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GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES \$2.4 MILLION IN TOURISM GRANTS

SPRINGFIELD -- Governor George H. Ryan today announced more than \$2.4 million in grants, through two state tourism programs, to support twenty-two organizations with the development, implementation and improvement of tourist attractions and events. The funds are assisting groups from Lake County to Pope County with such projects as theater and museum renovations, interpretive centers, large sports complexes and the City of Chicago's latest public art event.

"Illinois continues to reap the benefits of a strong tourism industry with an economic impact of over \$23 billion last year," Ryan said. "Funding these initiatives will bring even more visitors to Illinois and further increase the return on our investment in statewide tourism attractions."

The grants were funded through the Tourism Attraction Development Grant Program (TAP), which allows municipalities, counties and local groups to develop and improve tourist attractions, and the Tourism Private Sector Grant Program (TPS) which provides grants to match funds from the private sector for the purpose of attracting and hosting major tourism events such as conventions, trade shows, sporting activities and cultural events. The Department of

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ADD 1

Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) administers grants to both programs.

“The projects being funded through these programs reflect the wide variety of tourism alternatives in Illinois,” said DCCA Director Pam McDonough, “from parachuting over Southern Illinois to taking a ‘suite’ seat on a Chicago sidewalk. By meeting the needs of historical, cultural, leisure and sports related travelers, we can broaden the economic impact that tourism has on all of our communities.”

Since its inception in 1994, the Tourism Private Sector Grant Program program has funded such major events as World Cup Soccer, the International Pow Wow '98, the 2000 National High School Rodeo Finals, and 2001: A Soccer Odyssey.

Tourism Attraction Development grants can be used to improve an existing tourist attraction or develop a new attraction that has the potential to draw visitors to generate overnight stays. Grants also may be used for feasibility studies, to plan for new attractions and to fund interpretive programs within cultural and historic sites. A list of the grant recipients is attached.

Tourism Attraction Development Grant Program

Cameo Vineyards, Inc., Greenup, Cumberland County will receive \$33,175 to construct a winery overlooking the Cumberland County Covered Bridge and the National Road Scenic Byway. This grant will enhance the visitors experience along the National Road.

Noble Fool's Theater Company, Chicago, Cook County will receive \$125,000 for the equipment costs relating to the mechanical systems for the facility. The improvement of this attraction will greatly enhance Chicago's Theater District.

Morris & Company Entertainment, Moline, Rock Island County will receive \$100,000 for the construction of an Adventure Village building. Plumbing, electrical and mechanical services will be completed with these funds along the Mississippi river. The addition of this attraction will enhance the visitors experience along the Great River Road National Scenic Byway.

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Bishop Hill Heritage Association, Bishop Hill, Henry County will receive \$49,720 to renovate three historic buildings in Bishop Hill. The Colony Store, Dairy Building, and Blacksmith Shop will be used to increase the number of educational and craft programs for this Historical Village. The renovation of these buildings will greatly add to the visitors learning about the significance of Bishop Hill as a Swedish Colony of religious dissenters who dreamed of creating a Utopia.

Warren & Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development, Monmouth, Warren County will receive \$4,000 for consultant fees to develop a living history farm in the Mississippi and Illinois River basins. This project will compliment the John Deere Commons Museum in Moline and advance the Agri-Tourism initiative for Illinois.

Springfield Park District, Springfield, Sangamon County will receive \$250,000 for a dehumidification system to complement the expansion and renovation of the Franklin P. Nelson Center. Expansion of this facility will provide an additional ice skating rink and visitors amenities which will enable the City to bid on major sporting events thus creating overnight visits.

Village of Libertyville, Lake County will receive \$100,000 to purchase an indoor mountain for climbing. This addition will assist in the development of an indoor sporting complex enabling the Village to host other sporting related events.

New American Theater, Rockford, Winnebago County will receive \$100,000 to install a new phone system which will advance box office ticketing connecting to a new computer system, to purchase new stage curtains, a heating and cooling system and a new stage floor for the Theater in Rockford, Illinois. The improvement of this facility will assist greatly in the visitors experience along the Immigrants and Ingenuity Heritage Tourism Project.

Makanda Development Co., Inc. d/b/a Stone Creek Golf, Makanda, Jackson County will receive \$238,500 for the development and infrastructure for the cabins adjacent to Giant City State Park in Makanda, Illinois. The themed Golf Course sits on 600 heavily wooded acres of scenic Southern Illinois amid outcroppings of sandstone bluffs and creek beds. The addition of this development will provide needed overnight facilities to the region.

Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, Chicago, Cook County will receive \$113,461 for the design of U.S. Mexican Veterans Memorial statues recognizing the civic contributions of Mexican servicemen and women in the entire nation. The artist fees, sculpture and engravings will be accomplished with this grant.

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Lynfred Winery, Roselle, DuPage County will receive \$79,215 for the purchase of cultural furnishings and appliances related to the construction of a Bed and Breakfast to compliment the Winery. Each suite has a motif from various countries: France, Germany, America, and Italy.

City of Charleston, Coles County will receive \$40,000 to create an exterior bronze, life size sculpture to serve as the outdoor interpretation for the Charleston Lincoln Douglas Debate Museum. The artist fees and casting fees will be funded with approval of this project.

Rockford Park District, Winnebago County will receive \$250,000 for the addition of a Sportscore II Development project. The construction of soccer goals, basketball courts, and concession facilities will provide the needed expansion to Rockford's existing Sportscore facility. This grant will significantly increase the communities ability to bid on large sporting events therefore, generating overnight stays.

The City of Joliet, Will County will receive \$250,000 for an HVAC system to be installed in the renovated building which will house the Joliet Historical Museum. The museum will feature stories of the Joliet area and serve as a transportation hub for Route 66, Lincoln Highway and the Historic Illinois and Michigan Canal.

The Heritage House and Museum of Okawville, Washington County will receive \$39,139 for the renovations to a museum complex in Okawville Illinois. The attractions are in need of roofing and porch repairs, a rebuilt furnace, new windows, sidewalk improvements, a museum auto display and restoration of a horse drawn hearse. Completion of this project will compliment the original Springs Hotel and Bathhouse, a National Register property and the last operating bathhouse in the state.

The DuQuoin Tourism Commission, Perry County will receive \$25,000 to implement Phase II of the year 2000 "Holiday Lights Fair". This project will provide the visitors a multi-night indoor and outdoor entertainment opportunity throughout the winter season by offering the area an improved addition.

The Lincoln/Sargent Farm Foundation, Lerna, Coles County will receive \$53,196 to expand and enhance the interpretation at the Lincoln Log Cabin, the Sargent and Moore Homes. The expansion of hours and interpretation for the two additional sites will provide an extended Living History experience. A full scale Conestoga Wagon (used to transport settlers) will provide the basis for the interpretation of transportation during the 1840's and on allocated days during the season will provide the horse drawn rides for site visitors. The Wagon will also serve to commemorate the National Road which represents the first transcontinental road from Maryland of which the settlers inhabited the western section of this nation.

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Mound City National Cemetery, Pulaski County will receive \$187,866 for the architectural and engineering services for an interpretive center on one of the original twelve National Cemeteries in Illinois. It will provide interpretation for the Ohio River Scenic Route and will be matched with Federal Highway Administration Scenic Byway funding.

The City of Golconda, Pope County will receive \$179,767 to assist in period furnishings for the Historic Dam 51 Houses which overlook the Ohio River in Golconda. The project will complete the Bed and Breakfast facilities designed to generate overnight stays along the Ohio River National Scenic Byway. The Federal Highway Administration is partially matching this grant with Transportation Enhancement Funding.

Tourism Private Sector Grants

American Powered Parachute Association, Greenville, Bond County, received \$103,283.57 for costs associated with hosting the August 16-19, 2001 World Powered Parachute Championships, Chute Out on the Prairie. Parachuting is one of those extreme sports that is really taking off and has international appeal. Most participants will come into the area to practice a week or two prior to the competition. A four-day festival has been created around this event in order to attract bigger crowds and is expected to generate \$2,350,000 in economic impact for the State.

Chicago Office of Tourism, Chicago, Cook County, received \$85,000 for costs associated with hosting Suite Home Chicago, a Summer 2001 public art event that will showcase colorful panoply of art furniture-oriented work by significant artists. This public art exhibition is similar to the 1999 Cows on Parade that received national and international media attention. Grant funds will be used for installation and de-installation of the fiberglass furniture.

Brunk Morgan Horse Museum, Inc., Springfield, Sangamon County, received \$35,000 for costs associated with hosting Symphony of Horses, a new event that will be held August 28, 2001 at the new Illinois State Fairgrounds outdoor arena. Similar events are held throughout the country playing to sold-out audiences, and this will be the first time one has been held in Illinois. The new event is expected to attract leisure visitors, motor coach groups, music lovers and equine enthusiasts alike with an estimated economic impact of \$632,080. Plans are to hold the event annually, and proceeds from this year's event will be used to benefit the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum and The Brunk Horse Museum.

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