



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

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EXPERIENCE THE SIGNS OF SPRING IN ILLINOIS

New attractions and annual events blossom throughout the state

CHICAGO - Spring signals longer days, warmer weather, blooming flowers and an abundance of new blockbuster attractions and perennial events in Illinois. This spring Illinois travelers can discover new destinations and rediscover old favorites certain to make for an enjoyable 3-day getaway.

Blooming Blockbusters

This spring at the Chicago Children's Museum, March 2–June 12, Scholastic's **The Magic School Bus™ Kicks Up A Storm** invites children to join Ms. Frizzle™ on a journey into the wonders of weather. Based on the popular books and television series, this unique, weather-focused exhibit explores the science of meteorology, how climate affects culture and safety precautions for severe weather events. (Chicago)

For more information, contact the Chicago Children's Museum (312-527-1000, www.chicildrensmuseum.org).

Chicago's new **Millennium Park** is anticipating various developments this spring. The Lurie Garden, located at the park's southeast corner, will receive 56 additional benches for patrons to enjoy. In late May, Cloud Gate, the 110-ton elliptical sculpture created by celebrated British artist Anish Kapoor, will be officially unveiled as the artist intended it to look, after having undergone its final phase of polishing and welding. (Chicago)

For more information, contact Millennium Park (312-742-1168, www.millenniumpark.org).

Through May 8, Chicago's Field Museum features **Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years – Selections from the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum** exploring how Jacqueline Kennedy's style, as well as her passion for the arts and history, influenced American culture. (Chicago)

For more information, contact the Field Museum (312-922-9410, www.fieldmuseum.org).

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, a 13-acre Caribbean-themed outdoor water park, is targeted to open May 28 just west of Six Flags Great America in Gurnee. It features more than 25 water slides, a 500,000-gallon wave-making pool, an adventure river, waterfalls and family raft rides. Other highlights will include *Speed Slides*, taking thrill-seekers on rides that reach up to 40 miles an hour, and *Skull Island*, featuring pirate ships, erupting volcanoes and a 23,000-square-foot activity pool for younger children. Admission to the water park will be included in the admission price to Six Flags Great America. (Chicagoland)

-more-

Governor Rod Blagojevich

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

For more information, contact Six Flags Hurricane Harbor (847-249-INFO, www.sixflags.com).

The newly renovated **Genesee Theatre** in Waukegan takes center stage this spring with an exciting entertainment line-up, including performances by B.B. King on March 29, The Buckingham, The Ides of March and The Cryan' Shames on April 16 and legendary comedian Jerry Seinfeld on April 30. Visitors will enjoy the restored beauty of the original 1927 structure, as well as many modern updates, including additional seating and expanded lobbies, restrooms and concession areas. (Chicagoland)

For more information, contact the Genesee Theatre (847-782-2366, www.geneseetheatre.com).

Families can hit the waves later this spring at **Grizzly Jack's Grand Bear Lodge and Water Park**, Illinois' first indoor water park resort, just outside Utica's Starved Rock State Park. The park offers a 24,000-square-foot indoor aquatic center with water slides, a wave pool, a splash and play pool, a lazy river, a zero-depth play area with splash bucket, a tot pool and other attractions the whole family will enjoy. Visitors also will take pleasure in the comforts of the Grand Bear Lodge, a state-of-the-art 92-room hotel and conference center featuring restaurants, shopping, exercise center and arcade. (Northern)

For more information, contact Grizzly Jack's Grand Bear Lodge and Water Park (866-399-3866, www.grandbearlodge.com).

April 2005 marks the completion of the **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum** in Springfield with a truly grand opening. Visitors can explore state-of-the-art, full-immersion experiences and galleries that guide guests through the life and times of Abraham Lincoln. The grand opening, April 16-19, offers a range of activities, including "Looking for Lincoln," a two-day historic block party (April 16 and 17); a torchlight parade, concert, fireworks and laser spectacular (April 17) and more. The festivities culminate with the public dedication on April 19, when the museum will open to the public. Admission on April 19 is free. (Central)

For more information, contact the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (217-558-8844, www.alplm.org).

Illinois' Perennial Blossoms

Baseball fans can swing over to U.S. Cellular Field for the **Chicago White Sox** home opener on April 4 when the Sox will take on the Cleveland Indians, or to historic Wrigley Field for the **Chicago Cubs** home opener on April 8 when the Cubs will play the Milwaukee Brewers. (Chicago)

For more information, contact the Chicago White Sox (866-769-4263, www.whitesox.com) or the Chicago Cubs (773-404-CUBS, www.cubs.com).

The 13th annual **Art Chicago**, April 29–May 2, featuring some of the world's most important fine art galleries, will return to a state-of-the-art tent structure in Grant Park near the lakefront where it began in 1993. The exhibitors range from well-established galleries to some of the contemporary art world's most promising rising stars who will exhibit paintings, drawings, sculpture, mixed media, film, video and installations. (Chicago)

For more information, contact Thomas Blackman Associates (312-226-4700, www.artchicago.com).

