



20th Chicago Peace Fest slated for Lincoln Park

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Chicago

All we are saying is....

Give the Chicago Peace Fest a chance. Everybody's talking about bailouts, money doubts, going without - so take the route to Lincoln Park for the 20th annual celebration that offers spirited music, interactive exhibits, fine and outsider art, entertainment, refreshments and wholesome fun. Join a drum circle, listen to local activists dish about social issues and check out people partying like it's 1969. Noon to 9 p.m. Friday to Sunday, June 19-21, at Lincoln Park, just south of the zoo at 1700 N. Stockton Drive. (708) 795-1146 or visit myspace.com/chicagopeacefest

Urban paddles

Multitask in an exhilarating way by embarking upon a kayak tour with the Chicago History Museum. Get a Chicago history lesson while you work out on a professionally guided tour on the Chicago River. Paddle into the Past takes you into the architectural canyons of the river and the Sunset Paddle is a wonderful summer outing to watch the sun set behind the magnificent Chicago skyline. Opt for an evening paddle on Lake Michigan against the backdrop of a fireworks display. The cost for each is \$60 (\$55 for members) and all tours paddle approximately six miles and last about three hours. No experience necessary. Choose a single kayak or tandem.

Paddle into the Past: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. most Saturdays and Sundays through August. Sunset Paddle: 7 to 10 p.m. Sundays, July 12 and Aug. 9; Fireworks Paddle: 7:15 to 10:45 p.m., Wednesdays, July 8 and Aug. 5. Purchase tickets at chicagohistory.org or call (312) 799-2254.

Special street fair fare

If your palate leans more toward baba ganoush, leg of duck with orange glaze, French pastries and mochi ice cream rather than typical fest fare like corn on the cob and fried dough, the 12th annual Taste of Randolph Street is the festival to schedule on your summer calendar. Participating restaurants include some of the hottest spots along Chicago's Randolph Street corridor in the heart of the West Loop and nonstop tunes will be provided by the likes of Urge Overkill, Baby Loves Disco and The Posies among others. Peek into trendy art galleries and clubs and snag a seat at the Taste of Randolph Street Culinary Pavilion as some of the city's most renowned chefs wow foodies with their knife skills. Suggested donation for admission is \$10.

5 to 11 p.m. Friday, June 19; 2 to 11 p.m. Saturday, June 20; and 2 to 10 p.m. Sunday, June 21, at 900 West Randolph St. See what's cooking at jamfests.com/tasteofrandolph/index.htm or call (312) 458-9401.

Midwest

He coulda won a Grammy, buried in his jammies

How do you make a 2,000-year-old king interesting to kids? Leave it to the Children's Museum of Indianapolis by way of its new "Tutankhamen: The Golden King & the Great Pharaohs" exhibit. More than 130 treasures from the "boy king's" tomb and other ancient Egyptian artifacts tell the story of pharaohs. Four galleries devoted to King Tut correspond to the four rooms of his nearly intact tomb where the treasures were discovered in 1922. See the king's golden sandals, jewelry, furniture, weaponry and statuary. Also opening is a new permanent exhibit, "Take Me There: Egypt," which immerses kids and families in modern Egyptian culture.

Saturday, June 27, to Oct. 25 at Children's Museum of Indianapolis, 3000 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Exhibit hours vary widely by day during the summer so excavate details at childrensmuseum.org or call (317) 334-3322.

The Eagle (Ridge) has landed

As if you actually needed a reason to visit the gorgeous geography of Galena and its equally attractive Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa, the largest balloon race in the Midwest is quite a come-on. The eighth annual Great Galena Balloon Race is an eye-ful of over 20 hot air balloons puffing across the Illinois sky. Benefiting the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, the event takes place at Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa's north course driving range and a number of family-friendly events occur throughout the weekend. The weekend kicks off with a night of food, live music, kids' activities and glowing balloons. Parents may want to get in on Ale Fest where \$20 gets samples of more than 100 of fine craft beers. Arise early on Saturday to watch the Crack of Dawn Balloon Race with hot air balloon rides available all weekend. Later, there's a collectors car show, kids' activities, food and beverage concessions and more live music before the Great Galena Balloon Race ensues.

Friday to Sunday, June 19-21, Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa, 444 Eagle Ridge Drive, in Galena. Call (800) 892-2269 or float by eagleridge.com for lodging.

Muse on a Lake Michigan cruise

If a Caribbean or Mexican cruise was erased from your summer plans due to health or hurricane jitters, consider a cruise in your own backyard pool via the Lake Michigan Getaway 2009. The seven-day/six-night itinerary begins and ends at Chicago's historic Navy Pier with stops in between at charming Holland and Manistee, Mich., known for elegant mansions; Mackinac Island; Door County's Sturgeon Bay; and Milwaukee. Cruise aboard the 100-passenger ships designed for easy passage through shallow waters and narrow channels. All meals are included while on board and there's a "bring your own bottle" liquor arrangement that really reduces expenses. The cost per person starts at \$1,725.

Through Aug. 3. Book or get details from the Great Canadian Travel Company, (800) 771-4833 or surf over to greatcanadiantravel.com.

Worth the trip

Sure we have Conan O'Brien and Patti Blagojevich to entertain us this summer, but let's look beyond the borders for chuckles aplenty. Montreal comes alive when Just For Laughs - the Montreal International Comedy Festival takes over the Canadian city each July. Numbering 1,700 of the planet's most talented comics, the event boasts 1,250 of them participating in free outdoor activities suitable for the entire family. Exclusive indoor shows feature comedians from around the world and the one-of-a-kind gala series showcases Hollywood superstars such as John Cleese, Lewis Black and Bill Cosby. Choose one-day to full-week ticket packages. A number of hotels are offering special rates that include continental breakfast and a festival souvenir (prices are based on double occupancy and include taxes). For example, Hotel Lord Berri starts at \$132 CAD per night, while the four-star Auberge Le Pomerol starts at \$166 CAD. Many Montreal hotels are in on the Sweet Deals promotion, which gets you a third night at half price with rates beginning at \$105 through Oct. 15. July 16 to 26, times and venues vary. For full details, go to hahaha.com and hotel deals are listed at www.hahaha.com/packages. For information on Montreal, visit tourismemontreal.org/Offers/Summer or call (877) 266-5687.