

MINNESOTA'S GROUP TRAVEL MAGAZINE

# ITINERARIES

*Minnesota*<sup>®</sup>

fall 2006



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*Young Trumpeter Swan - Monticello, MN*

Big Bog  
Wildflowers and Birds

A New Nest for Our Bald Eagle  
in Wabasha, MN

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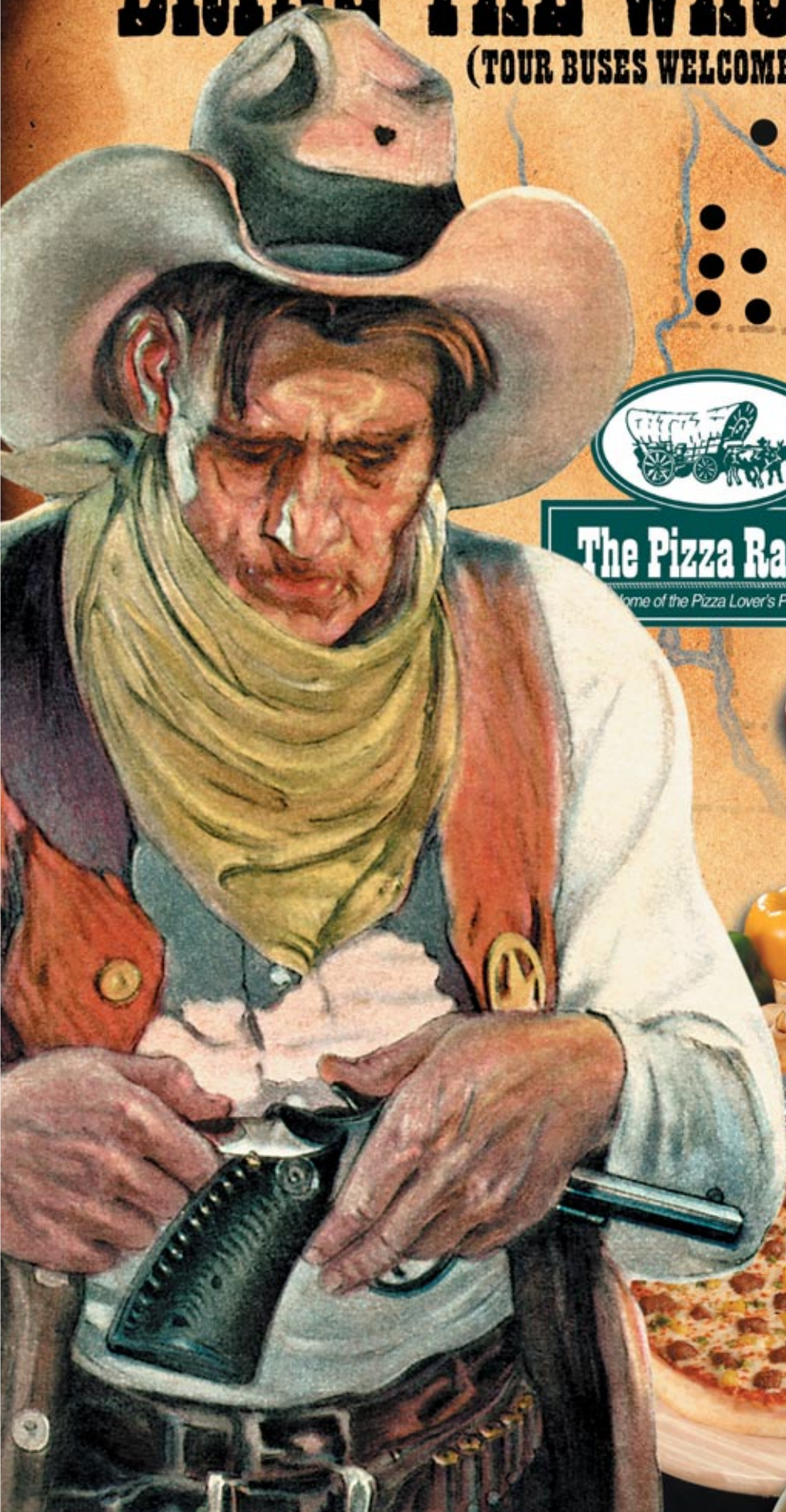
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## LETTER FROM the publishers

Dear Reader,

We believed a feature on birding and wildflowers could be quite fun because it would be about flirting with nature. Even better, this issue found nature flirting with us! It contains what probably is the most research-laden material we have compiled since our magazine began, along with some of the most awe-inspiring discoveries: 150,000 migrating geese in one location (every year!). Gardens filled with lady-slippers, wood violets, and the Wild Prairie Rose. For you, we also found thousands of hawks, owls, cranes, songbirds, waterfowl, trumpeter swans (up close) and our national symbol of freedom, the majestic American Bald Eagle. All over the region in the most surprising and accessible places.

Our specific aim was to find new and predictable ways for your tour groups to enjoy birding or wildflower stops during a heavily-scheduled travel itinerary. We discovered wondrous and group-friendly flora and fauna. In fact, in addition to the many delightful itineraries and destination botstops that follow, you'll find more than 70 birding opportunities on the introductory page for each region.

Please keep your radar up for our Great North Group Travel Show in Wisconsin this spring. There are quite a few surprises, including meeting with suppliers one-on-one, that will make this two-day Show and FAM worth every penny and every minute you invest. Visit our website frequently ([www.itinerariesminnesota.com](http://www.itinerariesminnesota.com)), and if you want to ask us about the Show and FAM in person, just call 1-877-832-7267.

Finally, please take the Reader Response Survey in this issue and fax it back to us. We are eager to learn from professionals like you, what you are discovering to be the upcoming trends in the travel trade industry, and what tours your groups are choosing most. You might even win a very special Gift Trip!

Take care, and see you down the road...

**Heather Labren and Mark Peterson**

Co-Publishers, ITINERARIES MINNESOTA Magazine



*Coming Winter/Spring 2007*

## Scenic Byways & Historic Highways...

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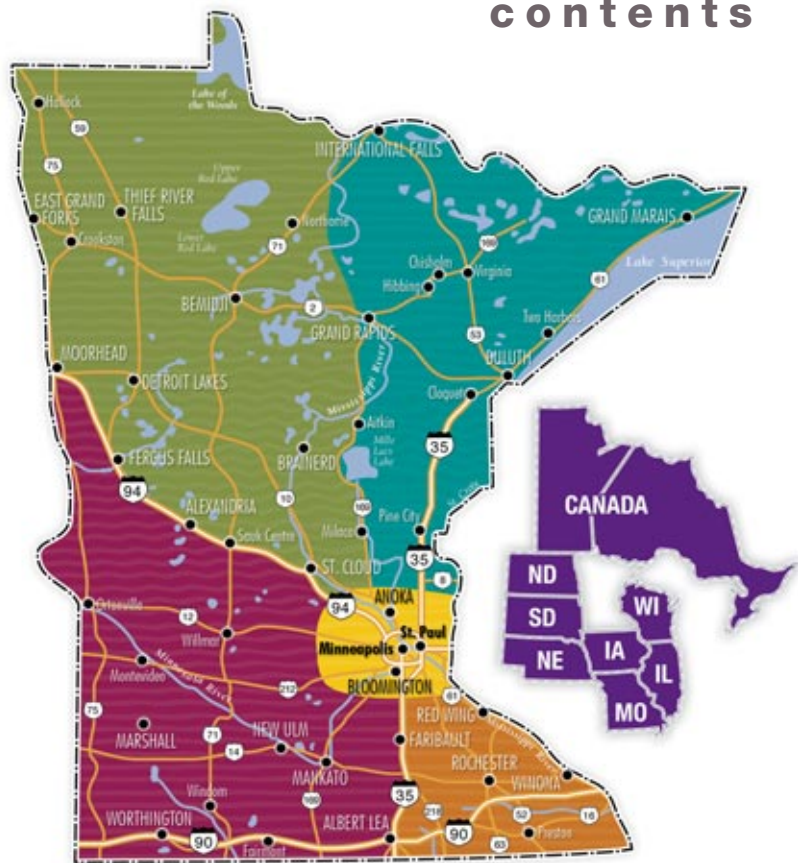
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### MAKING THIS MAGAZINE WORK FOR YOU:

ITINERARIES MINNESOTA Magazine is published specifically for group travel planners three times a year: Fall, Winter/Spring and Summer. It presents Minnesota topically, attempts to share the rich local flavor of Minnesota communities and is designed as a reference planning tool to assist you with your groups' travel plans. It also offers sample itineraries and destinations with unique and new ideas for your trips. These sample itineraries are suggestions, are not intended for sale, and presented in a format that can be customized according to your needs. Simply call your tour operator or the contact at the end of each itinerary to help customize your itinerary and plan your trip. We suggest that you also contact advertisers since they are specifically catering to your group business. Their presence in this magazine underscores the importance of your business for them.

❧

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### Feature Photo:

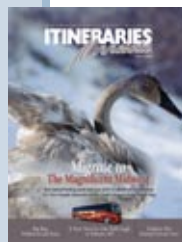
One of the many wintering Trumpeter Swans readies himself for the day in the warm Mississippi River waters below the power plant in Monticello. Photo was submitted by Jean Davids to the Annual Monticello Arts Council Photo Show during 2006. More images of Monticello swans can be viewed at: [www.MonticelloArts.org](http://www.MonticelloArts.org).

### Transportation:

Heartland Tours & Travel/Richfield Bus Company shows off a beautiful new motorcoach on the cover that they also displayed to tour planners at the 2006 Annual Showcase Group Travel Show in Fergus Falls, MN.

### photos provided by

Mark Peterson, Kathleen Somers, Albert Lea CVB, American Swedish Institute, Austin CVB, Bachman's Floral/Garden Center, Big Bog Eco-Tours, Big Stone Lake Area Chamber, Birding Drives Dakota, Bloomington CVB, Bryce Anderson, Debra Chial Photography, Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber of Commerce, Doug Easthouse, Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden & Bird Sanctuary, Explore Minnesota Tourism, Grotto of Redemption, Fergus Falls CVB, Guthrie Theater, Hinckley CVB, Hok-Ski-La Park, Horicon Marsh Bird Festival, Houston Nature Center, International Crane Foundation, Lanesboro Area Chamber, Lac Qui Parle Wildlife Management Area, Lake of the Woods Tourism Bureau, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Monticello Chamber, National Eagle Center, Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce, Padelford Packet Boat Company, Paul Stafford, Plymouth Playhouse, Prairie Waters Tourism, Saint Paul RiverCentre, Shakopee CVB, St. Cloud CVB, Treasure Island Resort & Casino, Whitewater State Park, Willmar Lakes Area, Winona CVB





# The *Big Bog* State Recreation Area

## Minnesota's Last True Wilderness, Untamed, and Inaccessible...until now

BY JERRY STENSING



Pitcher plants wait for their next meal of insects on top of a sphagnum moss hummock.



The mile-long boardwalk is five feet wide with benches every 300 yards.



Northern Minnesota has the largest patch of patterned peatland (say that fast 5 times) in the lower 48 states - over 500 square miles! For over thirty years, resource professionals, tourism officials, and local citizens have been preparing a special walkway into the environmentally unique **Red Lake Peatlands**, affectionately known to locals as **Big Bog.** As of 2006 groups can now stroll the mile-long, raised-trail **Big Bog Boardwalk**, allowing access for people to see and learn about this impressive ecosystem. Having taken 3 years to construct, the boardwalk was designed to assure protection of the bog while allowing up-close and personal learning encounters. Visitors will find 20 interpretative stations each telling the stories behind Big Bog's unique landforms and its residents, including a wide variety of plants, birds and animals (including caribou), plus early efforts to develop it. The entire boardwalk is handicapped accessible, with benches about every 300 yards for resting or wonderful contemplation of the miracles of life in this untamed garden of nature.

### Methane moves this world.

An open plastic grate decking was chosen as the walking surface of this easily-hiked boardwalk. The open grate design allows 65% light penetration to help keep the bog alive – and active - underneath. Long pipes with helical anchors were used to anchor the boardwalk in the sand substrate below the peat layer of the bog, sometimes reaching down 16 feet deep to ensure the stability of the boardwalk. Why, you ask? In this peatland, researchers have documented up to 10-inch vertical changes in the bog's surface. When methane gas builds up in the peat, it raises the bog's surface. When the gas is expelled, the bog can fall six to ten inches, sometimes quite rapidly. A floating boardwalk would not have been a good choice.

### Nature and History Signs

The stories of the Big Bog unfold for visitors as they walk the boardwalk.

Along with the fascinating plant and animal life, the human history is presented as well, such as the 1930's caribou reintroduction efforts (wild caribou trails trod more than 80 years ago are still visible.) One interpretive sign includes thermometers to show visitors how little the bog temperature fluctuates compared to the air temperature.

Board-walking birders have reported frequent northern hawk-owl sightings, among many others. Wildflower lovers tell of rose pogonia orchids, blooming bog rosemary and bog laurel, cotton grass, labrador tea, and the very specialized insect-eating pitcher plants and round-leaved sundews.

