



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

FOR DISTRIBUTION

April 30, 2008

CONTACT: Andrew Smith 312-552-1139

andrew.smith@edelman.com

GET ON THE ROAD FOR ONE-TANK GETAWAYS TO ILLINOIS THIS SUMMER

Historic events and summer favorites can be found within a short drive to Illinois

CHICAGO – Visitors to Illinois will find an abundance of exciting—and budget-friendly—vacation destinations all within a one-tank drive from areas across the Midwest. This summer the Illinois Bureau of Tourism heats up travelers' vacation plans with unique and enjoyable getaways throughout the Land of Lincoln. The Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers comprehensive 3-Day Getaways throughout the state every season. Travelers can visit www.enjoyillinois.com to download itineraries, get information about the hot spots in Illinois and book hotels.

CHICAGO

Navy Pier is a staple of Chicago summers. With Chicago's famed skyline as the backdrop, a never-ending calendar of events and a variety of attractions and restaurants, visitors of all ages will enjoy a summer day at Navy Pier. During the summer months, fireworks light up the night sky every Wednesday and Saturday.

For more information, contact Navy Pier (312-595-7437, www.navy Pier.com).

The Museum of Science and Industry is presenting **The Glass Experience**, now through September 1, inviting guests to learn about the discoveries in glass-making. Visitors will receive a first-hand look at master glassmakers as they demonstrate glassblowing, view a forest of hand-blown glass sculptures and learn about evolution of glass.

For more information, contact the Museum of Science and Industry (773-753-7100, www.msichicago.org).

Music lovers everywhere will converge on Grant Park to enjoy legendary musicians celebrate the heritage of blues at the **25th Annual Chicago Blues Festival**, June 5-8. This year, B.B. King will return to the festival stage for the first time in 20 years. The other festival headliners include Johnny Winter, Koko Taylor and Chicago favorite Lil' Ed & The Blues Imperials.

For more information, contact the Chicago Mayor's Office of Special Events (312-744-3315, www.chicagobluesfestival.org).

Visitors can celebrate the Year of the Frog at **Lincoln Park Zoo** this summer. The zoo is highlighting the importance of amphibians in the ecosystem and how protecting the environment can save these creatures. Animal lovers will also see lions, monkeys, bears and other zoo favorites. The zoo also features special events such as bird walks and classes to educate visitors.

For more information, contact Lincoln Park Zoo (312-742-2000, www.lpzoo.com)

CHICAGOLAND

-more-

Governor Rod R. Blagojevich

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

Enjoy the splendors of nature in the summer at the **Chicago Botanic Gardens** in Glencoe. The Garden offers 23 formal display gardens, waterways and 385 acres of woods, which can be explored either on foot, or by taking a tram. Special events and activities provide visitors with distinctive educational experiences.

For more information, contact the Chicago Botanic Garden (847-835-5440, www.chicagobotanic.org).

Visitors can experience the thrill of dropping, spinning and flipping at **Six Flags Great America** in Gurnee. This year the theme park will unveil The Dark Knight Coaster, which will resemble Gotham City from the famed "Batman" movie. A visit to the park would not be complete without cooling off at the adjacent waterpark, Hurricane Harbor. The waterpark, which opens April 26, includes water slides, lazy rivers, a wave pool and much more.

For more information, contact Six Flags Great America and Hurricane Harbor (847-249-4636, www.sixflags.com/greatamerica).

The majestic dance and elegant movement of the **Tempel Lipizzans** have enthralled onlookers for more than 50 years at the Tempel Farm in Wadsworth. At Tempel Farm, visitors have the opportunity to learn the history of Lipizzan horses, how they are trained and see them perform.

For more information, contact Tempel Farm (847-623-7272, www.tempelfarms.com).

