



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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10th ANNUAL GREAT GALENA BALLOON RACE MARKS MONUMENTAL YEAR AT EAGLE RIDGE RESORT & SPA

GALENA, ILL. - [Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa](#) will host the [Tenth Annual Great Galena Balloon Race](#) on June 17-19, 2011 – an event that is marking a decade of successful fundraising this year. This event is a unique, eye catching experience that also benefits the [Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation](#) and [Camp Hertko Hollow](#), a camp for children with diabetes located in Boone, Iowa.

The event takes place in Galena, Illinois, at Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa's North Course practice range and not only focuses on the fundraising goal, but also provides a wide variety of family-friendly events throughout the entire weekend that evolves around The Great Galena Balloon Race.

"The event originated in 2002 when my son, Cooper, was diagnosed with Juvenile Diabetes," said Andy Williams, owner of [Galena On The Fly](#). "As I became more educated on the subject I realized that there was a real need for helping this organization out even further. The result was the fundraising partnership with Eagle Ridge to host the event every year since."

This spectacular three-day event will feature over 20 hot air balloons, two big races, two balloon night glows, tethered balloon rides, an antique collector car show, food and beverage, and activities for the entire family, along with a special Friday night Ale Fest! Live music will be provided by The [Wundos](#) from Platteville, Wisconsin, on Friday night and Taste Like Chicken from Dubuque, Iowa, on Saturday night. The event gets underway both days at 5 p.m., with complimentary remote parking shuttle busses available to pick up and drop off guests to the launch site.

On Friday night, June 17, [Galena On The Fly](#) officially kicks off the event with a Balloon launch at 6.30 p.m., coinciding with another traditional event - [Ale Fest](#), sponsored by [Family Beer & Liquor](#) of East Dubuque, Illinois, from 6:30-9 p.m., featuring over 100 craft beers and ales to be taste tested.

"The Ale Fest is an opportunity to taste the latest releases in the craft beers and ales," said Tim Althaus, President of Family Beer and Liquor. "For the true beer lover, this gives you an excellent opportunity to taste from 100 beers, many new to the market, and even enjoy some of your old favorites as well. It's not only a way to get acquainted with some new brews, but also with some new friends!"

Tickets for Ale Fest are available for purchase for \$20 at Family Beer & Liquor in East Dubuque, Illinois, and comes with your own tasting glass for the event. You can also purchase tickets online by visiting www.greatgalenaballoonrace.com or at the gate on June 17. All proceeds from the event also go to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Friday and Saturday evening will bring a special celebration in the form of a nightly Camp Hertko Helium Balloon Launch. To support the camp, guests can purchase a white helium balloon for \$1 or a special silver balloon for \$5 and launch them as a group at 7:45 p.m. People who opt for the \$5 balloon are also entered into a drawing for a free hot air balloon ride the next morning, joining the actual hot air balloon race the next day! Each balloon has a tracking code attached, which you can follow online. Participants will be able to find out where and when their balloon landed by visiting www.greatgalenaballoonrace.com.

Also on both evenings, tethered balloon rides will be available for the "hot air balloon novice." For \$5 participants can climb into a hot air balloon basket and go up 40-50 feet in the air. Once their "test drive" is completed, balloon rides can be purchased from Galena On The Fly all weekend at the event or by calling 800-690-1287.

After the sun sets on both Friday and Saturday night, the participating hot air balloons will light up the night sky with a balloon glow around 8:30p.m., creating a glow that can be seen for miles. Volunteers are welcome to join the pilots at the balloon launch site to provide support during the set up of the night glow.

In addition, volunteers are needed to help with the overall events. Activities that require volunteers range from food and beverage attendants, ID checkers, bounce house supervisors, donation collectors, night glow support, and much more. If you are interested in volunteering for this event, please e-mail info@greatgalenaballoonrace.com. All volunteers receive free balloon event t-shirts.

"Volunteers are an extremely important part of making this event a success, without them, this fundraiser would not be possible," says Eric Dregne, Great Galena Balloon Race committee member.