### Park Facilities

Bring bag lunches and enjoy the picnic shelter (restrooms are available), all near the parking area. Drop lines into the nearby fishing pond, and try out the other hiking loops too. Nine miles south of the Big Bog Boardwalk, at the lower unit of the recreation area, is a campground along the beautiful **Tamarac River** where it flows into **Upper Red Lake**. Camper cabins are available, along with boat launches, a picnic area, and nature trails, and the walleye fishing on Upper Red Lake is phenomenal.

A trip to experience the Big Bog Boardwalk has become a very exciting destination for many people this first year. At the boardwalk's end, ponder the vast bog and consider how immigrants wrestled to harness this untamable landscape. And then left, leaving a sweet wilderness for northern wildflowers, birds and animals – and your groups – to enjoy. 🌿

Free bus parking, tour guide available, very accessible. For more information about including **Big Bog** in your itinerary, contact your tour operator, or call Jerry Stensing at 218-647-8858.



### Great River Birding Festival

May 11-13, 2007 | Lake City to Winona | 800-369-4123  
Celebrate spring at the Great River Birding and Nature Festival on the Mississippi bird flyway along the beautiful Mississippi Great River Road in Southeast MN. Guided boat tours along shoreline and backwaters, and by mini-rail over land to visit many varieties of feathered friends – including our American Bald Eagles - up and down both sides of the river. Enjoy day and night birding by eye and ear, nature storytelling, silent auctions and even a scavenger hunt.



### Wild Encounters - The McGregor Area Birding + Nature Festival

June 8-10, 2007 | McGregor, MN

What makes a birding festival? In McGregor it's birds, butterflies, wildflowers and a whole lot more! After checking out the popular Yellow Rail birds and orchids, enjoy wine & cheese tasting along with nature programs that are designed to entertain and educate. The wines are from the local Minnestalgia Winery, and Gouda, Blue, Gorgonzola cheeses are made available from local Minnesota Dairies. All this adds up to outstanding birding and nature events, programs that complement the festival and provide attendees with excellent adventure and culinary delights!



### Horicon Marsh Bird Festival

May 2007 | Horicon National Wildlife Refuge  
Horicon, WI | 920-387-2658

It's May, and the very peak of spring bird migration. Designated by the American Bird Conservancy as a Globally Important Bird Area (more than 268 species), Horicon Marsh is host to a unique birding festival that offers tours, tours and more tours. Enjoy First Light Birding Bus Tours, Habitat Birding Boat Tours, Hot Spot Birding Bus Tours, Night Sounds Bus Tours, Pontoon Boat Tours, and related birding workshops. See how birds are banded, and learn about the sounds of night, shorebird ecology, and even discover what it takes to work with birds of prey such as owls, kestrels, hawks and many more. Experience many activities about the rich bird life of the Horicon Marsh in eastern Wisconsin near Madison.



### 5th Annual Pottholes + Prairie Birding Festival

June 7-10, 2007 | Carrington, ND | 1-888-921-2473

Celebrate birding on a prairie, wild with wetlands and wavy, open meadows with more than 320 bird species that include waterfowl, shorebirds, and blackbirds. The area also hosts a dazzling array of breeding sparrows, Ferruginous Hawk, Gray Partridge, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Piping Plover, Sprague's Pipit, Baird's Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, and Chestnut-collared Longspur. Here is your chance to go to some of the world's most remote birding hotspots. Join your peers and be ready for guided tours, hands-on workshops, wonderful people, distinctive culture and wild country.



# Count Down to *Take Off* for the **NEW National Eagle Center**

BY KATHLEEN SOMERS



The nation's symbol for democracy, honor, respect and dignity is naturally the American Bald Eagle. In 2007, a makeshift storefront that has humbly represented this great raptor will spread its wings and soar over the mighty Mississippi with the unveiling of the new **National Eagle Center**.

In mid-2007, its move to the new 15,000-square-foot building will be complete.

The innovative and functional new building is closer to the river, and will offer more opportunities for “nose to beak” encounters, and panoramic views of the river and the raptors that still soar. New educational offerings will include two meeting rooms, more programs and plans to house an eagle care area, plus 4,000 square feet for exhibits and a big gift shop to help the cause. In the words of Finance Director James Lungren, “The new facility will retain the flexibility with the small groups to meet their individual needs, while also being able to handle larger groups than the current temporary Center.”

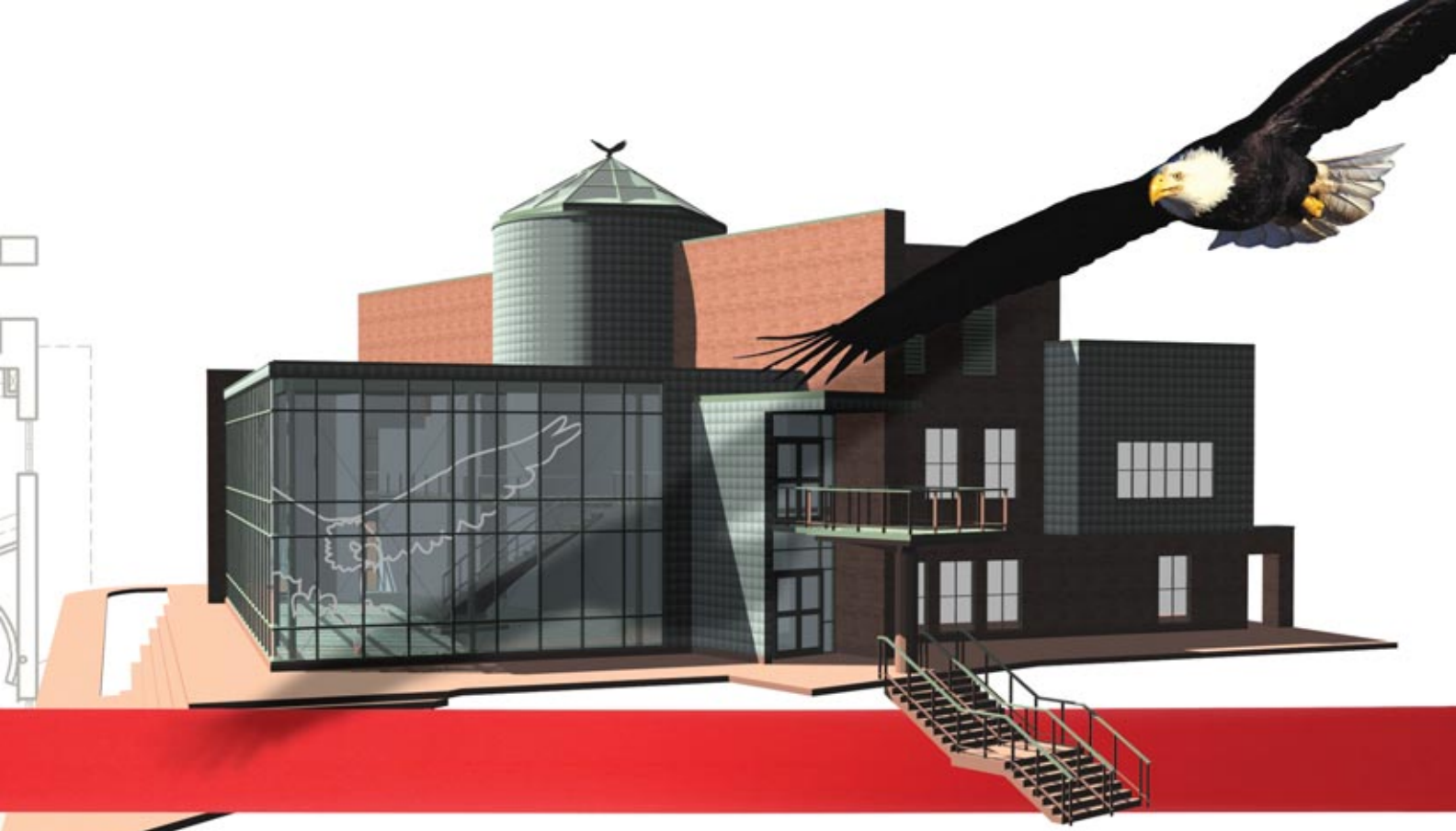
As the eagle population continues to increase since its near extinction in the 1960's, most can say they've witnessed our majestic national bird firsthand. But for an up close and personal experience, come to Wabasha where the Chippewa and Mississippi Rivers converge, and visit the National Eagle Center.

The National Eagle Center was born of a need to preserve eagles. A combination of the area's wooded bluffs and the river waterways attract an astonishing array of birds and wildlife. Since the strong river currents prevent freezing, it makes fish plentiful all winter, which is the eagle's mainstay diet. This natural haven is midway in the bald eagle's

migratory route from northern Canada to the central United States. It seems natural to put an eagle center right where the eagles are. It also is every bit as natural that the center would focus on these four interrelated themes: **Eagles, River, Flyway and Human connection**. And you'll learn just how programs in each area interact when you visit. In fact, it's hard to talk about one aspect without including another. “What makes the NEC truly unique is that the visitors get to see them without anything impeding their view: No glass, no bars, just eagles, education and enjoyment,” says programs director Mary Beth Garrigan.

Along with educational programs focusing on river environment, the Center offers interpretive exhibits, an eagle's nest lookout deck, plus a gift and souvenir shop. But the real stars are the actual eagles. The Center's aviary is home to three Bald Eagles named **Angel, Harriet** and the latest addition **Columbia**, named in honor of the Space Shuttle crew. Each bird was rescued and all three are non-releasable due to permanently damaged wings. All medical work is done at the **U of M – Twin Cities Raptor Center**. Once the disabled birds are healthy, they head back to Wabasha where they're treated like stars for the rest of their lives.

The center enjoys a special relationship with our country's veterans, especially with **Harriet** regally posed on the new state veteran's license plate – acting as an ambassador to all the eagles we dedicated to the Veterans in 2000. The birds make personal appearances at memorial services, dedications and once-a-month visits to the VA hospital. All three birds are trained and accustomed to being around people.



The veterans love it and the eagles seem equally proud of our soldiers.

Groups rarely forget their camera knowing they can have their pictures taken with the magnificent eagles. Angel is a good one to pose with because she has such beautiful wings. She fell from the nest and was rescued with a broken wing. The raptor center was able to repair her wing but the muscle structure was too weak to support flight. She's been around people most of her life so she cooperates nicely for those photo opportunities.

Thanks to an ambitious group of eagle scouts, the Center has a wonderful lookout perch for viewing the soaring eagles. The deck is formed to look like an actual eagles nest and is 12 feet in diameter, which isn't far off from the real thing. Eagle nests start out about six to seven feet in diameter and just keep growing. Every year the same eagles return to the same nest to add another layer, and the nests can get quite large since the bird's lifespan is over twenty years.

Birds start migrating south in August and the NEC is the perfect place to enjoy the thrill of watching while the parade of different species move on through. Witness hundreds of pelicans at one time, or black-birds or warblers — all packing their bags and following the river south.

So why not make it a National Eagle Center getaway? Bring your group. Stay over night or stop by for lunch while you enjoy

all that historic Wabasha has to offer. The eagles eat at 1:00 PM, so make sure your camera battery is recharged! ❁

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## Welcome Waters: Sound Off with Minnesota's Swan Lady

BY KATHLEEN SOMERS

When Minnesotans vacation to warm climates in the winter, we appropriately call them “snow birds”. But what do you call birds who seek snow and winter in Minnesota? Answer: **Trumpeter Swans**. And you can see flocks numbering over a thousand, luxuriating at a special “spa” on the **Mississippi River** in **Monticello** all winter long. The birds are attracted by a combination of the open water (warmed by the Power Plant upstream) and the hospitality of a local who’s been feeding the swans for the past twenty years.

Sheila Lawrence, fondly dubbed the “Swan Lady,” started feeding the ducks and geese at a small riverside park near her home in **Monticello** when she noticed a pair of graceful swans — and decided they looked hungry, too. Over the past twenty years that original pair has turned into more than a thousand, and now the swans are so comfortable with her that she is the only one who can approach them without scaring them off. Sheila seems to have formed a bond with the beautiful birds. She knows much about each Trumpeter’s history and tells quirky stories about their personalities. She had her favorites right from the beginning. In fact, that’s how the swans seemingly arrive each year to take over Sheila’s life. But when she speaks, you know it’s a good thing.

The returning flock increases yearly and it’s estimated that this winter will bring 1,500 of the beautiful white birds. But as the number of returning swans increases, so does the labor and costs involved in feeding them. Thanks to other generous volunteers, Sheila now has reduced her workload by half with the use of an auger and gravity wagon. Still, this pretty and petite grandmother can be seen daily hauling thirty five pound buckets of corn, two at a time, between November and April. She puts it in large plastic tubs where the long-necked swans can feed without sharing with the ducks and geese. But the Swan Lady hasn’t forgotten her smaller feathered friends and reserves 150 pounds of feed for her smaller flying friends.

An amazing commitment for any one person, one might consider that when Sheila visits her mother in Wisconsin, she must always return to Monticello in time to feed the

**“As the flock grew my favorite birds ended up lower and lower in the pecking order. So I’d put out more corn to make sure they too would have enough to eat. Now I feed 1,200 pounds of corn a day when the whole group is here and adjust it down as they start leaving.”**

swans. If she asks, “Can you feed my birds while I’m away?” You may want to think twice before saying yes. But she knows any sacrifice is well worth it just to enjoy. “How entertaining and beautiful they are,” she’ll ponder.