The **Ravinia Festival** is a wonderful summertime experience for any fan of music. Ravinia, located in Highland Park, offers a variety of spectacular performances all summer long, May 31 through September 14, from classical to jazz, blues, country, rock and more. Visitors can enjoy the performances from the 3,200-seat, open-air covered Pavilion or relax with a picnic in the lawn area. New this year, visitors can also enjoy their favorite pop concerts from their dinner table on the terraces of Ravinia's new Park View Restaurant,

For more information, contact the Ravinia Festival (847-266-5100, www.ravinia.com),

NORTHERN

Since its inception in 1967, the **Ski Broncs Water Ski Show**, located in Loves Park, has showcased some of the most gifted and passionate amateur water skiers in Illinois. Spectators will be amazed as the team performs thrilling acrobatics on water. The shows occur every Wednesday and Friday, beginning May 28 through September 1.

For more information, contact Ski Broncs Water Ski Show (815-332-7155, www.skibroncs.com).

As the summer heats up, family and friends can cool off at **Magic Waters Waterpark** in Cherry Valley, open May 24-September 1. This waterpark offers the largest wave pool in Illinois, body slides, tube slides and a lazy river lined with waterfalls around every bend. With great deals throughout the summer, this waterpark offers something for everyone.

For more information, contact Magic Waters Waterpark (800-373-1679, www.magicwaterswaterpark.com).

The old West is brought to life at **Donley's Wild West Town** in Union, offering visitors an entire day of cowboy fun. The town features showdowns between gunslingers, a blacksmith shop, a

jail, a saloon and a gold mine. Enjoy a Wild West Show, explore Wild West exhibits at the museum and top the day off with a meal at the Old West Steakhouse.

For more information, contact Donley's Wild West Town (815-923-9000, www.wildwesttown.com).

Look to the sky June 20-22 for the **Galena Balloon Race**. The race, which benefits the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, offers spectators three balloon races with more than 20 hot air balloons, a car show, live music and much more.

For more information, contact Galena Balloon Race (www.greatgalenaballoonrace.com).

CENTRAL

Springfield celebrates the life of Abraham Lincoln with its **Looking For Lincoln** tours. Visitors can tour various communities in Central Illinois where Lincoln lived and worked, such as the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, and the Lincoln Herndon Law Offices State Historic Site.

For more information, contact Looking For Lincoln (217-782-6817, www.lookingforlincoln.com).

The **National Road Festival**, June 13-15, is an annual event held in several communities along the National Road Scenic Byway. Each community will offer unique attractions such as live music, antique tractor shows, local fare and more.

For more information, contact National Road Association of Illinois (www.nationalroad.org).

The **Illinois State Fair**, held in Springfield, is legendary in the state's history. It has seen the likes of Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln as the two held a debate at the fairgrounds in 1854. This August 8-17, the fair will once again provide visitors with amusement for all ages, including live music on the grandstand, a kids' corner, horse races, an ethnic village and beer and wine tents.

For more information, contact the Illinois State Fair (217-782-6661, www.illinoisstatefair.info).

The **Scovill Zoo**, located in Decatur, is home to more than 500 animals and that's not all. The zoo features unique attractions including the Z.O. & O. Railroad – a one-mile narrated tour around the zoo on a replica 1863 C.P. Huntington Steam Train and the Endangered Species Carousel featuring 30 hand-carved wooden animals.

For more information, contact Scovill Zoo (217-421-7435, www.decatour-parks.org).

WESTERN

Look no further than the **Peoria RiverFront** for an exciting and fun-filled summer destination. With daily offerings including live music, ethnic festivals, boating, sports and fireworks, this destination is ideal for the whole family. After strolling the RiverFront, visitors can enjoy a river cruise on the Spirit of Peoria, a turn-of-the-century-style paddle wheeler.

For more information, contact Peoria RiverFront (309-671-5555, www.peoriariverfront.com),

The **Niabi Zoo**, located in Coal Valley, offers a truly one-of-a-kind experience inviting visitors to stroll along paths among free-roaming wallabies and emu and hand feed cups of nectar to

colorful Australian birds. With more than 900 animals, a family atmosphere, and select days of free admission throughout the summer, the zoo is a wonderful option for family fun.

For more information, contact Niabi Zoo (309-799-5107, www.niabizoo.com).

The Mid Mississippi Muddy Water Blues Society will put on the **Quincy Area Blues Fest**, July 18 and 19, in historic Washington Park. Considered to be one of the top Midwest blues festivals, this annual festival showcases some of the best acts in blues locally, regionally and nationally.