Citibank's Sisters Weekend in St. Charles celebrates sisters and girlfriends, April 22–24. Ladies can pamper themselves with experiences created around the theme of sisterhood, including a pajama party with *Late Night Catechism's* Mary McHale, a spa experience, dance workshop, and a fashion show. WGN's Kathy and Judy, two of Chicago's most popular radio personalities, also will stop in for an evening of laughter and fun. (Chicagoland)

For more information, contact the St. Charles Visitors Bureau (630-513-5386 ext. 2, www.sistersweekend.com).

Candy lovers will delight in the 6th annual **Long Grove Chocolate Fest**, April 29–May 1. This family festival features dozens of tents offering candy and chocolate as well as art, home accessories, furnishings, apparel, crafts and jewelry. Other highlights include live entertainment and a children's fashion show featuring clothing adorned in real candy. (Chicagoland)

For more information, contact the Long Grove Information Center (847-634-0888, www.longgroveonline.com).

Rockford's **Anderson Gardens** invites visitors to reflect on the tranquil beauty of nature while exploring its 14-acre grounds beginning May 1. Patrons can enjoy the recent addition of The Garden of Reflection, containing the Event Pavilion, three large cast bronze angel sculptures, conversation areas, a new viewing dock and strolling paths. (Northern)

For more information, contact Anderson Gardens (815-229-9390, www.andersongardens.org).

Pec Thing, May 14 and 15 in Pecatonica, invites collectors to experience the ultimate antique flea market with more than 500 dealers selling artwork, furniture, jewelry and other treasures. Visitors can hunt for unique items arranged in five enclosed buildings and two sheds, as well as across acres of outside grounds. (Northern)

For more information, contact the Winnebago County Fairgrounds (800-238-3587, www.winnebagoountyfair.com).

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign presents the 7th annual **Roger Ebert's Overlooked Film Festival**, April 20-24, at the Virginia Theatre in Champaign. Movie buffs can view films selected by Roger Ebert whose quality he feels are "overlooked." Afterward, guests can stay for a discussion with Ebert and the filmmaker. (Central)

For more information, contact the Virginia Theatre (217-356-9063); Roger Ebert's Overlooked Film Festival (www.ebertfest.com).

The warm breezes of spring offer the perfect conditions for **Kites Over Lake Storey**, May 6-8, at Lake Storey Park in Galesburg. Kids can take kite-flying lessons, watch kite shows (with some of America's top flyers), indulge in a kite-flying candy drop and marvel at an evening fireworks show, "Nite Lites & Kites." (Western)

For more information, contact the Lakeside Recreation Centre (309-345-3604).

Hornucopia Festival, Rock Island's first outdoor spring festival, presents "horns of plenty" with continuous music on two stages featuring blues, funk, jazz, ska, swing, soul and horn-driven rock at the Downtown Rock Island Arts & Entertainment District, May 20 and 21. Visitors also can feast on flaming chicken wings, seasoned kabobs, enchiladas, tacos and other delicacies. (Western)

For more information, contact the Downtown Rock Island Arts & Entertainment District (309-788-6311, www.ridistrict.com).

Birding Fest 2005, April 29–May 1, offers a variety of programs for all ages at the Cache River Wetlands Center in Southern Illinois. Visitors can explore nature through guided canoe tours, birding hikes, owl prowls, live bird demonstrations, a bird-watching competition, wildlife photo exhibit and other exciting events. (Southern)

For more information, contact the Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau (800-248-4373); Birding Fest 2005 (www.birdingblitz.org).

Herrinfesta Italiana, May 23–30, spotlights Herrin's Italian heritage through a showcase of entertainment, authentic Italian food, art gallery, carnival, bocce ball tournament, golf tournament, pasta-eating contests and more. (Southern)

For more information, contact Herrinfesta Italiana (877-847-8822, www.herrinfesta.com).

Camp River DuBois: Point of Departure, May 14 and 15, commemorates the departure of the Lewis & Clark Expedition from Camp River DuBois in Hartford, where the members of the Corps of Discovery set out on their epic journey west. History will come alive as costumed re-enactors demonstrate blacksmithing, coopering, candle making, cooking, weaving, spinning and many other activities. (Southwestern)

For more information, contact the Lewis & Clark State Historic Site (618-251-5811, www.campdubois.com).

Ranked as the best small fine art show in the nation by *Fine Art Show Art Fair Source Book 2004*, **Art on the Square** features 100 juried artists from around the world exhibiting at Belleville's Memorial Fountain, May 13-15. The show offers visitors the chance to meet exhibiting artists, enjoy family entertainment and activities, taste fine cuisine and explore the town's historic neighborhoods. (Southwestern)

For more information, contact Art on the Square (618-239-9428, www.artonthesquare.com).

To get travelers started on their spring getaways, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers additional information on one-of-a-kind attractions, events statewide and suggested 3-Day Getaways through the Bureau's Web site, **www.enjoyillinois.com** or its travel counselors at **1-800-2CONNECT**.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Media materials and downloadable images are now available on the Illinois Bureau of Tourism online media center at www.illinoismediacenter.com. Additional photography, available electronically or in slide format, may be obtained by contacting Anne Dattulo at anne.dattulo@edelman.com, 312-240-2829, or Katie Markese at katie.markese@edelman.com, 312-297-7561.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.