The city maintains a small park on the river where visitors are welcome to view and photograph the swans. There is a walking path, information on Trumpeter Swans and a donation box in the park. But more importantly, there is a split rail fence behind which viewers are asked to remain, since Trumpeters are shy and wary of unfamiliar people — especially when Sheila is not around. For directions to **Swan Park**, contact the **Monticello Chamber of Commerce** or visit [www.discovermonticello.com](http://www.discovermonticello.com). 🌿



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# Zip-a-dee

**Put Mr. Bluebird on your shoulder and witness the wonders of wildflowers right under your beak.**

**BY SHAWN SWEENEY**

My, oh my! Many of us are in awe when we see a Cardinal, a Blue Jay or a Yellow-Breasted Which-a-ma-jigger in the backyard. Even the domesticated potted-geranium is applauded.

But people are getting out of the house. Leaving the milkman a note. Taking Scruffy to doggy daycare and giving their backyard buddies enough seed to get by until they get back from their last memorable trip. And that's if the squirrels don't beat the birdfeeder system first.

They're leaving Kansas (sorry, Kansas readers) to see the upper Midwest and to visit the relatives of those backyard birds and the blooming wildflowers reminiscent of the *Wizard of Oz* or *Gone with the Wind*. After all, they don't have control over when the Marsh Marigolds, Bloodroot, Field Violets and Wild Strawberries bloom on the North Shore or when the Prairie Chickens boom in Crookston, Minnesota.

So you're thinking, "I'm going to fill a bus with a bunch of excited, cross-eyed, birdwatchers and flower children?" The answer is a resounding "yes". More specifically, they'll see their share of 835 fascinating bird species and an amazing full palette of flowering colors in our five-state area's big backyard, also known as the upper Midwest.

The USDA Forest Service reported that over 85 million people watched or photographed birds in 2004, making bird watching the fastest-growing form of outdoor recreation in the United States. So show your groups the incredible destinations you love with historic sites, great shopping, antiques and incredible natural surroundings. And show them the

fascinating world of birding along the way.

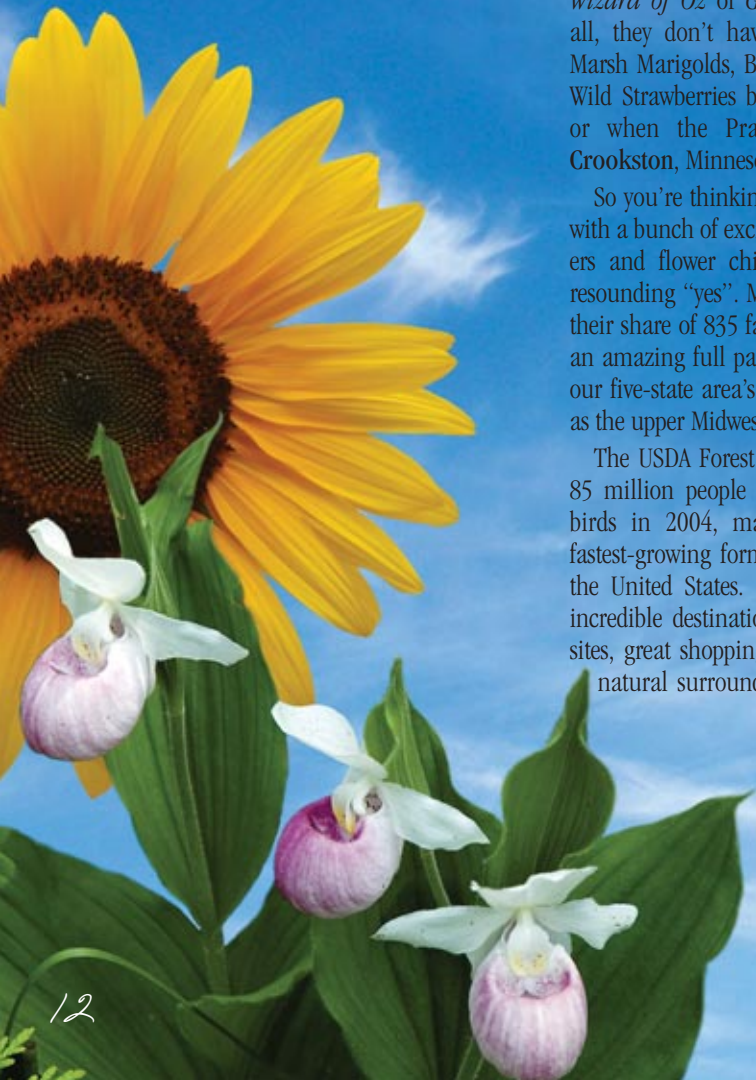
**Meet our accomplished birding Post-It® Child.**

Richard Hartman is a native of Minneapolis and a retiree of the 3M Corporation with a Doctorate in Chemistry. More importantly, Richard has been an avid birder for the past 50 years. And he has a knack for finding the right places. "I'm not a professional birder, per say, but I've witnessed 2,500 species worldwide over the past 35 years with over 600 in the U.S., Canada and Alaska, including the rare Berylline Hummingbird in southeastern Arizona, and the unbelievable White-tailed Eagle I just witnessed this year in Scotland. The trip was not just for birding, it was to see the incredible European countryside," Hartman said.

What about the upper Midwest's best birding? "There are so many wonderful places to see fascinating species. But my favorites are St. Louis County (Duluth) and the North Shore", Hartman continued. "Old Cedar Avenue Bridge in Bloomington and Maplewood Nature Center in (naturally) Maplewood. On a particular trip to the McGregor Marshes, I was lucky enough to get a great look at the rare Yellow Rail. For the real seekers, I'd advise getting a copy of Kim Eckert's book, *A Birder's Guide to Minnesota, 4th Edition*". For the novice, A.K.A "birdy newbie," we suggest you call the CVB in the area you're headed for and pick up their very local, and handy birder's guides.

**Root for the hometown bird.**

Every upper Midwest state boasts its own special winged friend. Look for Minnesota's





# doo-dah

own Common Loon between its patented dives while on boating cruises throughout the state. On Lake Itasca, your group can take a guided tour of the Headwaters of the Mississippi while they watch waterfowl, and the soaring eagles watch you. Other stunning beauties include the Western Meadowlark (ND & NE); the Ring-Necked Pheasant (SD); the Eastern Goldfinch (IA); and the ever popular, angle-worm-munching American Robin (WI).

### Know your seasons:

#### The birds don't wait for the bus.

Sorry, but birds don't care about the group tour business. They have their own flocks to worry about. But having birds waiting for your group when they arrive is important to every tour operator. So when planning, consider the massive — and awe-inspiring — migrations of Sandhill Cranes (Platte River, NE), hawks (Duluth, MN), Canadian Geese and waterfowl (Lac Qui Parle State Park, Madison, MN), and the wintering Trumpeter Swans that stay the entire winter season in Monticello, MN.

In southeastern Minnesota, The Mississippi Great River Road has been listed among “the top most beautiful drives in the country,” (source: Mississippi-river.org) and the Great River Birding Festival tops this notion off when visitors experience the return of numerous bird species each May via land, water and even mini-railcars through wetlands. “People flock to Wabasha each spring to learn about our area and all the incredible bird migration and wildlife. Our community is thrilled with the anticipated opening of our new national eagle center on the river,” said Wabasha tourism

director and spokesperson, Cindy Gosse. Bird migrations and festivals are quite predictable, and most of the time can easily complement a busy itinerary.

#### Don't forget to look down!

Ah, the magnificent, unpretentious and often overlooked Midwestern wildflowers. Not unlike birding, the wildflowers wait for no one. They bloom when the time is right and often are covered with a blanket of white before we know it, along with our driveways, cars and slippery highways. This issue of Itineraries Minnesota has plenty of beautiful places to catch a glimpse of nature's picturesque, fragile, and sometimes rare flowers. You may not be lucky enough to witness the elusive — though not nearly as nimble as a bird — Minnesota state flower, the Showy Lady's Slipper (also known as the Queen's Lady Slipper) that was adopted by the 1893 legislature, but never even grew indigenously in Minnesota. Other state flowers each carry their own tender magnificence: the Wild Prairie Rose (both ND & IA) sports five bright pink petals with a tight cluster of yellow stamens in the center, growing along roadsides and in native meadows. The small, lavender Pasque (SD) is also called the May Day flower, growing wild throughout the state, and its blooming is one of the first signs of spring. The Goldenrod (NE) is a 2-3 foot tall yellow-flowered perennial herb found in pastureland and ditches throughout the state. The spring-blooming purple Wood Violet (WI) was originally selected by Wisconsin's school children, and is found in wet woodlands, meadow areas and along roadsides. Would you

believe the Wood Violet's leaves are very tasty and can be used in salads, candies or jellies? Okay, you try it first.

#### Picture this: Gadgets and games make trips memorable.

Before you decide to move forward on your itinerary, here are some ideas that will help to entice your guests to step onto the bus:

**Digital Cameras** Nearly everyone, especially the guests who enjoy your tours, has a digital camera (and a tripod) these days. Many are fascinated by them, but maybe don't know how to use them correctly. A quick tutorial on the motorcoach about the functions most digital cameras (and zooming lenses) offer, can help your group have even more fun when they've found their birds and wildflowers.

**Bird and Flower I.D. Games** It may sound like a game for kids, but adults love games on paper as much as anyone. Learn what species of birds and wildflowers will be in season and in action, and give your groups contest sheets to see who identifies the most species of birds or wildflower plant names. Then throw in a contest for the best digital photo to submit for inexpensive, nostalgic prizes.

You can arm yourself with a plethora of bird and wildflower references and information about your destination's native wildflowers and bloom dates, and the different fascinating bird species, habitats, nesting, breeding and feeding habits. In fact, you'll find them throughout this issue in the Itineraries, Hot Stops, Special Features sections and more. Tweet, Tweet! 🐦

*My, oh my, what a wonderful day!  
Plenty of sunshine heading my way...*



# Argyle Socks and Binoculars

A Five-Day Sample Itinerary for Group Tours



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- 1 - Park Rapids Chamber of Commerce**  
www.parkrapids.com . . . . . 800-247-0054
- 2 - Detroit Lakes Chamber**  
www.visitdetroitlakes.com . . . . . 800-542-3992
- 3 - Fergus Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
www.visitfergusfalls.com . . . . . 800-726-8959
- 4 - Big Stone Lake Area Chamber of Commerce**  
www.bigstonelake.com . . . . . 800-568-5722

your binoculars. You don't want to waste any time. More than 250 species of birds live in **Becker County!** Festival leaders can help you prepare a productive bird tour during your stay.

**9 – 4:00 pm**

Get into a unique “migration celebration”, with speakers, displays, and guided field trips. Grab your walking shoes and head out with birding-expert David Allen Sibley, keynote speaker for the evening. He'll also lead a morning birding field trip followed by an afternoon book signing. Sibley began seriously watching and drawing birds at the age of seven and has traveled all of North America watching birds, and is considered one of the tops in his field. Take in a simple picnic lunch at **Dunton Locks County Park** while you watch great blue herons fish for



their lunch. (They probably won't share, though!) Stay on for the book signing before heading back to your hotel.

**4 – 5:00 pm**

Freshen up for the evening's **Birding Festival** events.

**5:00 pm**

Join the group for a casual social hour with hearty hors d'oeuvres, where you can chat with field trip leaders as well as other festival-goers and birders. Maybe you can talk them into doing the chicken dance – just for fun!

## *any where*

### **Fergus Falls**

**9 – 12:00 pm**

After breakfast, join the group for a final field trip and a few last glimpses of this beautiful birding area and its feathery residents, before getting on your coach.

**12 – 1:00 pm**

Enjoy the view on your way to **Fergus Falls**, the southern most city on the **Pine-To-Prairie Birding Trail**. Centered within deciduous woodlands, tall grass prairies, and lakes, there are eleven significant birding sites within 20 miles of Fergus Falls.

**1 – 5:30 pm**

Once you have settled in at the **Best Western - The Falls Inn and Suites** in Fergus Falls, follow your guide out to feast your eyes on the multitude of birds in this area. Some highlight species are Henslow's Sparrow, Chestnut Collared Longspur, Blackpoll Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, and Black Backed Woodpecker.

**5:30 pm**

Return to the hotel and trade in your binoculars for an evening on the town!

**6:30 pm**

Enjoy the cozy atmosphere and delicious food created by



2,552-mile journey to the Gulf of Mexico. The world-famous park supports many wildlife species and the birding is excellent. With over 400 nesting pairs of Bald Eagles, eastern Bluebirds, Ruffed Grouse, Hawks, Kestrels, Flickers, Loons, Sandpipers, Scarlet Tanagers, Grosbeaks, Trumpeter Swans, Pelicans, Woodpeckers, Ducks, Egrets and hundreds of other species documented, birding is wonderful!

At the Park, and near the famed **Douglas Lodge**, board the **Chester Charles** for a professionally-narrated “on-the-water” tour of **Lake Itasca**. Hear about and see many of it's winged residents, and learn the fascinating history of the **Mississippi headwaters**. Then relax and enjoy a picnic lunch near the new **Jacob V. Brower Visitor Center**. After lunch, browse the interpretive displays and exhibits, visit the **Headwaters Gift Shop**, and get some tips on area birding from the experts.

**3 – 5:00 pm**

Board the bus for a 20-minute trip to **Park Rapids** and dinner at one of their many group-friendly restaurants!

