

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 15, 2000

CONTACT:

Laura Morris
Edelman Public Relations
(312) 297-7523

**Point, Click, Shoot...Illinois Photo Trek
Captures the State on Film**

Illinois and American Photo Magazine Kick-off the First-Ever Statewide Photo Trek

CHICAGO, IL – To commemorate Illinois in the Millennium year, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Bureau of Tourism (DCCA/IBOT) has partnered with the internationally-renowned *American Photo* magazine to create a photo trek throughout Illinois.

The pictures taken on the trek, which takes place throughout Illinois from June 23-25, 2000, will be celebrated in a special commemorative issue of *American Photo* magazine, available to consumers in January 2001. The Illinois trek is the largest state-sponsored event of its kind in the *American Photo* series.

“We are thrilled to partner with a magazine of the caliber of *American Photo* for this exciting and interesting project. Through these photos we will be able to showcase a different view of Illinois’ history, heritage, destinations and residents,” said Pam McDonough, director of DCCA.

The four regions of Illinois, Chicagoland, Northwest, Central and Southernmost will each play host to a portion of the trek. Each segment

-more-

Illinois Photo Trek/Page Two

will cover a different aspect of Illinois life: fast-paced drag racing at Gateway International Raceway, the thrill of victory at the Prairie State Games, a lazy day on the beach at Illinois Beach State Park, the peaceful pace of the Amish, and charming summer festivals throughout the state. Each of the four groups will wind their way through the state, converging on Springfield, June 25, 2000. In Springfield, participants will meet for a wrap-up event, slide show and presentation of the wonderful snapshots from the previous days. The event will also be an opportunity for each individual trek to showcase the uniqueness of their route and the diversity the state has to offer. For complete itineraries, see the attached pages.

The Illinois photo trek will be comprised of four groups of ten amateur photographers each traveling with a professional mentor. A panel of *American Photo* editors through a portfolio review selected these amateurs from a competitive group of more than two hundred applicants.

Of the 40 selected participants, three are international photographers from Quebec and Vancouver, Canada, and the United Arab Emirates, 10 are from Illinois and the remainder hail from 23 other states.

Leading these exciting treks will be four of *American Photo's* best mentors, Scott Thode, Porter Binks, Stephen Brown and Kevin Gilbert. All experienced mentors, these photographers bring a diverse teaching and photographic background to the trek.

-more-

Illinois Photo Trek/Page Three

Collectively, these men have shot for the *Washington Times*, Discovery Communications (owners of the Discovery Channel), *New York Times* magazine, *Life* magazine, *National Geographic*, the Associated Press, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Sports Illustrated* and *U.S. News and World Report*, to name a few. Among them they have covered everything from the Eco-Challenge and the White House, to Beirut and Cambodia. The Illinois photo trek will provide them with an opportunity to teach students their skills, while shooting a truly wide range of topics.

The DCCA, IBOT and *American Photo* partnership is part of Illinois' Millennium program, which is designed to showcase the heritage and spirit of Illinois and commemorate the state's place in history and contributions to the future. For detailed information on hundreds of events, attractions or accommodations and routes throughout Illinois, visit our Web site at www.enoyillinois.com or call an Illinois travel counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT (TTY: 1-800-406-6418).

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.

###