



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ILLINOIS TOURISM GROUPS PRESENTED WITH GOVERNOR'S TOURISM AWARDS**  
*Statewide tourism organizations recognized for excellence in marketing*

**SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (March 12, 2003)** – Illinois tourism industry members were honored last week with the Governor's Tourism Awards for excellence in marketing. The awards were presented at the Governor's Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, March 5, which concluded activities at the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism at the Crowne Plaza Springfield.

The Governor's Tourism Awards provide tourism organizations with a venue for exhibiting innovative marketing programs that help grow Illinois' tourism industry. Each category is judged by a panel of marketing professionals based on clarity of message, creativity, originality and the project's overall success.

"The Governor's Tourism Awards recognize Illinois tourism groups that have implemented successful tourism programs on behalf of their local communities," said Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (prior name: Department of Commerce and Community Affairs) Director Jack Lavin. "We are proud to see that so many great people are applying creative and strategic programs to attract both new and repeat visitors to statewide destinations."

This year, the Governor's Tourism Awards were presented in three categories: General Advertising and Promotion, Hospitality Organizations, and Community Leaders. General Advertising and Promotion is split into two divisions – 1A is for organizations with operating budgets under \$350,000 and 1B is for groups with budgets over \$350,000.

**Award winners are:**

**GENERAL ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION:**

**Newspaper Advertising**

Division 1.A

City of East Peoria

**Magazine Advertising**

Division 1.B

Chicago Convention & Tourism Bureau

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**Posters**

Division 1.A

Galena Cellars Vineyard & Winery

Division 1.B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention & Visitors Bureau

**General Brochures**

Division 1.A

Quincy Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Division 1.B

Chicago's North Shore Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Booklets or Area, Media and Meeting Planner Guides**

Division 1.B

Lake County, Illinois Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Newsletters**

Division 1.B

Tourism Bureau of Southwestern Illinois

**Visitors Guides Including Advertising**

Division 1.A

Quincy Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Division 1.B

Chicago Plus

**Visitors Guides Without Advertising**

Division 1.A

Ottawa Visitors Center

Division 1.B

Aurora Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Premium Items**

Division 1.A

Williamson County Tourism Bureau

Division 1.B

Chicago Office of Tourism

**Web site**

Division 1.B

Heritage Corridor Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Advertising/PR Campaign, Single Media**

Division 1.A

Blackhawk Waterways Convention & Visitors Bureau

Division 1.B

Chicago Office of Tourism

**Advertising/PR Campaign, Multi Media**

Division 1.A

City of East Peoria

Division 1.B

Wildlife Prairie State Park

**Citywide Promotional Campaigns**

Division 1.A

Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition

Division 1.B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau

**HOSPITALITY ORGANIZATIONS:**

Hotel or Motel with the Best Promotional Package including an Overnight Stay

Holiday Inn – Alton

Bed and Breakfast with the Best Promotional Package including an Overnight Stay

Goldmoor Inn

Best Marketing Promotion in the Restaurant Division

Aurora Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

**COMMUNITY LEADERS:**

Legislative Friend of Tourism

Representative Tom Holbrook (D-Belleville)

*Individual Friend of Tourism*

Bill Thomas - A resident of Atlanta, Ill., Thomas is heavily involved in improvements along historic Route 66, organizing a group of more than 30 sign painters from five states to help beautify the route for Route 66 drivers. He is a member of the Atlanta Historic Preservation Council, and is involved in numerous activities in Atlanta that highlight the town's agricultural history.

*Corporate Friend of Tourism*

MultiAd - MultiAd plays a significant role in promoting tourism in the Peoria, Ill. region through sponsorships, offering staff members for key tourism committees, and providing their services to the Peoria Area CVB at greatly reduced rates.

*Media Friend of Tourism*

Max Armstrong, WGN-AM - Armstrong is well-known throughout the Midwest as WGN-Radio's Agriculture Reporter. He is instrumental in promoting various agriculturally-themed events throughout the state, and has used his considerable name recognition and contacts within the radio industry to publicize Illinois' agricultural events on a national level. His support of agri-tourism in the State of Illinois is second-to-none, and his promotion of Illinois' rural communities has helped build festivals and events throughout the state.

*Peer's Choice*

Aurora Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

*Best of Show*

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention & Visitors Bureau

For additional information about the winning entries, please contact the winning tourism organizations, or call Rebecca Olchawa at 312-729-1710 for the appropriate contact information.

The Governor's Conference on Tourism is designed to further educate members of Illinois' tourism industry on issues affecting travel and tourism on a national and statewide level, reinforce existing tourism development efforts, and plan for future initiatives. The Governor's Conference is hosted by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism and Visit Illinois, a non-profit umbrella organization promoting tourism through public awareness, governmental relations and education.

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*The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (prior name: Department of Commerce and Community Affairs), Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality of life benefits for Illinois residents.*

*Visit Illinois is a not-for-profit membership organization that serves as the primary umbrella for the Illinois travel and tourism industry. The group's 29-member board of directors oversees efforts to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within Illinois with core services focusing on legislative support, education and professional development.*