**5 – 6:00 pm**

Travel west 40 miles to **Detroit Lakes** for the **10th Annual Festival of Birds**.

**7:00 pm**

After hotel check-in and dinner, get right into the **Birding Festival** tonight; the focus will be on wildflowers and dragonflies! You'll be inspired!

## *any where*

### **Detroit Lakes**

**8 – 9:00 am**

Enjoy a complimentary hot waffle breakfast and grab

## *any one*

### **Park Rapids**

**10:30 – 3:00 pm**

Begin your birding adventure at beautiful **Lake Itasca State Park**, where the **Mississippi River** begins its

the visiting chefs at **The Jazzy Fox Restaurant**. Then attend a musical performance at **A Center for the Arts**.

### DAY FOUR

10 – 4:00 pm

Your group will head over to the **Prairie Wetlands Learning Center**, on 325 acres just outside Fergus Falls. Over 180 species of birds have been identified at the Center, as well as a wide variety of native prairie grasses and wildflowers.

Follow your guide on a prairie bird walk. With guides specializing in environmental education programs, they are sure to have interesting stories. What type of soil does the beautiful Lupine wildflower grow best in? How should



you landscape your backyard to attract birds? What exactly is a wetland? Find out why groups have heard horned larks, but can't ever see them. In the late autumn, learn about the array of beautiful colors in the ice on the small wetlands. The liquid water is heavier, so it falls down, and stirs the mineral-filled soil up, causing the different colors.

The Visitor Center houses a 2500 square foot exhibit area, the **Bluestem Store**, classrooms, a meeting room, and a dining area. It's a great place to arrange for a refreshment time as you hear stories about the natural prairies, their wildflowers and birding in this ELC.

4 – 5:00pm

Return to your hotel and relax before dinner on your own. Afterwards then head for bed, because tomorrow will be an early start.

### DAY FIVE

Ortonville

5:00 am

The motorcoach rolls out as the dawn breaks, enjoy the ride 100 miles south to **Big Stone County**.

7:30 – 11:00 am

On the way, stop at **Marsh Lake** (by **Appleton**) and see one of the only two nesting colonies of white pelican in Minnesota.

Arrive at the **Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge** and **Lac**



**qui Parle Wildlife Management Area**. (Big Stone and Lac Qui Parle counties in SW Minnesota.) Both refuges boast of many lakes, pools, meadows, fields, woods and marshes. Discover a huge variety of colorful and lively water, prairie, and woodland birds. Usually these areas are best visited during migration periods or early summer. Watch also for Cattle Egret, Swainson's Hawk, Marbled Godwit, Sedge Wrens, Western Vagrants, & even Bobolinks. Many song birds and waterfowl use the Lac Qui Parle Wildlife Management Area for nesting (including bald eagles) and as a migratory stopover. Lac qui Parle Wildlife Management Area is a stopover for fall migrating Canada geese. Flocks of up to 100,000 can be seen during peak migration every October.

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Check into one of the area resorts for a lakeside pause.

1 – 3:00 pm

Learn about life of the settlers at the pre-territorial Lac qui Parle mission sites just northwest of **Montevideo**. See a mission and fur post as they stood overlooking the **Minnesota River** 150 years ago and as the mission stands today. Joseph Renville, an explorer and fur trader whose mother was Dakota and father was French, established a fur post there in 1826 on what was known as Lac qui Parle.

3 – 5:00 pm

**Salt Lake Wildlife Management Area** near **Marietta** is a haven for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. **Salt Lake**, a 312-acre body of shallow water has two claims to fame: It is the only salt lake in Minnesota; and it attracts an amazing variety of birds. This makes for fascinating and remarkable bird-watching, and is considered one of the state's top birding spots with more than 150 bird species

documented (including tundra swans and snow geese). Why salt? It has no inlet or outlet to flush out alkaline



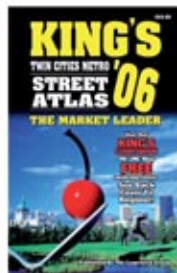
minerals, as water evaporates salt remains and builds up. It is about one-third as salty as seawater. As a result, in spring, shorebirds and waterfowl flock there every spring to feast on sago pondweed and brine shrimp.

5 – 7:00 pm

Dinner in Montevideo and then head back to your resort for your evening sunset by **Big Stone Lake**.

**Thank you for bringing your groups to our region. This sample itinerary contains just a few of the many ideas you can use to customize a tour for your own groups. For more information and assistance, contact your tour operator, our advertisers or local CVB's throughout the region. If you a group leader looking for a tour operator, contact Heartland Tours for customized assistance at 651-777-7170.**

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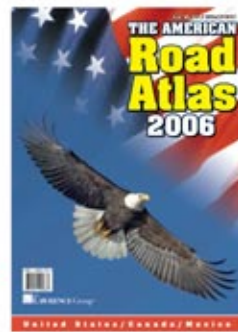
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WELCH  
WINONA

SE REGION CITIES



Alice, Houston Nature Center - Houston, MN

## calendar of events

### december

- 1-2 **Christmas in the Village**, Owatonna 507-451-1420
- 1-3 **Christmas in Christ Chapel**, Saint Peter 507-933-7520
- 2 **Holiday Lighted Parade**, Winona 507-452-2618
- 2-3 **Bluff and Valley Hot Air Ballon Rally**, Caledonia 507-725-3450
- 7 **Winter Walk**, Northfield 800-658-2548
- 16-17 **Nutcracker Ballet**, Red Wing 651-388-2380

### january

- 15 **"Late Night Catechism 2,"** Winona 507-457-1715
- 25-27 **Frozen River Film Festival**, Winona 507-459-8090
- 26-28 **Scrapbooking and Stamping Weekend Retreat**, Austin 507-437-4563

### february

- Wknds - March **Eagle Spot Weekends**, Red Wing 800-498-3444
- 2-4 **Winter Weekend**, Lanesboro 800-944-2670
- 8 **Gaelic Storm**, Rochester 507-285-8076
- 23-25 **Ibsen Festival**, Lanesboro 800-944-2670
- 23-24 **Grumpy Old Men Festival**, Wabasha 651-565-4158
- 25 **Guys On Ice**, Red Wing 651-388-2380

### march

- 2-4 **Festival of Owls**, Houston 507-896-4668
- 9-7 **Home, Garden and Vacation Show**, Wabasha 651-565-4158
- 9-11 **Soar with the Eagles 2007**, Wabasha 651-565-4989

Contact the CVB's for a more complete calendar.

[escortnotes.com](http://escortnotes.com)

## Houston Nature Center

The **Houston Nature Center** functions both as a nature center and as the trailhead facility for the **Root River Trail** in **Houston**. Enjoy our hands-on nature displays, walk through the prairie, take in a Saturday evening program during the summer, or enjoy our recycled bike art! But the star of the Center is **Alice**, the **Great Horned Owl**. Alice is in all likelihood the most pampered Great Horned Owl on the planet. What other owl commutes to work, eats their favorite food every day, has free run of an entire house, and rides to work perched on the backseat of a car? She fell out of her nest in Antigo, WI in 1997 when she was only 3 weeks old and permanently injured her left wing. She now works as an ambassador for owls at the Houston Nature Center.

## other birding & wildflower stops in southeast minnesota

### Avian Acres' Wild Bird Supply Lanesboro

Stop into this store for ideal birding supplies including specially mixed feeds, binoculars, field guides, gifts, and more.

### Boyd Sartell Wildlife Management Area Fairbault

This wooded area attracts blue-winged teal, hooded mergansers, comical ruddy ducks, Virginia rails, grebes, and red-winged blackbirds and many more.

### Colvill Park Red Wing

The bank of the Mississippi makes this a great place to watch wintering bald eagles, migrating ducks, mergansers, and goldeneyes.

### J.C. Hormel Nature Center Austin

This nature center has hands-on exhibits, and features a mile of paved trails into the nature preserve for those in wheelchairs, walkers, crutches and strollers.

### National Eagle Center Wabasha

Here visitors not only get to watch eagles, but have a chance to see the resident eagles up close and personal.

### Read's Landing Read's Landing

One of the best places to watch bald eagles in the Midwest, congregating over the open water to feed on fish and waterfowl. Also see wintering rough-legged and red-tailed hawks.

### Rice Lake State Park Owatonna

Wildflowers are in full bloom in the springtime when the marshland attracts flocks of birds to observe.

### River Bend Nature Center Faribault

Featuring 700 acres of wildlife and 10 miles of trails for guests to get close to the numerous different species of ducks, herons, swans, and seasonal migrating birds.

### Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge Winona

The enormous refuge holds a huge portion of the continent's waterfowl including swans, eagles, ducks, and herons.

### Walnut Lake Wildlife Management Center Wells

Features two lakes that are a habitat to larger majestic birds such as blue herons, red-tailed hawks, pheasants, and woods ducks.



*Ohhh watonna. Birding is just the beginning.*

This itinerary works best in the Spring. You'll find Owatonna(J-18), Faribault(J-17) & Northfield(J-17) on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.



Rice Lake State Park - Owatonna

**DAY ONE**

**10 – 11:30 am**

Begin at **Rice Lake State Park**, seven miles east of **Owatonna**. Enjoy the spring wildflowers and birds. The shallow waters and marshy edges of the lake attract many waterfowl during migrations, making for prime bird watching.

**11:30 – 1:00 pm**

Have a picture-perfect picnic lunch before traveling North on I-35 to **Faribault**.

**1 – 2:00 pm**

Tour the **Rice County Museum** and learn about the

history of the county. This exhibit highlights interesting tidbits of information and leaves visitors enlightened about the area.

**2 – 3:30 pm**

Next, tour the **Alexander Faribault house**, one of the first framed houses ever built in Faribault, which adds a little extra education & history to your trip.

**3:30 – 5:00 pm**

Hop back on I-35 to **Northfield**. Check into one of Northfield's cozy hotels and freshen up for dinner.

**5 – 6:30 pm**

Have a casual dinner at **Georges Vineyard**, voted "Best Pizza" in Southern Minnesota's Applauze Magazine. Now that's Italian! So to speak.

**6:30 – 9:00 pm**

Enjoy a theatrical performance at one of the many theaters Northfield has to offer. Such as **Northfield Arts Guide Theater, St. Olaf College's Kelsey Theater & Haugen Theater** or the **Carleton College Theaters**.

**DAY TWO**

**9 – 10:00 am**

Begin your morning with a hearty breakfast to fuel your day.

**10 – 11:30 am**

**Maltby Family Nature Preserve** is a haven for birds and

other wildlife. The preserve is a 36-acre wildlife sanctuary and nature area, located on the **Cannon River**.

**11:30 – 12:30 pm**

Stroll along the **Riverwalk of the Cannon River** for an incredible view of the river and falls. It will leave you in awe of the beauty and tranquility of this peaceful town.

**12:30 – 1:30 pm**

Relax for lunch at an area restaurant.

**1:30 – 2:30 pm**

See one of the 10 highest-quality gardens outside of Japan — the **Japanese Garden** located at **Carleton College**. Tour a garden of lichen-covered rocks that are real life canvases of beauty.

*Three communities have come together to work with your tour groups. This is a great opportunity to develop a customized two-or-three-day itinerary based on the heritage and history interests of your group. Contact your tour operator or any of our local Chamber of Commerce for your next tour.*

**Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism**  
**Deb Kotek - 800-423-6466, [www.owatonna.org](http://www.owatonna.org)**

**Faribault Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism**  
**Todd Ginter - 800-658-2354, [www.faribaultmn.org](http://www.faribaultmn.org)**

**Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce**  
**Kathy Felbrugge - 800-658-2548, [www.visitingnorthfield.com](http://www.visitingnorthfield.com)**



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Owatonna Area Chamber/Tourism  
 800-423-6466 | [Owatonna.org](http://Owatonna.org)



Wildlife you can witness. Beauty that abounds.

This itinerary works best in the fall or spring. You'll find it on coordinates N-18 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

DAY ONE

9:15 - 9:45 am

Stop at Bird Song Inc., a premiere store for birders where you can bird watch while you browse.

10 - 4:00 pm

Every November, Winona organizes a Tundra Swan Bus that travels to two swan hot spots on the Upper Mississippi River Refuge. On-board guides provide valuable information about wildlife in the area as you travel. Box lunch is included in the cost. Advance reservations necessary.

4:15 - 5:30 pm

Check into the Quality Inn of Winona, rest & freshen up.

5:45 - 7:00 pm

Dinner at a myriad of restaurant choices. Select from fine dining with scenic views, to family-style or more casual restaurants.

7:15 pm

Take in a play or concert at Saint Mary's University, Winona State University or the Historic Masonic

Temple Theatre sponsored by Theatre du Mississippi.

DAY TWO

9 - 10:00 am

Winona State University offers a Garden & Monument tour. The landscaping offers great beauty and diversity in plantings.

10:15 - 11:45 am

Tour Winona's newest museum and gardens. The Minnesota Marine Art Museum opened July 2006 with the Burcher-Kierlin Collection; the Leo and Marilyn Smith Folk Art Collection; and the Henry Bosse photographs. More than 40,000 plants make up the enchanting gardens at the Museum featuring a prairie area and native plant species.

12 - 1:00 pm

Enjoy lunch at a downtown restaurant or have a catered lunch while enjoying a program at the Winona County Historical Museum.

