



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

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BUREAU OF TOURISM CONDUCTS 2005 ILLINOIS ROAD SHOW

Illinois Bureau of Tourism representatives travel statewide to unveil visitor numbers and showcase the impact of Illinois' tourism industry

CHICAGO – Representatives from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism (DCEO/IBOT) and their agency partners will conduct a six-market tour throughout the state, June 13-16. They will share the latest Illinois visitor numbers for 2004, which illustrate the significant impact that tourism has on Illinois' economy. In 2003, tourism expenditures contributed nearly \$23 billion to the state's economy.

"We're excited to travel the state to announce the 2004 visitor numbers and discuss the future of Illinois tourism with our industry partners," said Jan Kostner, DCEO/IBOT deputy director. "Last year marked an upswing in Illinois tourism and we have more plans in the works to build on the momentum we've generated in the past couple years."

In addition to the 2004 visitor numbers, representatives will discuss relevant trends and highlight new tourism products and marketing initiatives expected to stimulate travel in Illinois, including:

- **Advertising:** The upcoming plans and concepts for DCEO/IBOT's summer advertising campaigns. In 2004, the new "Illinois. Mile after Magnificent Mile." campaign generated a record-breaking 2.4 million consumer inquiries, a 58 percent increase over 2003.
- **Diversity marketing:** The San Jose Group and Beaman Inc. will conduct strategic outreach to the Hispanic and African-American communities respectively.
- **New attractions in Illinois:** The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, the world's largest presidential library and museum complex, which opened in April to national acclaim; Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Waterpark, a 13-acre Caribbean-themed, outdoor water park just west of Six Flags Great America in Gurnee; and Grizzly Jack's Grand Bear Lodge and Water Park, Illinois' first-ever indoor water park resort, located just outside Utica's Starved Rock State Park.
- **Upcoming initiatives:** The first-ever Illinois Great Rivers Ride, a 385-mile noncompetitive bike ride that showcases the scenic beauty and tourism destinations along the Mississippi, Illinois and Rock rivers; Illinois Wine Month, in September, to celebrate the state's wine industry comprised of more than 50 wineries; the unveiling of the *Jane: Diary of a Dinosaur* exhibit, which will include the discovery, excavation and Jane's remarkable skeleton at the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford; and Fall-O-Ween™ a new season in Illinois that blends the best of autumn and Halloween throughout the state.

Governor Rod R. Blagojevich

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

The Road Show begins in Chicagoland on June 13 and concludes in Carbondale on June 16. The presentation schedule is as follows:

- Gurnee – June 13, Six Flags Great America, 9:00 a.m.
- Rockford – June 13, Burpee Museum of Natural History, 1:00 p.m.
- Quad Cities – June 14, Quad City Botanical Center, 8:30 a.m.
- Springfield – June 14, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, 2:30 p.m.
- East Alton – June 15, National Great Rivers Museum, 8:30 a.m.
- Carbondale – June 16, African American Museum of Southern Illinois, 9:00 a.m.

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To schedule an interview or for more information, contact Anne Dattulo onsite during the Illinois Road Show at 773-415-7323 (cell) or Katie Markese at 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.