery.

### ***See the Northern “Sights”***

Rockford is full of gardens, and spring is the perfect time to visit them all. The **Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden** springs to life with the *Wild about Plants Exhibit*. Throughout April, families can explore the intricacies of plants and wildlife. Not far from the Klehm Arboretum, visit the **Sinissippi Gardens Greenhouse and Lagoon** on the riverfront, which features a Greenhouse with small aviary and a large floral clock. The **Anderson Japanese Gardens** let you experience Eastern beauty with nine acres of flowers, waterfalls and Koi ponds.

Spring is also a great time to spruce up your home. At the *Ryan Home Improvement and Garden Show*, April 8-9 at the **Kankakee County Fairgrounds**, you can learn about home additions, repairs and recreational ideas. Add to your home décor with timeless antiques from the **Kankakee Antique Mall**. This is the largest antique mall in the state with more than 225 antique dealers open every day of the week.

**-more-**

### **Spring Senses – Page Three**

In May, plan a trip to the aptly named Garden Prairie and stop by **Susie's Garden Patch**. Stock up on fruits and vegetables as you pick your own asparagus, strawberries, tomatoes and pumpkins. You can also choose among a variety of freshly picked produce.

**Starved Rock State Park** in Utica is magnificent this time of year. Take a guided hike at the *Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage* May 6-7, and immerse yourself in a sea of gorgeous wildflowers. In addition, Starved Rock has endless miles of hiking trails, and breathtaking river views. Take advantage of the beautiful weather with outdoor activities such as biking, fishing and golf.

### **Get a *Feel* for Illinois' Wild West**

The scents of more than 500 varieties of herbs and 15 varieties of rosemary fill the air at *National Herb Week* at **Wagner's Gardens in Camp Point**, May 8-14. There will be more than 40 varieties of herbs for sale. On Mother's Day take advantage of specials on hanging baskets and herbs, which make great gifts for Mom.

Taste the delectable entrees of the season as your favorite specialty restaurants sell dishes in an outdoor café. Live music fills the air and patrons can sit back and relax and enjoy their lunch every Wednesday from May 31 to September 13 in Galesburg. After lunch take a drive to

**Lake Storey Recreational Area**. The 600 acres of land has plenty of activities that will keep the whole family entertained for hours. Fill your afternoon with golf, hiking, boating, biking, fishing, swimming and water skiing.

**-more-**

## **Spring Senses – Page Four**

The Western region is home to another fabulous garden. The **Quad City Botanical Center** is a conservatory with more than 6,400 square feet of foliage. Flower shows are exceptional at this facility, which also houses a 14-foot waterfall, tropical trees and plants and a bridge spanning over the reflecting pools.

Peoria is home to many springtime activities. **The George L. Luthy Memorial Botanical Garden** is a 5,000 square-foot conservatory that has special events and displays throughout the year. Children will love the hands-on experience at the Glen Oak Zoo. “The World of Wonder” is a discovery and activity area. The zoo is home to more than 175 animals and is part of the International Species Survival Plans program.

### ***Smell the Season in Central Illinois***

The heartland of Illinois is full of activities guaranteed to stimulate your senses. In April and May enjoy *Blossom Time* at the **Lincoln Memorial Garden** in Springfield. Take tours of the vibrant wildflowers and trees that surround the garden. Noah’s Ark will be recreated at the *Spring Floral Display* at **Washington Park Botanical Garden** March 18 through April 8. Celebrate “Noah’s Garden” with hundreds of Easter lilies, chrysanthemums, geraniums, tropical flowers, foliage plants and pairs of paper mache animals to bring life to Noah’s legendary Ark.

What better way to celebrate the season than a *Festival of Spring*? Visit Decatur April 29 for hikes, music, crafts, food and a guaranteed good time. In addition, see nature in flight as the World Bird Sanctuary presents wild bird shows.

**-more-**

## **Spring Senses – Page Five**

Between Peoria and Springfield lies San Jose, where you can add a little spice to your life from April 29-30. *The Spring Thyme Plant Faire* features herbs, everlastings and scented geraniums. You can also learn new skills at seminars and workshops, including ones on decorating your garden, creating wall baskets and specialty cooking. The herbal craze continues on May 20-21 in Momence at the *Annual Spring Herb Festival*. In addition to herbal lectures, demonstrations, garden tours and exhibitors, patrons will also have the opportunity to sample herbs for lunch.

**Curtis Orchard** in Champaign-Urbana is a wonderful destination point for the family. Pick your own apples and shop for fresh produce for an afternoon picnic. The orchard also has tours of the working farm and a petting zoo.

Amish country in Arthur/Arcola brings back the simplicity to life. Visit an Amish home, take a buggy or train ride through the country and dine on authentic Amish meals. **Rockome Gardens** in nearby Arcola allow you to appreciate nature at its finest, where you can explore 15 gorgeous acres of flower and rock gardens.

## **A Taste of Southern Hospitality**

Southern Illinois is filled with festivals, plant sales and garden parties this season. *The 18th Annual Art & Craft Festival* in Belleville takes place April 22-23 at **the Belle-Claire Expo Center**. Let your inner artist shine as you observe the creations of 225 exhibitors from six states. Belleville's downtown historic district will take you back in time as you walk among the 10 blocks of historic homes built in the 1700 and 1800's – all in their original state.

**-more-**

## Spring Senses – Page Six

Fragrant fields will come alive at the *Herb Fest and Plant Sale* in Dongola, May 5-7. Celebrate the spring with the selection of herb plants and perennial flowers. After an afternoon of enjoying nature, relax with a treat in the Mule Barn Courtyard Café.

April showers bring May flowers which will be on display May 7 at **the Pierre Menard Home** in Ellis Grove. The day will be full of herb and flower gardening tips with the magnificent mansion as the backdrop. At this historic mansion built in 1802 for the first lieutenant governor of Illinois, a speaker will talk about various medicinal herbs found in Southern Illinois.

Celebrate Memorial Day weekend at *The Eckerts Strawberry Festival and Craft Show*. Take your family on a wagon ride to the strawberry patch or take part in the face painting, pony rides and children's crafts. Adults will enjoy live music and artwork by 40 local crafters.

The Shawnee National Forest makes an excellent destination point this season as it offers more than 250,000 acres of land in full bloom. The 200-million-year-old sandstone formations are breathtaking, as are the 1,250 miles of trails open to bikers, hikers and horseback riders.

This spring, let your senses run wild. Illinois is the perfect destination for enjoying all that mother nature has to offer. For detailed information on these and other spring events and attractions across Illinois, or to plan a customized trip, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT (TTY: 1-800-404-6418) or visit the Illinois Web site at [www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com).

## **Spring Senses – Page Seven**

###

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.

For information, contact:     Jennifer Resnik  
  Edelman Public Relations  
  Ph:     312-240-2811  
  Fax:     312-240-2901  
  E-mail: [jennifer\\_resnik@edelman.com](mailto:jennifer_resnik@edelman.com)

### **Captions for slides (from left to right):**

#### **Gordon Moore Park Rose Garden – Alton**

Enjoy a beautiful spring day at the Gordon Moore Park Rose Garden in Alton. In addition to the rose garden, the park's activities and 700 acres make it a perfect spring vacation destination.”

#### **Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge - Carbondale**

The Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in Carbondale surrounds the Crab Orchard Lake and is a popular place for boating, fishing and camping.

#### **Mari-Mann Herb Farm – Decatur**

The Mari-Mann Herb farm in Decatur is one of the largest herb farms in the Midwest. Savor your spring getaway with herbal snacks, teas and a walk through the gardens or wildflower fields.