1:15 - 4:00 pm

Take our popular city tour that includes stops at the Winona County Historical Museum, Watkins Museum, Polish Museum, Garvin Heights Overlook (good for viewing fall hawk migration), and Lake Park with the Rose Gardens, Bandshell, and Veterans Memorial

Park. Lake Winona is a popular destination with plenty of good bird habitat and interesting birds. During fall migration, discover diving ducks like scaup, goldeneye and bufflehead.



For more information or to customize this sample itinerary for your group, contact your tour operator or Heidi Eldridge, Visit Winona, 507-452-0735.

WATCH THE CAST OR MAKE YOUR OWN.



Winona, Minnesota HISTORIC ISLAND CITY

FOR FIVE WEEKS THIS SUMMER, SEASON 3 OF THE GREAT RIVER SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL WILL ELECTRIFY AUDIENCES WITH ITS NATIONALLY RE- NOWNED CAST. MEANWHILE, WINONA'S LAKES AND BACKWATERS OFFER DRAMA OF AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SORT. OTHER 2006 HIGHLIGHTS IN- CLUDE, HUCK FINN DAYS, THE BLUFF COUNTRY STUDIO ART TOUR, AND THE OPENING OF THE MINNESOTA MARINE ART MUSEUM. FOR A FREE VISI- TOR GUIDE, CALL 1-800-657-4972 OR LOG ONTO WWW.VISITWINONA.COM.





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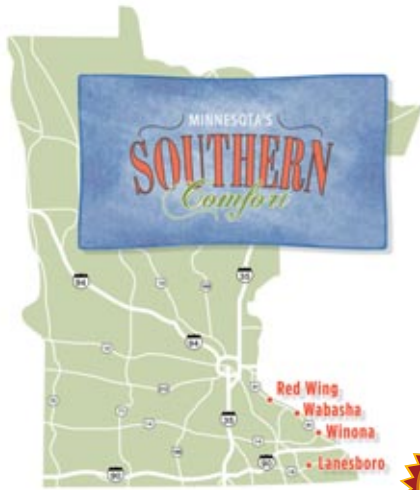
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Maximum 50 attendees.

Contact the Lanesboro Area Chamber for details and registration:  
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800-944-2670 • lacc@lanesboro.com

*Wabasha: The quintessential river town that spreads its wings.*

This itinerary works in the Spring or can be customized for anytime in the year. You'll find it at coordinates M-17 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### DAY ONE

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

After a welcome from our Wabasha Ambassador, enjoy lunch at Beach Park nestled on the west end of town and located directly on the Mississippi River. The Eagle's Nest Coffee House offers a fine selection of gourmet sandwiches, and think-outside-the-box lunches by order.

12:30 – 1:30 pm

Enjoy a tour of Wabasha with insight from our Wabasha Ambassador.

1:30 – 2:30 pm

Take in the majesty of our national symbol, the Bald Eagle, with a visit to the National Eagle Center. Learn about this and other great raptors through educational displays, and meet the three resident Bald Eagles, Angel, Harriet and Columbia for great photo opportunities.

2:30 – 4:00 pm

Arrowhead Bluffs Museum & Hunting Consultants will be happy to show you their display of mounted North American wildlife, Native American and pioneer artifacts.

4 – 6:00 pm

Check into the award-winning AmericInn of Wabasha. Enjoy a hot cup of coffee and a fresh cookie while you relax in their lobby.

6 – 8:30 pm

Dinner will be served at the oldest inn in Minnesota – The Historic Anderson House, with its elegant and comforting Victorian décor, reminiscent of Minnesota's fabled past.

8:30 pm

The remainder of the evening is yours.

### DAY TWO

8 – 9:00 am

Continental breakfast, check out. Head out for the short journey to Kellogg.

9 – 10:00 am

First stop will be the Bouquet Factory Outlet store. This gift manufacturer has an ever-changing array of decorative items. Sample their popular and mouthwatering Annie B caramels.

10 – 11:00 am

SVJ Creative Designs of Kellogg, a family-owned business, offers quality statuary, ironworks, and uniquely handcrafted designed outdoor products to beautify the yard, home or business. Tour the gardens and see the handcraft demonstrations on-site by appointment.

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

The L.A.R.K. Toy Company is the largest specialty toy store in the U.S. See and ride the spectacular hand-carved carousel with 19 colorful and fantastic animals. Visit the numerous shops for toys, children's books, candy and more. Lunch is on your own at L.A.R.K.'s own food court.

For more information or to customize this sample itinerary for your group, contact your tour operator or the Wabasha-Kellogg CVB, 800-565-4158.

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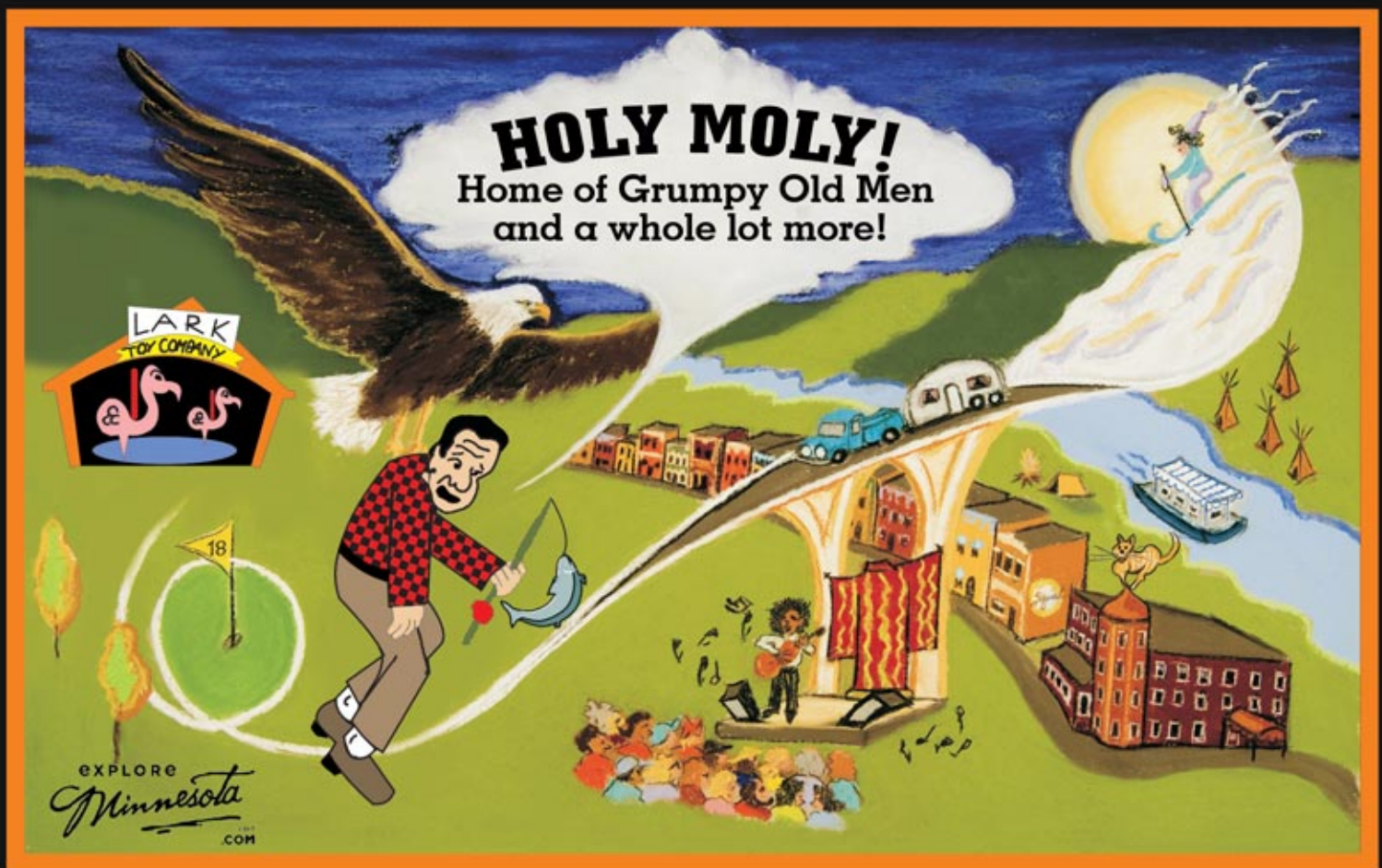


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**www.wabashamn.org**





Wonderful Wildflowers, the best birding and rib-sticking BBQ, of course.

This sample itinerary is best in the fall. You'll find it at coordinates J-19 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

DAY ONE

10 - 11:15 am

Your group begins the tour day at Greibrok's Mini History Farm and County Fair — a must see attraction. Greibrok's highlights an extensive collection of more than 700 model tractors, trucks, cars, farm machinery and other toys assembled in various theme settings throughout the unusual and beautiful 39-room farm home. Groups love this stop!

11:15 - 11:30 am

On the 10-minute trek back to Austin, your guide will enlighten you on the interesting history of Austin.

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Get your oink on! Dine at multiple award-winning Piggy Blue's Bar-B-Que for some fantastic rib-sticking barbecue. The fun and casual restaurant houses many antiques and pictures on the walls, and plays jazz & blues

music in the background.

1 - 5:00 pm

The main event for the afternoon will be your visit to the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center, where birds and wildflowers abound. Take in over 500 acres of wildlife to enjoy including hardwood trees, restored prairie, ponds, pine forests and Dobbins Creek (not to be confused with Dawson's Creek) running through the property. The trees will be donned in their favorite fall colors with birding opportunities all around, in preparation for the annual Oak Savanna Birding Festival every year in May — unusually full of different bird species. Also, take a peak downward to see a vast number of late-blooming wildflowers this time of year.

5 - 6:30 pm

Check into the AmericInn or Austin Holiday Inn to relax and get settled.

6:30 - 8:00 pm

Enjoy fine dining at its best at the Old Mill Restaurant for a wonderful meal. You cannot go wrong ordering the Old Mill casserole, meatloaf or Windsor chop for a great harvest season feast. Trust us on this one.



Oak Savanna Birding Festival

8 - 9:30 pm

Return to your hotel and enjoy the Las Vegas style show tunes about everything SPAM ... with the SPAMETTES® singing quartet. You'll surely never forget them.

DAY TWO

9:00 am

Wake up refreshed, and enjoy breakfast before you depart Austin and hit the road.

For more information on this sample itinerary, contact your tour operator or the Austin CVB, 800-444-5713.

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Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau

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**ACCOMMODATIONS**

- AmericInn Lodge & Suites Faribault ..... 507-334-9464
- AmericInn Lodge & Suites of Caledonia Caledonia ..... 866-465-5026
- ▶ **AmericInn Lodge & Suites of Wabasha** ..... 651-565-5366  
 150 Commerce Drive - Wabasha, MN 55981 / americinnw@lakes.com / www.americinn.com  
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- AmericInn Motel & Suites Austin ..... 507-437-7337
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- ▶ **St. James Hotel** ..... 651-385-5541  
 406 Main Street - Red Wing, MN 55066 / www.st-james-hotel.com  
 Experience the charm of historic Red Wing with the classic elegance of the St. James Hotel. Choose from 61 enchanting Victorian guestrooms, each named after a 19th century riverboat, & four distinct dining options.
- ▶ **Quality Inn** ..... 507-454-4390  
 956 Mankato Ave - Winona, MN 55987 ..... 800-562-4544  
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**ATTRACTIONS**

- Historic Forestville Preston ..... 507-765-2785
- Orphanage Museum Owatonna ..... 800-423-6466
- ▶ **SPAM® Museum** ..... 507-434-6582  
 1937 Spam Boulevard - Austin, MN 55912 / sradford@hormel.com / www.spam.com  
 Visit the SPAM® Museum in Austin, MN. Visitors will be welcomed to the world of SPAM® family of products with a variety of interactive and educational games, fun exhibits and remarkable video presentations. Admission is free!
- Village of Yesteryear Owatonna ..... 507-451-1420
- Watkins Museum & Store Winona ..... 507-457-6095
- Winona County Historical Society Winona ..... 507-454-2723

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- ▶ **Faribault Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau** ..... 507-334-4381  
 530 Hilson Ave - Faribault, MN 55021 ..... 800-658-2354  
 chamber@faribaultmn.org / www.faribaultmn.org  
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- ▶ **Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce** ..... 507-467-2696  
 PO Box 348 - Lanesboro, MN 55949 ..... 800-944-2670  
 lvc@acegroup.cc / www.lanesboro.com  
 Visit Historic Lanesboro-the heart of the Root River State Bike Trail. In the deep valley of the Root River, Lanesboro offers biking, hiking, canoeing, fishing, art gallery, professional theatre, shopping, tours, dining and lodging. **DC, DF, E, GB, GD, GT, H, KO, MG, YR, PM, RN**

- ▶ **Northfield CVB** ..... 507-645-5604  
 205 3rd Street West Suite A - Northfield, MN 55057 ..... 800-658-2548  
 info@northfieldchamber.com / www.visitingnorthfield.com  
 Enjoy the beauty and hospitality of this charming, historic river city that offers guided tours, entertainment, shopping, dining, lodging, meeting and event accommodations, recreation, culture and history. Only 30 minutes south of the Twin Cities.