For more information, contact the Quincy Area Blues Fest (217-224-7256, www.quincyblues.com).

Enjoy the best of Southern Illinois wine at the **Illinois River Wine Festival at Kickapoo Creek Winery** in Edwards, June 7 and 8. The festival features 12 area wineries and includes food and live music from local bands. During the same weekend, visitors can travel to nearby Mackinaw Valley Vineyard for additional wine tasting and a battle of the blues bands music contest at the Mackinaw Music Fest.

For more information, contact Kickapoo Creek Winery (309-264-9000, www.kickapocreekwinery.com) or Mackinaw Valley Vineyard (309-359-9463, www.mackinawvalleyvineyard.com).

SOUTHERN

Visitors looking for that “super” getaway can travel to Metropolis for the **30th Annual Superman Celebration**, June 12-15. Actors and actresses from current and previous Superman movies and television shows will come to town to celebrate the “Man of Steel.” A Superman show kicks off the festival, followed by a weekend of games, crafts and a super carnival.

For more information, contact the Superman Celebration (800-949-5740, www.supermancelebration.net).

Music is in the air June 12-July 4 during the **Southern Illinois Music Festival**. Now in its fourth year, the festival will feature 51 performances ranging from orchestral, opera, musical theatre and jazz. The concerts will be held throughout Southern Illinois. The majority of the concerts are free.

For more information, contact the Southern Illinois Music Festival (618-453-2776, www.sifest.com).

The 42nd Annual Pioneer City Rodeo and Labor Day Parade in Palestine provides entertainment for all ages, August 29-September 1. Friday night kicks off the festival with the “Bullbash on Wabash,” followed by a weekend of live music, hearty breakfasts, lunch with the rodeo clowns, a parade and exciting rodeo performances.

For more information, contact Palestine Chamber of Commerce (618-586-2222, www.pioneercity.com/rodeo).

SOUTHWEST

Spice up the summer June 7 and 8 at the **International Horseradish Festival** in Collinsville. The festival, dedicated to the spicy member of the mustard family, provides a weekend of fun with activities including a root sacking contest, a root derby, the Little Miss Horseradish Festival Pageant and live music on the entertainment stage.

For more information, contact the International Horseradish Festival (618-344-2884, www.horseradishfestival.com).

Fort de Chartres, located in Prairie du Rocher, is the last remaining 18th-century fort erected by France's colonial government and will celebrate its **38th Annual Rendezvous at Fort de Chartres**, June 7 and 8, with a recreation of the traditional French fur trapper's holiday. Re-enactors dressed as buckskinners, militiamen, artisans, and entertainers will celebrate the holiday within the fort.

For more information, contact Fort de Chartres (618-284-7230, www.ftdechartres.com).

The **State Street Music Festival** in Jerseyville, held June 14, is a great time to hear a variety of music, ranging from 50s music, country, classic and contemporary rock. Visitors can also enjoy food, entertainment and children's activities during the festival.

For more information, contact Jersey County (618-639-5222, www.jcba-il.us).

Celebrate the birthday of a national historic site during the 10th Annual **World's Largest Catsup Bottle Summerfest**, July 12 and 13, in Collinsville. This old-fashioned street festival features a car and cruise show put on by the classic car club C.I.A. "Cruzin' In Antiques," live music, games and entertainment. Festival-goers can also take part in a catsup tasting contest and the Little Miss Tomato and Sir Catsup Contest.

For more information, contact the World's Largest Catsup Bottle (618-344-8775, www.catsupbottlesummerfest.com).

To get travelers started on their summer getaways, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers information on related one-of-a-kind attractions, events, accommodations and bookable 3-Day Getaways through the Bureau's Web site, **www.enjoyillinois.com** or its travel counselors at **1-800-2CONNECT**. Travelers can also order the new 2008 Illinois Travel Guide, the most comprehensive guide to travel in the Land of Lincoln. Guides are available at Tourist Information Centers, local convention and visitors bureaus, and regional tourism development offices statewide.

###

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, may be obtained by contacting Emma Douglas at emma.douglas@edelman.com, 312-240-2730 or Andrew Smith at andrew.smith@edelman.com, 312-552-1139.

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.