



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

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CONTACT: Emma Douglas 312-240-2730
emma.douglas@edelman.com

“OFFBEAT ILLINOIS” ATTRACTIONS FEATURED ON EXCLUSIVE MERCHANDISE
State’s popular tourism advertisements now available on posters, clothing and accessories

CHICAGO – Prompted by enthusiastic response to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism’s (IBOT) “Offbeat Illinois” advertising campaign, consumers can now purchase posters and additional items featuring the vibrant, eye-catching artwork used in the state’s vintage-style campaign at www.enjoyillinois.com/shopoffbeat.

The advertisements are modeled after colorful travel posters from the 1920s and highlight quirky travel destinations unique to Illinois. After launching throughout Chicagoland in fall 2005 on train platforms, bus shelters and billboards and on special postcards found in select restaurants, IBOT was inundated with consumer requests to obtain the posters.

“The campaign’s goal was to create memorable advertising that showcases Illinois’ hidden gems and attractions that can only be found in our state,” said Jan Kostner, deputy director, IBOT. “We’re thrilled to respond to the overwhelming consumer demand by sharing the amazing artistry and one-of-a-kind Illinois destinations with a wider audience.”

The merchandise on www.enjoyillinois.com/shopoffbeat is made available through a partnership with CafePress.com, an online marketplace offering e-commerce services to create and sell a wide variety of customized products. Proceeds from sales will fund future efforts to promote Illinois tourism.

Items from the Offbeat Illinois advertisements, including posters, T-shirts, magnets, coasters, journals and baby bibs, are available featuring the following attractions:

Spring 2006 advertisements:

- **Cave-In-Rock**, a 55-foot wide cave in Southern Illinois that was a hideout for bandits, pirates and other outlaws on the Ohio River during the 1800s.
- **The World’s Largest Catsup Bottle**, measuring 170 feet, in Collinsville. The beloved roadside attraction was built in 1949 by the producer of Brooks Old Original Tangy Catsup.

Summer 2006 advertisements (available in late June):

- **The Chester Gould Dick Tracy Museum** in Woodstock, which pays homage to the yellow fedora-wearing crimestopper Dick Tracy and his creator Chester Gould. Museum visitors can explore Gould’s legacy through historic documents, memorabilia and photographs.

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- **Bronzeville**, the South Side Chicago neighborhood that boasts one of the most famous addresses in American pop history. From 1957-1967, Chess Records recording studio rang with the voices of some of the world's most influential blues and rock 'n' roll artists including Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters and Buddy Guy.
- The **Brookfield Zoo**, home to more than 3,000 wild animals including the naked mole rat. While he won't win any beauty contests, this wrinkly, buck-toothed, pale-skinned rodent enjoys a social life to rival any human.

Summer 2005 advertisements:

- **The 400-pound butter cow**, Bessy, that has been an Illinois State Fair icon for more than 70 years. Each year, fairgoers flock to the Dairy Building on Springfield's fairgrounds to watch the "Butter Cow Lady" sculpt this dairy-based delight from real unsalted butter.
- **Jane**, the most complete and best preserved juvenile T-Rex in the world. The 66-million-year-old dinosaur can be found at the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford.
- **The World's Tallest Man, Robert Wadlow**, who called Alton home from a very high vantage point. He was already standing 6 foot 5 inches by the fifth grade and was named "The Gentle Giant" for his kind and mellow demeanor. He eventually grew to 8 feet 11 inches, weighed 491 pounds and wore a size 37 shoe!
- **The Annual Pumpkin Festival** in Morton, the "Pumpkin Capital of the World." Every fall, locals paint the town orange with a pumpkin festival of mammoth proportions that includes a pumpkin parade, pumpkin rides and the "Punkin Chuckin'" contest.
- **Illinois Wine Country**, with its rolling hills, breathtaking scenery and charming bed and breakfasts. More than 60 wineries statewide feature friendly vintners and award-winning varietals.

Consumers should also look out for additional posters launching this fall.

For those wanting to check out the "Offbeat Illinois" sites in person, IBOT offers free travel resources with additional information on 3-Day Getaways across Illinois, providing ideas for any type of trip including arts and culture, family fun, NASCAR, girls' getaways, outdoor, Lincoln, golf and romance. All are available by calling **1-800-2-CONNECT** to speak with an Illinois travel counselor or by visiting the Bureau's Web site at **www.enjoyillinois.com**.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Artwork and photography is available electronically. Contact Emma Douglas at emma.douglas@edelman.com, 312-240-2730 or Julie Connolly at julie.connolly@edelman.com, 312-233-1246.

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.