- ▶ **Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce** ..... 507-451-7970  
 320 Hoffman Drive - Owatonna, MN 55060 / www.owatonna.org  
 Located in south central MN, 45 minutes from Mpls/Saint Paul on I-35. Come "discover our faces & places" - filled with historical, recreational & cultural opportunities as well as nearly 700 guest rooms to accommodate any group.

- ▶ **Visit Winona** ..... 507-452-0735  
 67 Main Street - Winona, MN 55987 / www.visitwinona.com ..... 800-657-4972  
 Charming historic river town with a big heart offers guided tours, scenic beauty, recreation, professional theater/arts, shopping, and great festivals/events and attractions. Offering Paddlewheel steamboat cruises, Stained Glass Tour, Amish Tours, & Great River Shakespeare's Festival.

**ENTERTAINMENT & THEATER**

- ▶ **Jon Hassler Theater** ..... 507-534-2900  
 412 W. Broad Street, PO Box 276 - Plainview MN 55964 ..... 866-548-7469  
 chmartin63@yahoo.com / www.jonhasslertheater.org  
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- WASECA
- WILLMAR
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SW REGION CITIES

## calendar of events

### december

- 1 **Winterfest**, Luverne 888-283-4061
- 2 **Artist's Holiday Sale**, Winona 507-453-9959
- 2-6 **BARC Holiday Showcase** (formerly A Branson Christmas), Windom 507-831-2375
- 6-7 **Holly Days Celebration**, Glencoe 320-864-3650
- 7 **Mistletoe Madness**, Morton 507-697-6912

### january

- 1-Feb 1 **Key Ingredients: America by Food**, Waseca 507-835-7700
- 20-21, 27-28 **Winterfest 2007**, Spicer 320-796-8066

### february

- 2-4 **Frozen Lake Festival**, Litchfield 320-693-8184
- 8-11 **Waseca Sleigh & Cutter Festival**, Waseca 507-835-7711
- 9-18 **Winterfest**, Saint Peter 800-473-3404
- 17 **Bock Fest**, New Ulm 507-354-5528
- 17 **Fasching**, New Ulm 888-463-9856
- 17 **Fairmont Fruitcake Follies**, Fairmont 507-235-5547
- 23-25 **Hutchinson Area Home, Landscape & Garden Show**, Hutchinson 320-587-2140

### march

- 16 **St. Patrick's Day Parade**, Pipestone 507-825-3316
- 17-18 **Ortonville's Annual Sports and Leisure Show**, Ortonville 320-839-3284
- 18 **Shetek Sugar Bush Boil-off**, Slayton 507-763-3567
- 10 **Wanda Gag House**, New Ulm 507-354-8103

Contact the CVB's for a more complete calendar.

[escortnotes.com](http://escortnotes.com)

## Lac qui Parle

**Lac qui Parle** is a French translation of the name given to the lake by the Dakota Indians who called it the "lake that speaks." If you visit in the spring or fall you'll understand why. The lake is a stop-over for thousands of migratory Canada geese and other waterfowl. You'll hear a chorus of honking, quacking, and other vocalizations. Paddle the lake, or cast a line and catch walleye, northerns, perch, or crappie. Explore one of the trails by foot or horseback. Visit the historic **Fort Renville** and **Lac qui Parle Mission** sites. While in the area, be sure to visit the 27,000-acre **Lac qui Parle Wildlife Management Area**.

## other birding & wildflower stops in southwest minnesota

### Blue Mounds State Park Luverne

The park has cactus, a herd of buffalo and a feel to it more like states found farther west. See Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Western Kingbird, Say's Phoebe and Mountain Bluebird and nowhere in the state is a Blue Grosbeak easier to find than here.

### Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge Odessa

Take the auto tour road and you can find water birds, prairie birds, and woodland birds.

### Flandrau State Park New Ulm

Many types of birds common to wooded river bottom areas can be found here. There are many opportunities for wildlife observation.

### Geneva Lake Wildlife Management Area Albert Lea

During spring and fall migrations large flocks of waterfowl can be spotted.

### Hole in the Mountain Lake Benton

This prairie provides habitat for more than 25 species of butterflies. The park's woodland offers Wilson's snipes, savannah, vesper and clay-colored sparrows, bobolinks, and dickcissels.

### Monson Lake Sunburg

Birdwatchers look for white pelicans, herons, western grebes, and songbirds in this 187-acre park with a diverse landscape of wetlands and hardwood forests.

### Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Odessa

Approximately 1,800 acres in size, view waterfowl, songbirds, marsh and wading birds, shorebirds, raptors, and upland game birds.

### Salt Lake Marietta

Every spring, birders from around the Midwest make the trip to Salt Lake for a long birding weekend.

### Schaefer Prairie Glencoe

The 160 acre site contains marshes, several ponds, a creek, and its floodplains. Monarchs, savanna and vesper sparrows, ring-necked pheasants, and bobolinks are just some of the wildlife found in the area.

### Swede's Forest SNA Sacred Heart

Found within the Minnesota River Valley, the 202 acres provides habitat for waterfowl, great blue herons, red-winged blackbirds, and eastern bluebirds.



*Flowers and flight. Beauty made in heaven.*

This sample itinerary is best spring, summer, and fall. You'll find it at coordinates D-19 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

The variety of birds and the ever-changing prairie flowers make this tour a prairie-lover's dream come true.

**9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

Begin the tour at **Kilen Woods State Park** viewing one of the world's largest populations of prairie bush clover. Then travel to the **Jackson County Historical Museum** in **Lakefield** to view a collection of preserved migratory birds and research history of wildfowl migration routes over **Heron Lake**.

**12 – 1:00 pm**

Stop for lunch at an area restaurant.

**1 – 2:00 pm**

Travel to **Worthington** and see wildlife artist Jerry Raedeke's work at **Lee's Frame & Craft; Raedeke Gallery**.

**2:00 pm**

A short trek on Hwy 60 south to the **Worthington Rest Stop and Information Center** offers a peek at the

yellow-headed blackbird, quite an elusive marsh species. The prairie-themed rest area has acres of wildflowers and a habitat sculpture, which depicts the timeless landscape.

For more information on this sample itinerary contact your tour operator or the Worthington CVB, 800-279-2919.



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## Willmar: A wake in history. A splash for today's visitors.

This itinerary is best on weekends in the Spring through the Fall. You'll find it at coordinates F14 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map, distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### DAY ONE

#### 12 – 1:30 pm

Roll into **Willmar** and enjoy lunch at one of our many fine restaurants. From soups and salads to heartier fare, we have a location to fit any taste and any appetite.

#### 1:30 – 4:00 pm

Take a step back in time as you tour the **The Mikkelson Collection** – the world's largest and finest **Larson Boat Work's** famous **Falls Flyers**. The collection contains every type of boating memorabilia imaginable.

#### 4 – 5:00 pm

Time to check into your hotel. During this visit, you'll be a guest at the **Holiday Inn** – a full-service hotel with relaxing lounge and restaurant. Unpack, freshen up and get ready to enjoy the evening's activities.

#### 5 – 6:30 pm

Join your group at **The Green Mill**. Famous for pizza, The

Green Mill has a full menu that includes everything from Italian pastas to steaks, seafood and everything in between.

#### 7 – 8:30 pm

Witness the award-winning **Little Crow Ski Team Show**, a professional, high-energy water show that will have your group on the edge of their seats as they watch graceful ballet skiers, high octane jumpers and bare-footers, 42 giant pyramids and much more.

#### 9 – 10:30 pm

Willmar's own, "**The Classics**" provide the evening's entertainment with Rat Pack-style classics that transport you from "Chicago" to "New York" with many stops along the way. Foot-tapping and finger-snapping almost always accompany this musical journey.

### DAY TWO

#### 9 – 10:30 am

Breakfast at your hotel.

#### 10:30 – 12:30 pm

First stop, **The Schwanke Museum**. You'll be amazed at this 45-year collection of vintage tractors, trucks and other

farm vehicles. A pleasure for the young, young at heart and anyone who enjoys just a little bit of history.

#### 12:30 – 2:00 pm

Try something new for lunch at one of Willmar's many group-friendly restaurants.

#### 2 – 4:30 pm

Off to the "Ranch" with **J & L Bison Ranch**. Talk about a step back in time – you'll have the opportunity to view the herd in their natural habitat. Educational as it is astonishing, there's much to know and learn about this impressive animal. We'll save the details for the tour!

#### 4:30 – 6:00 pm

Back to your hotel. Relax and freshen up before you head off for evening entertainment.

#### 6 – 8:00 pm

Dinner and the theater – what a lovely combination. Enjoy dinner at **Blue Heron on the Green** – from surf and turf, to burgers and ice-cold beer. You'll find something you're sure to enjoy, and before you know it it's show time.

#### 8 – 10:30 pm

The show changes throughout the year, but no matter what the production, you're in for a treat. **The Barn Theater** is a community theater group with a pool of talent and committed volunteers that rival many professional companies. So, sit back and enjoy – you're sure to enjoy this performance from the first scene to curtain call.

For more information and to customize this tour for your group, contact your tour operator or the Willmar CVB, 800-845-8747 ext. 603.

## Indulge in a Dutch Delight

This itinerary is best spring through fall or can be customized for anytime of the year. You'll find it at coordinates I-19 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

#### 9 – 10:30 am

Begin your "Dutch Delight-ful" day in the quaint town of **Hollandale** with your first stop at **Oma's Country Treasures** and the **Heritage Huis**. While at Oma's, enjoy a cup of coffee and a morning treat.

#### 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

After the shopping, enjoy a trip to **R&R Farms** as you tour a working vegetable farm. Learn about the entire potato farming process from planting and harvesting to storing, washing and bagging.

#### 12 – 1:30 pm

How about an authentic Dutch lunch? Today on the menu they're serving up Dutch meatballs, coleslaw, oranged potatoes, dessert and a beverage. This is truly a unique, cultural luncheon you won't soon forget.



#### 1:30 – 3:30 pm

Finish your day at **Greibrook's Mini-History Farm & County Fair**. You really need to see this one-of-a-kind collection. Forty rooms with over 700 toys from extensive steam engines, threshing machines and a variety of farm equipment all set in different scenes. Examples of the theme rooms include: Fantasy Island, African Room, Garden of Eden and an animated County Fair. This sight to see often is referred to as a miniature version of the "House on the Rock."

For more information or to customize this tour for your group please contact your tour operator or the Albert Lea CVB, 800-345-8414.

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# WILLMAR

## Lakes Area

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## Check your pulse for a day in Czech Country

This sample itinerary is best in fall, spring or summer. You'll find it at coordinates I-17 on your 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### DAY ONE

#### 12 – 1:00 pm

Begin with a mouth-watering, ethnic buffet luncheon that includes specialties such as **Czech Pork & Dumplings**.

#### 1 – 2:00 pm

Follow it up with a variety show that highlights superb talent featuring original and familiar music, story-telling and family string players.

#### 2 – 3:00 pm

Enjoy browsing through the **Arts and Heritage Center**.

#### 3 – 4:00 pm

See the world-famous wood-carving artist, **Marvin Kaisersatt**. Take a look at his numerous creations all

showcased in his studio

#### 4 – 5:00 pm

Stop at the **Big Honza's Malt Shoppe & Bunzo Factory**, a coffee and gift shop featuring a full line of specialty coffees and teas, delicious ethnic pastries, frozen custard delights and unique gifts.

#### 5 – 6:30 pm

Tour the **Big Honza's Museum of Unnatural History**, a place filled with unnatural attractions that are sure to tickle your funny bone! Personal guided tours can be arranged.

For more information or to customize this tour for your group, please contact your tour operator or John Grimm, Big Honza Museum of Unnatural History, 612-756-1075.

**Big Honza's Malt Shoppe & Bunzo Factory** **Big Honza's Museum of Unnatural History**

Big Honza's favorite spot to eat is located in one of Montgomery's historic buildings in the heart of town. Like the Museum, this unique coffee & gift shop maintains an element of humor - even the restroom is a one-of-a-kind sight!

**Proudly featuring:**

- Specialty Coffee, Tea, & Hot Chocolate
- Delicious Ethnic Pastries
- Homemade Soups, Salads, & Sandwiches
- Frozen Custard Delights

**Hours:** M-F 7:30 am - 8:00 pm  
Sat 10:00 am - 7:00 pm  
Sun CLOSED  
507-364-7993



In Montgomery, visit Minnesota's newest and strangest museum.

Group tours include a live musical presentation and Czech heritage meal at Historic Hilltop Hall.

Museum open during Malt Shoppe hours April through October.

Call John Grimm  
**612-756-1075**

info@bighonza.com  
www.bighonza.com



## FUN WINTER EVENTS... to cure those Blizzard Blues!

Looking for something to do this winter? Fairmont welcomes you to take part in their winter festivals. We're sure to have something for everyone. Come witness the *City of Lakes* transform into the *City of Lights*. The Fairmont Glows Festival runs from November 17 through January 1, 2007. The festival kicks off with a parade packed with lighted floats, carolers, marching units and an appearance by Santa Claus on Friday. Visit Ward and Lincoln Parks to view the Glows lighting, do some shopping and just delight in the season. Looking for something a little different? Have you ever found yourself wondering what to do with that Fruitcake you received for Christmas? We've found the answer! Join us for the fifth annual *Fairmont Fruitcake Follies* Saturday, February 17. This festive and fruitful event is focused on using the much-maligned fruitcake for what it is best suited for, throwing! There is a fruitcake toss for men, women, and children as well as fruitcake launching from catapults, trebuchets and other strange devices.