On Saturday morning at 6 a.m. the hot air balloon race begins! Over 20 pilots launch their hot air balloons in a race to find a mark that is hidden somewhere throughout the 6,800 acres of Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa. When the pilots find the mark, they drop a weight, aiming it as close to the target as they can. Although the event's primary function is raising funds for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, the grand prize comes with the winning balloonist and their team claiming the race's bragging rights for the entire year.

Guests can make the day extra special by purchasing a balloon ride as the sun rises over the Midwest by contacting Galena On The Fly, Inc. at 800-690-1287. Guests are also encouraged to come out and watch the balloons set up from start to lift off and meet all the pilots involved.

"All the pilots donate their time in support of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation," Williams added.

Early Sunday morning, June 19, spectators will have one last chance to view the Crack of Dawn Balloon Race, as the balloons take flight one last time beginning at 6a.m. and closing out the event.

"We have a lot of people who come out every year to support this event and every year new people discover The Great Galena Balloon Race. If you've never attended a hot air balloon extravaganza, this is one of the more unique family activities you'll ever run across," Williams concluded. "Everyone involved with this event has been amazing, from the supporters to sponsors to volunteers. We couldn't do it without all their hard work!"

Other key sponsors of the event includes the Telegraph Herald, Net-Smart and FS Stephenson Supply Company.

About Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa

Located on 6,800 acres amid the rolling hills of northwestern Illinois, **Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa** in Galena, Illinois, is a full-spectrum resort complex located 150 miles west of Chicago. The property showcases superior golf with 63 holes on four acclaimed courses which include the North Course; the South Course; the East Course (9-holes); and the resort's crowning achievement, The General, an 18-hole, par 72 course with over 250 feet of elevation changes throughout.

Lodging accommodations at Eagle Ridge are delightfully unique with 80 quaint Inn rooms and over 250 villas and distinctive homes to choose from throughout the property.

For the resort's corporate clients Eagle Ridge boasts 15,000 square feet of state-of-the-art meeting space, in addition to beautiful conference homes for small, elegant meetings. The entire facility is also the perfect venue for banquets, weddings and theme parties.

Eagle Ridge offers three distinctive restaurants that include award-winning Woodlands Restaurant, along with Spikes Bar & Grill and Paisanos. Other amenities include the tranquil Stonedrift Spa, providing ten treatment rooms for a complete sensory experience, and a state-of-the-art fitness center with a beautiful indoor/outdoor pool, sauna and steam room.

The resort lays claim to numerous industry awards and recognition:

- In 2010, ***Golf Magazine*** listed The General as the #4 "Best in Illinois" course to play alongside the "Top 100 Courses You Can Play" ranking.
- In 2000, 2008 and 2010, ***Golf Magazine*** listed The General among the "Top 100 Courses You Can Play" in the magazine's ranking.
- For three straight years ***Golfweek*** named The General one of the best resort courses in the annual *Golfweek's Best Resort Courses* listing in 2009, 2010 and 2011.
- In 2009, ***Golf Digest*** named The General one of the best golf courses in the state of Illinois for *The World's Greatest Golf* rankings, 2009-2010. The General was named #24 in the state of Illinois. The rankings were put out as a supplement to the May 2009 issue of Golf Digest.
- In 2009, ***Golfweek*** named The General second in the state of Illinois for *Golfweek's Best Courses You Can Play* listing, published July 2009.
- In 2008 and in 2009, ***Successful Meetings*** honored Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa with the "Pinnacle Award" as voted by readers in the Hotels & Resorts category.
- In 2009, ***Zagat*** ranked Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa's The General, North and South courses in the 2009 America's Top Golf Courses, sixth edition as ranked and reviewed by players.

The property is the perfect backdrop to an incredible selection of outdoor activities including miles of biking, hiking and horseback riding trails, as well as tennis, hot air balloon rides, boating and fishing on the picturesque 220-acre Lake Galena. For reservations or additional information, call (800) 892-2269 or visit www.eagleridge.com.