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12th Annual HERITAGE TRACTOR ADVENTURE Heritage Corridor CVB Opens HTA Registration, Announces New Route

Romeoville, Illinois, March 21, 2013 – Tractor drivers eager to participate in the 12th Annual Heritage Tractor Adventure (HTA) need to know three things: registration is now open, the route has changed, and Max (Armstrong) is back. Individuals interested in seeing the caravan as it crosses a new route along the Heritage Corridor can mark their calendar and pack the camera. This year's Heritage Tractor Adventure is scheduled for Friday, June 7th thru Monday, June 10, and will be based in Streator, with stops in Ottawa, Sheridan and Pontiac. The revised route is expected to draw a record number of vintage tractors, drivers and visitors, as it incorporates new entertainment, agricultural and tourism opportunities.



"This annual event is another example of how the Corridor offers 'heritage with a twist' for all ages and interests," said HTA Coordinator Mary Beth DeGrush.

Fans and followers of the popular annual pilgrimage can enjoy the tractors and visit with drivers along the route, which includes classic small town America, according to DeGrush, Vice President of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau. DeGrush says registration is encouraged by May 20 so that driver details can be arranged. To participate, tractors need to travel at least 10 mph, and be at least 30 years old.

Route Expands Tourism Opportunities

Highlights of the 12th Annual Heritage Tractor Adventure include: the Ottawa Two Rivers Wine, Jazz and Lobster Festival on Friday evening. Tractors will be parked on display in historic Washington Square Park. Drivers and followers can enjoy food (advance order lobster), the Farmers Market, music, vendor booths and visit downtown Ottawa shops. Saturday finds the tractors visiting and touring the impressive Spirit Family Farm in Sheridan. Evening activities back in Streator feature an always popular show by nationally-recognized agriculture reporters Max Armstrong and Orion Samuelson, of WGN 720 AM Radio. Samuelson will be part of a book signing for his book, "You Can't Dream Big Enough." Musical entertainment in the new City Park Band Shell will also be provided Saturday evening.

Sunday afternoon, June 9, the Tractor Adventure will proceed to Pontiac's City Town Square and includes the Route 66 Museum for tours, as well as a live broadcast by The Mother Road Radio Tour. Open to the public, the Adventure offers arranged meals for purchase in advance, allowing a convenient and affordable way for visitors to mingle with drivers and learn about the vintage tractors.

Registration Details

Tractor drivers interested in participating can learn about event details and complete registration at <http://www.heritagetractoradventure.com>, or by calling 866-6-TRACTOR. For additional information, or to volunteer, contact Mary Beth at 630.226.1764, or email her at Maryde@hccvbil.com. Registration for the 12th Annual Heritage Tractor Adventure is \$175 (second driver \$75). Registration includes an official HTA hat, T-shirt and pin, fuel during HTA, and transportation to and from CVB-arranged lodging during the ride. Breakfast, lunch and dinner meals are offered at an additional cost. Meals are provided by, and proceeds benefit, local community organizations, including Rotary Clubs and Future Farmers of America (FFA). Upon registration, drivers will receive a detailed itinerary, information on meal purchases and hotel blocks, and have lodging arranged by the HTA coordinators.

Call for Volunteers

In the past, an average of 200 vintage tractors from as far as Florida and Canada, and across the United States, have been involved in this event. For those eager to get up close and personal with the event and its unique venues, the Heritage Corridor CVB has issued a call for volunteers to assist in all areas of the event. Agriculture enthusiasts, historians, farmers, students and community organizations are urged to contact DeGrush for information on volunteer opportunities. "For the tractor drivers, spectators, local towns and volunteers, a great time is had by all," says DeGrush, who has served as Coordinator for all 12 years. She added, "Just like farming, it's a lot of work, but worth it, so we welcome helping hands." Volunteers are needed to support logistics, lodging and meal coordination, and offer driver support before and during the event.

The Heritage Tractor Adventure is coordinated by the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau, which promotes economic development and tourism along the counties and communities within the 94-mile historic Illinois and Michigan Canal. For information on CVB members, trip ideas and special events for all ages and interests, go to <http://www.heritagecorridorcvb.com>, or call 800.926.CANAL.

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