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- Built around 5 beautiful lakes
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from Chicago to the Black Hills!*

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or visit our web site at  
**www.fairmontcvb.com**





## Do they honk in French too?



Lac qui Parle is a Minnesota State Park with a French name with Native America roots. As mentioned on page 22, translation of the name given to the lake by the Dakota Indians is the "lake that speaks." If your groups visit in the spring or fall they will understand just why. The lake is a stop-over for thousands of migratory Canadian geese and other waterfowl. During this two seasons, you can be sure you'll hear a wonderful cacophony of honks, quacks, and screeches.

In the fall of 1958, only 150 geese were counted at Lac qui Parle. Since then, careful management has brought back as many as 120,000 migrating geese at one time. The geese arrive in early March from their primary wintering grounds at Swan Lake, Missouri, and continue through April. In late September, migrating geese arrive and continue until the last birds leave in early December. Flights of tundra (whistling) swans pass over Lac qui Parle in April and November, and pelicans can be seen nesting on a one-acre island. This is a very popular location for birders.

For more information, contact Prairie Waters Tourism at 866-866-5432.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

AmericInn Belle Plaine	952-873-6017
AmericInn Lodge & Suites Blue Earth	507-526-4215
AmericInn Motel & Suites Worthington	507-376-4500
AmericInn of Hutchinson Hutchinson	320-587-5515
AmericInn of Madelia Madelia	507-642-2004
Holiday Inn & Willmar Conference Center Willmar	877-405-4466

## ATTRACTIONS

### ▶ Big Honza's Museum of Unnatural History

201 First Street South - Montgomery, MN 56069  
 big\_honza@hotmail.com / www.bighonza.com  
 Have lunch at historic hilltop hall, while enjoying a live musical presentation of Czech country history. Then marvel at the unique artifacts of Big Honza's Museum of Unnatural History guided by the legendary Monty Gomery. AC, E, GB, GD, GT, H, MG, PM, PO

Birch Coulee Battlefield Morton	507-697-6321
Brown Country Museum Battlefield	888-463-9856
Fort Ridgely Historic Site Fairfax	507-426-7888
Harkin Store Historic Site New Ulm	507-354-8666
J & L Bison Willmar	320-235-8465

### ▶ Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel

PO Box 420 - Morton, MN 56270 ..... 800-WIN-CASH  
 wincash@jackpotjunction.com / www.jackpotjunction.com  
 99 miles southwest of Minneapolis. 325,000 square feet of action: video slot machines, table games, bingo, pull tabs, restaurants, full service bars, 276-room on-site hotel, swimming pool, fitness center, live entertainment, RV Park Dacotah Ridge Golf Club.  
 AC, AS, CA, DC, DF, E, GB, GD, H, KO, MG, 24, YR, PM, PO, RO, SA, SP

Jeffers Petroglyphs Historic Site Comfrey	507-628-5591
Lac qui Parle Mission Montevideo	320-269-7636
Little Crow Ski Team New London	320-354-5684
The Mikkelson Boat Collection Willmar	320-231-0384
Nicollet County Historical Society Saint Peter	507-934-2160

Olaf Swensson Farm Museum Montevideo	320-269-5527
Schwanke Museum Willmar	320-231-0564

## CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAUS AND CHAMBERS

### ▶ Albert Lea Convention & Visitors Bureau

143 West Clark Street - Albert Lea, MN 56007 ..... 507-373-2316  
 800-345-8414  
 alcvb.smig.net / www.albertleatourism.org  
 Located 90 minutes from Mpls, where I-90 & 35 intersect, featuring small town hospitality with big city amenities. Plus additional lakes & 38 city parks hosting various outdoor activities.

### ▶ Fairmont Convention & Visitors Bureau

PO Box 976 - Fairmont, MN 56031 ..... 507-235-8585  
 800-657-3280  
 director@fairmontcvb.com / www.fairmontcvb.com  
 Fairmont is situated on five beautiful, tree bordered, fresh water lakes. A recent visit from the Travel Channel called Fairmont, "Minnesota's own little Shangri-la & Minnesota's hidden little secret!!!"

### ▶ Hutchinson Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

2 Main Street South - Hutchinson, MN 55305 ..... 800-572-6689  
 www.explorehutchinson.com  
 Hutchinson, Minnesota's Hometown™, is rich in history, offers family events & festivals, and the most unique shopping you can ask for! Hutchinson, We're Minnesota's Hometown™!

### ▶ Luverne Area Chamber of Commerce/CVB

211 E Main - Luverne, MN 56156 ..... 507-283-4061  
 888-283-4061  
 luvernechamber@iw.net / www.luvernechamber.com  
 Luverne - Minnesota's Prairie Playground. Located on Interstate 90 in southwest Minnesota, we welcome visitors to enjoy the grandeur of the prairie including Blue Mounds State Park, live buffalo herds, the Brandenburg Gallery, and much more!

### ▶ Morton Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 127 - Morton, MN 56270 / mortoncityhall@mchsi.com ..... 507-697-6912  
 Visit Morton, located in the scenic river valley for a celebration each season, featuring unique activities for each event; Spring Garden Party, Independence Day, Scarecrow Festival, Beneath the Village Wreath and Mistletoe Madness.

### ▶ Pipestone Convention & Visitors Bureau

117 8th Ave SE - Pipestone, MN 56164 ..... 507-825-4126  
 800-336-6125  
 pipecham@pipestoneminnesota.com / www.pipestoneminnesota.com  
 Song of Hiawatha Pageant, an exciting, colorful, pageant set on a small pond surrounded by prairie and redstone cliffs. A story about a small Indian boy-"Hiawatha". Top Minnesota Event...In late July/early August. Red Carpet Group Service.

### ▶ Redwood Falls Area Chamber of Commerce

200 South Mill Street - Redwood Falls, MN 56283 ..... 507-637-2828  
 800-657-7070  
 chamber@redwoodfalls.org / www.redwoodfalls.org  
 Along the Minnesota River, this area has much to offer its visitors. Alexandria Ramsey Park/Falls/Zoo - 217 wooded acres, 18 hole championship golf course, gaming, many historic attractions, great specialty shopping, convention & lodging facilities.

### ▶ Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

2104 Highway 12 East - Willmar, MN 56201 ..... 800-845-8747  
 ext. 603  
 www.willmar.com  
 Visit the Willmar Lakes Area. Only 2 hours west of Mpls/St. Paul. 360 lakes, 36 parks, 81 holes of golf - and that's just on the drive in! Let our staff help put together a getaway for your group.

### ▶ Worthington Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

1121 Third Avenue - Worthington, MN 56187 ..... 507-372-2919  
 800-279-2919  
 wcofc@frontiernet.net / www.worthingtonmnchamber.com  
 We welcome you to the Windsurfing Regatta, International Festival, and King Turkey Day. Let us assist you in finding places to visit, sleep, eat, and shop.

## ENTERTAINMENT & THEATER

The Barn Theatre Willmar	320-235-9500
The Classics Willmar	320-290-8400

## RESTAURANTS

Green Mill Willmar	320-231-2301
--------------------	--------------

### ▶ The Pizza Ranch

www.pizzaranch.com  
 At any of these Central & Southern Minnesota locations: Delano, Luverne, Olivia, Tyler, Edgerton, Montevideo, Owatonna, Waconia, Glencoe, New Prague, Redwood Falls, Waseca, Le Sueur, Norwood - YA., Slayton Worthington, Litchfield. Visit our website for specials and phone numbers.



Viking Woods & Lakes

Welcome to Northwestern Minnesota!

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GRAND FORKS
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- FERGUS FALLS
- FRAZEE
- HENNING
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- LONG PRAIRIE
- NEW YORK MILLS
- NISSWA
- OTTERTAIL
- PARK RAPIDS
- PELICAN RAPIDS
- PEQUOT LAKES
- PERHAM
- RED LAKE FALLS
- ROSEAU
- SAUK CENTRE
- ST. CLOUD
- THIEF RIVER FALLS
- VERGAS
- WALKER



American White Pelicans - Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge

calendar of events

December

- 1 **Michael Moschen-Juggler and Illusionist**, St. Joseph 320-363-5777
- 1-3& 8-9 **Madrigal Dinners**, Bemidji 218-755-3406
- 2 **Weihnachtsfest**, Biwabik 218-865-4183
- 2 **Christmas at the Lindbergh House**, Little Falls 320-616-5421
- 2-4 **Dance and Dessert**, Fergus Falls 218-736-5453
- 5-6 **Ice Fest**, Breezy Point 800-450-2838
- 13 **Lucia Fest**, Bemidji 218-444-3469
- 22-23 **Handel's Messiah**: Paramount Theatre, St. Cloud 320-259-5463

January

- 20 **Brrmiji Polar Days Festival**, Bemidji 800-458-2223
- 26-28 **4th Annual Crosslake Winterfest**, Crosslake 800-450-2838
- 27 **Frosty Bobber Winter Carnival**, East Grand Forks 218-773-9565

February

- 1-3 **Frostbite Festival**, Fergus Falls 218-736-6951
- 19 **Polar Plunge**, Detroit Lakes 218-847-5700
- 16-18 **28th Annual International Eelpout Festival**, Walker 800-833-1118
- 16-18 **Nisswa Winter Jubilee**, Nisswa 800-950-9610

March

- 17 **What's It? Kitchen Gadgets and More**, Fergus Falls 218-736-6038
- 31 **Marsh Madness**, Fergus Falls 218-736-0938
- 31 **Times Home, Sport and Craft Show**, Thief River Falls 218-681-4450

Contact the CVB's for a more complete calendar.

escortnotes.com

## Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge

**Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge:** Middle River (12 miles N of Thief River Falls). **Agassiz** has been designated a Globally Important Bird Area with 287 bird species recorded. It hosts up to 40,000 ducks, 14,000 geese and 1,000 Sandhill Cranes during spring and fall migrations. It also hosts one of the world's largest colonies of Franklin's Gulls (about 25,000 to 50,000 nesting pairs), 1,500 Black Terns and 3-5,000 non-breeding American White Pelicans. Le Conte's Sparrow is common and the Clay-colored Sparrow is abundant during breeding season. Other breeding birds seen include Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Bobolink and Yellow Rail. Agassiz is named as one of the 50 best places in the U.S. to observe birds and mammals.

### other birding & wildflower stops in northwest minnesota

#### Anna Gronseth Prairie Rothsay

Highlights spring and fall migrations for sandhill cranes, and spring observation of the greater prairie chicken on its booming grounds. Also inhabits yellow rail, marbled godwit, the Wildon'd phalarope, and the regal fritillary (a butterfly of special concern).

#### Burnham Creek Wildlife Management Area Fertile

The water impoundments, grasslands, and brushlands offer great habitat for waterfowl, rough-legged hawk, peregrine falcon, sandhill crane, and prairie songbirds.

#### Charles A Lindbergh State Park Little Falls

Quiet picnic grounds and 7 mi of scenic trails. Eagles, hawks, and owls can often be seen along the Mississippi River and surrounding forests.

#### Crane Meadows NWR Little Falls

1,825 acres of tallgrass prairie, oak savanna, and wetlands inhabits one of the largest nesting populations of greater sandhill cranes. Plus the Bald eagle, northern harrier, short-ear owl, great blue heron, and blue-winged teal.

#### Itasca State Park Park Rapids

Minnesota's oldest State Park. A 32,000 acre sanctuary, where the mighty Mississippi River begins. A great birding site for the Common Loon, Black-backed woodpecker, Alder Flycatcher,

Winter Wren and more.

#### Minnesota Prairie Chicken Booming Crookston

To fully experience spring on the prairie, awaken early to hide away in a viewing blind well before the sun makes its appearance. The prairie chickens have chosen this spot well in advance of your arrival, having staked out their territories in the fall and winter months. As twilight advances, the motion of the male chickens will slowly become visible, and then as if turned on by a light switch, the booming will begin. After this, the prairie comes alive with sound, motion and excitement, performing the age-old ritual of spring...

#### Uppgaard WMA Crosslake

Great habitat for ruffed grouse, blue heron, broad-winged hawks, and summer butterflies. There is a mixture of coniferous and deciduous forest, two small lakes, meadow, and marshland.

#### Waubun Wildlife Management Area Waubun

The tallgrass prairie, sattuail marsh, and wet meadow offer great opportunity to view Northern Harrier, greater Prairie-Chicken, Yellow Rail, Sandhill Crane, and prairie sparrows.

#### Wetlands, Pines and Prairie Audubon Sanctuary Warren

Over 163 species of birds have been observed throughout refuge's prairies, wetlands, and woodlands. A visitor center provides information, gifts and merchandise, lounge, and restroom.



## Land of the Birds at LAKE OF THE WOODS



Cedar Waxwing



White Pelican



Black and White Warbler

**L**ake of the Woods County offers incredible opportunities for beginning and seasoned birders. The area is strategically located on one of the four major migratory flyways that offer habitats including aspen parkland, coniferous and deciduous forest, and aquatic shoreline. These habitats encourage large numbers of birds to reside in the area during peak breeding periods.

### Full-Day Tour Options:

#### Lake of the Woods

The Northwest Angle and Islands area of Lake of the Woods encompasses large expanses of water dotted with rocky, pine-studded islands. These sheltered, tranquil waters are home to more than 250 species of birds. Birding by boat is the best and easiest way to observe the colonial nesting sites. The lake, with over 14,000 islands, provides safe nesting habitats for double-crested cormorants, and American white pelican colonies. Black, common and Caspian terns are also routinely sighted. Boat rentals are available from many of the area's resorts.

