

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jennifer Elving
Edelman
312/240-2813

Illinois Tourism Leaders Honored at 17th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism

Awards given for excellence in tourism marketing and achievements

CHICAGO (March 31, 2004) – Select Illinois tourism organizations and professionals were honored on today with Governor's Tourism Awards at the 17th annual Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism. The awards, which recognize excellence in tourism marketing and achievements, were presented to nearly 50 winning entries during a special awards luncheon at the Chicago Hilton – the culmination of the three-day conference, March 29-31.

“Organizations and individuals throughout this industry have such a great passion for what they do,” said Jack Lavin, director of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. “We are fortunate to have so many innovative and strategic programs focused on bringing more visitors to Illinois.”

The Governor's Tourism Awards were presented in three categories: General Advertising and Promotion, Hospitality Organizations, and Community Leaders. General Advertising and Promotion was split in two divisions – Division A for organizations with operating budgets under \$350,000 and Division B for groups with budgets over \$350,000. This year, ten new awards were added, including Logo Design, Billboard Advertising, and Attraction with the Best Special Promotion.

Each category was judged by a panel of marketing professionals based on clarity of message, creativity, originality and the project's overall success.

The 17th Annual Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism, the state's premier educational forum for the travel industry, was held March 29-31, at the Chicago Hilton. Hosted by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism and Visit Illinois, the conference brought together nearly 700 representatives from the state's tourism industry including hotels, attractions, convention and visitors bureaus, restaurants and destinations.

-more-

Award winners are:

GENERAL ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION:

Logo Design

Division A

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/
Merchant's Association, Galesburg

Division B

Quad Cities Convention and Visitors
Bureau

Newspaper Advertising

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and
Visitors Bureau

Magazine Advertising

Division A

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/
Merchant's Association, Galesburg

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention
and Visitors Bureau

Posters

Division A

Streator Tourism

Division B

Aurora Area Convention and Visitors
Bureau

Billboard Advertising

Division A

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/
Merchant's Association., Galena

General Brochures

Division A

Stoney Creek Inn, Galena

Division B

The Irish Cottage and Frank O'Dowd's
Irish Pub, Galena

Booklets or Area, Media and Meeting Planner Guides

Division A

Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center, Utica

Division B

Illinois Grape and Wine Resource
Council

Newsletters

Division B

Tourism Bureau of Southwestern Illinois

Visitors Guides Including Advertising

Division A

Galesburg Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Division B

Alton Regional Convention and Visitors
Bureau

Visitors Guides Without Advertising

Division A

Kankakee County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Premium Items

Division A

Ottawa Visitors Center

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Web site

Division A

Geneva Chamber of Commerce

Division B

Lisle Convention and Visitors Bureau

E-Marketing Efforts

Division B

City of Chicago-Office of Tourism

Radio Advertising Campaign

Division A

Geneva Chamber of Commerce

Division B

Aurora Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Television Advertising Campaign

Division A

Landmark Café & Creperie, Galesburg

Documentary/Travel-Log

Division A

Dreaming Tree Films in collaboration with Chicago's North Shore Convention and Visitors Bureau

Division B

Tourism Bureau of Southwestern Illinois

CD-Rom

Division A

Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center, Utica

Division B

Champaign County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Research

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Advertising/Public Relations Campaign – Single Media

Division A

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/
Merchant's Association, Galesburg

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Advertising/Public Relations Campaign – Multimedia

Division A

Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project

Division B

Aurora Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Citywide Promotional Campaign

Division A

Canal Corridor Association

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and Visitors Bureau

HOSPITALITY ORGANIZATIONS:

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

Division A

Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center,
Utica

Division B

Pheasant Run Resort and Spa,
St. Charles

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

Goldmoor Inn, Galena

Best Marketing Promotion in the Restaurant Division

Greater Woodfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, The “Original” Chef’s Fest

Attraction with the Best General Promotion

Pheasant Run Resort and Spa, St. Charles

Attraction with the Best Special Promotion

Galena Cellars Vineyard and Winery, Galena

COMMUNITY LEADERS: Each year at the Illinois Governor’s Conference on Tourism, individuals and corporations are recognized as extraordinary industry supporters. This year’s award winners include:

Legislative Friend of Tourism

Representative Steve Davis, 111th District – For nearly a decade, Davis has supported the growth of multiple Southwestern Illinois tourism projects. Most recently, he secured more than \$2 million in state funding to advance the construction of the Lewis & Clark Confluence Tower in Hartford.

Individual Friend of Tourism

Scott Lawlor, Galena Cellars Vineyard and Winery, Galena – Lawlor is committed to expanding the wine industry in Illinois. He has forged successful partnerships with the Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and Visitors Bureau, holds a seat on the Grand Excursion Board of Directors and hosts the annual Nouveau Wine Festival.

Corporate Friend of Tourism (TIE WINNERS)

- Country Insurance and Financial Services, Bloomington-Normal – Country Insurance and Financial Services sponsors more than 15 tourism-related events in the Bloomington-Normal and surrounding areas, including a major youth golf tournament, high school and collegiate athletic programs, theater festivals and local museums.
- Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), Decatur – ADM is a leader in global agriculture dedicated to its Central Illinois region. In the past year, the company has provided financial and volunteer support to more than 20 events and campaigns in their area.

Media Friend of Tourism

Midwest Suburban Publishing, Suburban Cook County – Midwest Suburban Publishing (MSP) publishes the *Daily Southtown* and *The Star* newspapers, as well as *Elite* magazine. MSP has provided extensive coverage on Chicago's southland activities and initiatives, including the 2003 U.S. Open and the bid for the Chicago Fire's Major League Soccer stadium.

Peer's Choice

Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
Tourism Economic Impact Campaign: Tourism Means Jobs

Best of Show

Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project
Promotional Campaign featuring their commemorative license plate

For additional information about the winners, please contact the winning tourism organizations, or call Jennifer Elving, 312-240-2813, or Katie Markese, 312-297-7561, for the appropriate contact information.

###

*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.*