#### Garden Island State Recreational Area

Garden Island is uninhabited and serves as a popular site for shore lunches during the summer months. This sandy island, with minimal topographical features, is markedly different than the rocky shorelines of all other islands found on Lake of the Woods. There are several beaver ponds on the island.

#### Zippel Bay State Park

Zippel Bay State Park offers visitors 2,766 acres of forested areas with rocky outcrops. The park features a harbor with a fishing pier for waterfowl and shorebird viewing. The park also has a two-mile long beach on Lake of the Woods, which offers accessibility to hundreds of migrating shorebirds. There are four campgrounds, with 57 sites located in the park. Great gray owls, scarlet tanagers and many wood warblers annually breed in the park.

#### Red Lake Wildlife Management Area

This immense wilderness area encompasses 250,461 acres of land where nearly 200 species of birds have been identified. Red Lake Wildlife Management Area is Minnesota's largest WMA.

Wood warblers including the rare Connecticut warbler nest in the boreal forest areas. Great gray owls can be routinely spotted hunting the bog areas.

#### Beltrami Island State Forest

The Beltrami Island State Forest has 669,000 acres within its boundary, which are managed by the Minnesota DNR; Forestry Division. Possible bird sightings include species associated with the boreal forests such as the black-backed woodpecker, boreal owl, northern hawk owl, and northern goshawk.

#### Pine Island State Forest

The largest State Forest Area in Minnesota with 878,040 acres. This tremendous forest area offers birders an opportunity to encounter a bog complete with sphagnum moss, stands of tamarack and patterned fens punctuated with conifer islands.

For additional locations and for more information contact Lake of the Woods Tourism, 800-382-3474. Birding guides for your group are available.

**Lake of the Woods**  
TOURISM

P.O. Box 518 Baudette, MN 56623  
www.lakeofthewoodsmn.com  
lakwoods@wiktel.com



Call now for your free  
Getaway guide.  
1-800-382-FISH(3474)



Sand Prairie Wildlife Management Area boardwalk



Quarry Park and Nature Preserve

Birds and bees. Flowers and trees. Naturally.

This sample itinerary works best in the spring, summer or fall. You'll find it on coordinates H-13 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

10 – 11:30 am

Witness the wonders of more than 150 species of prairie and wetland plants at the Sand Prairie Wildlife

Management Area. Sand Prairie features trails, a marsh boardwalk and an elevated deck with a striking view of the wetlands. During spring, watch migrating birds on their way, in the summer marvel at the monarch butterflies busy siphoning nectar from wild flowers and when autumn happens, observe the fascinating fall migration of birds. Take a short walk or don your hiking shoes to make the one-mile trek across the prairie, and onto the boardwalk to



the observation deck that overlooks the wetlands. Uncommon species include the red-shouldered hawk, and yellow rail. You'll also see wood ducks, blue heron, robins, finches and a host of other species.

11:30 – 12:30 pm

"Early bird" tour lunch at one of our unique restaurants.

12:30 – 1:30 pm

Explore another famed area to see fantastic birds and exotic wildflowers at Quarry Park and Nature Preserve. The park currently boasts 643 acres of scenic woodlands, prairie and wetlands that include 20 old granite quarries. More than 68 species of birds and an impressive 275 varieties of trees, plants, and wildflowers have been identified at the park including cactus (yes, cactus in Minnesota). Visit one or both unique nature preserves, and be sure to wear good walking shoes, bring your binoculars, camera and field guide.

1:30 – 2:30 pm

Get to know how to attract the right birds to your yard with bird products from Wild Birds Unlimited before heading home.

For more information or to customize this itinerary contact your tour operator or Jean Robbins at the St. Cloud Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, 800-264-2940 ext. 129.

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Egrets in Fergus Falls

*Fall is a great time to flock to Fergus Falls*

This itinerary is best in the fall, but can be customized for anytime of year. You'll find it at coordinates C-11 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map, distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

**DAY ONE**

**10:30 – 11:30 am**

Bus arrives in **Fergus Falls, MN**. Check into the **Best Western Falls Inn & Suites** and enjoy a brief orientation over a cup of coffee.

**11:30 – 1:00 pm**

Head south of the border for lunch at **Don Pablo's Mexican Restaurant**. A private party room is available for groups upon request.

**1 – 4:00 pm**

Take a relaxing tour of the **Otter Tail County Museum**, with award-winning interpretive exhibits, wildlife, period rooms, agriculture and **1919 Main Street**. Visit this winter, February 12 - March 26, 2007, for the Smithsonian Exhibit, **"Key Ingredients, America by Food."**

**4 – 5:00 pm**

Saddle up for the **Red Horse Ranch Arena** for an equestrian adventure. Open riding and lessons are offered for groups.

**5 – 7:00 pm**

Enjoy a delectable and entertaining dinner at the **Jazzy Fox** with fabulous regional cuisine and dazzling jazz from the piano.

**7 – 10:00 pm**

See a show at **A Center for the Arts**: a silent movie with Lance Johnson on the Mighty Wurlitzer, a play, or a concert (visit [www.fergusarts.org](http://www.fergusarts.org) for specific dates).

**DAY TWO**

**9 – 10:00 am**

Enjoy a hot breakfast at an area restaurant. Note: location can be arranged ahead of time.

**10 – 12:00 pm**

Birding at the **Prairie Wetlands Learning Center**. It's just one of 43 birding sites on the **Pine-to-Prairie Birding Trail**, which covers northwest Minnesota from **Fergus Falls to Roseau**.

**12 – 1:30 pm**

Take a ride over to **Lindig's Farm** for autumn activities, hayrides, food and entertainment.

**1:30 – 3:00pm**

Enjoy lunch at **Mabel Murphy's Eating Establishment**. There's no need to travel abroad to experience old world charm. Mabel Murphy's will take you there with its

quaint and cozy atmosphere.

**3 – 5:00 pm**

Complete your day by enjoying the beautiful fall colors of the **Otter Trail Scenic Byway**.

For more information or to customize this tour for your group, contact your tour operator or Jean Bowman, Fergus Falls CVB, 800-726-8859.

*A Taste of Fergus Falls*

**"KEY INGREDIENTS, AMERICA BY FOOD"**  
**February 12 – March 26, 2007**  
 —Smithsonian Exhibition at Otter Tail County Museum

**FREE Motorcoach Parking**

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[www.fergusfalls.com](http://www.fergusfalls.com) • 800-726-8959

EXPLORE Minnesota .COM



Big Bog State Recreation Area



Big Bog Boardwalk



© Photo courtesy of Diane Kesthousen

Up close, the bog reveals its colors.

## Birds, Bogs and Logs

This itinerary works best in the Spring, Summer and Fall. You'll find it at coordinates I-8 and F-7 in the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### DAY ONE

12 – 1:00 pm

Start in Grand Rapids, MN at the Sawmill Inn for lunch.

1 – 3:00 pm

Tour Forest History Center. Experience a live re-enactment of a turn-of-the-century logging camp.

3 – 4:00 pm

Head Southeast on US Highway 2 to Bemidji.

4 – 6:00 pm

Check into the AmericInn of Bemidji and freshen up.

6 – 10:00 pm

Dinner at a restaurant near your motel or 'on your own' choices downtown. Evening entertainment options including a Native American flute player or Hickory Wind Trio with live folk grass music.

### DAY TWO

8 – 9:15 am

Enjoy a hot breakfast at your hotel, then head for Big Bog State Recreation Area. Stop for a great photo opportunity with the famous giant duck in Blackduck.

9:15 – 10:30 am

Stroll the mile-long boardwalk into Big Bog for a first-hand look at the unique plant and bird life of this rare resource.

10:30 – 11:00 am

Enjoy picnic refreshments before boarding the coach for your return trip to Bemidji, or stop at West Wind Restaurant for coffee and snacks.

11 – 12:15 pm

Return to Bemidji.

12:15 – 1:30 pm

Head downtown for lunch at your choice of a variety of restaurants. Don't forget to stop in at Northern Flights Wild Bird Store for a great selection of wild bird foods, houses and a knowledgeable staff waiting to greet you.

1:30 – 3 pm

Visit the Headwaters Science Center's 'All About Raptors' presentation.

3 – 5:00 pm

Check out the Bald Eagles and nest at Lake Bemidji State Park. Take a tour with the Park Naturalist to witness and learn about other birding opportunities.

5 – 6:30 pm

Dinner at Bemidji Town & Country Club near Lake Bemidji State Park, which overlooks Lake Bemidji.

6:30 pm

Return to the AmericInn.

### DAY THREE

8:30 am

Depart for Itasca State Park – Headwaters of Mississippi River and Minnesota's first State Park saving old growth pine trees.

For more information or to customize this tour for your group, contact your tour operator or the Bemidji CVB, 800-458-2223 ext 106.

# Great group Getaway!

The Best Western The Falls Inn & Suites is the place to stay for your next meeting, reunion or group tour.

- Welcome reception
- Express group check-in
- 2103 Bar & Grill on-site
- Free continental breakfast
- Minnesota-shaped indoor swimming pool
- Great group rates
- Large coach parking
- Departing Gift

**Best Western The Falls Inn & Suites**

Located off I-94, Exit 54 • 925 Western Avenue, Fergus Falls, Minnesota

For your next group getaway call (218) 739-2211.

Group Friendly!

## See Eagles Soar Above The Tops Of Ancient Pines

as you tour the Mississippi at Itasca State Park or visit the historic statues of Paul & Babe. For details call 800-458-2223 or visit our website.

**Bemidji**  
First City On The Mississippi

www.visitbemidji.com



**AC**-Air Conditioned **AS**-Alcohol Served **BH**-Baggage Handling **CA**-Call Ahead **DC**-Dining/Casual **DF**-Dining/Fine **E**-Entertainment **GB**-Group Buffet  
**GD**-Group Discounts **GT**-Guided Tours **H**-Handicapped Access **KO**-Kids OK **MG**-Meet/Greet Service **24**-Open 24 hours **YR**-Open Year Round  
**PM**-Parking/Motorcoach **PO**-Parking/Onsite **PA**-Pets Allowed **RO**-Restaurant Onsite **RN**-Restaurant Nearby **SA**-Smoking Allowed **SP**-Swimming Pool

*Sunsets, swans and orchids—  
Discover your senses in Detroit Lakes*

This itinerary works best in Spring. You'll find it at coordinates D-9 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

Grab your binoculars and catch the bright and showy plumage of hundreds of birds and wildflowers during the spring migration in the **Detroit Lakes** area in mid-May.

**DAY ONE**

**8 – 10:00 am**

We arrive at **Maplewood State Park** near **Pelican Rapids**. We set out on a short hike on the park's trails to see the Great Egret and some of the other 150 species common here. We look for the striped coral root orchid in bloom within the park.

**11:00 am – 4:30 pm**

Arrive in Detroit Lakes for lunch on your own, then set out to browse the stores along Washington Avenue, in the mall and along the city's edge.

**5 – 8:00 pm**

After checking in at a Detroit Lakes hotel, dine with a breathtaking view of the sun over horizon of beautiful **Lake Detroit**.

**DAY TWO**

**6 – 8:00 am**

The early bird gets out of bed for the breakfast of their choice. Head west on Highway 10 to **Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge** to see the Prairie Chickens on their booming grounds. Hamden has several waterfowl and shorebird species as well as hawks, wrens and sparrows and panoramic fields of prairie wildflowers.

**9 – 10:30 am**

Roam across the prairie and see the transition to forest at **Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge**. Known for their Trumpeter Swans, you'll hopefully get a glimpse of this great white bird as well as Bald Eagles, Loons and Wild Turkeys. Head to the Visitor Center to see warblers, other birds on their feeders, indoor displays,



and to pick up souvenirs.

**12:30 – 5:30 pm**

Land in rustic **Thief River Falls** for lunch. Head north to **Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge**. Grab your camera for the likely sightings of moose, gulls and several species of waterfowl at one of the best 100 birding sites in North America.

**For more information or to customize this tour for your group call your tour operator or the Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-542-3992.**

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

- AmericInn Alexandria** ..... **320-763-6808**
- AmericInn of Baudette** Baudette ..... **218-634-3200**
- AmericInn of Bemidji** Bemidji ..... **218-751-3000**
- ▶ **Bigwood Event Center - Best Western Hotel** ..... **218-739-2211**  
 921 Western Ave – Fergus Falls, MN 56358 ..... **800-293-2216**  
 bigwood@prtcl.com / www.bestwestern.com/thefallsinnandsuites  
 Clean, comfortable and modern accommodations await you in the Best Western The Falls Inn & Suites. Remodeled in 2001, our facility features complementary, deluxe breakfast, swimming pool the shape of Minnesota and conference services to 600 people.  
**AC, AS, BH, DC, E, GD, H, KO, MG, 24, YR, PM, PO, RO, SP**

**ATTRACTIONS**

- Bemidji Woolen Mills** Bemidji ..... **218-751-5166**
- ▶ **Big Bog Eco-Tours** ..... **218-647-8755**  
 28932 Sunny Beach Road NE - Waskish, MN 56685 ..... **800-509-5471**  
 jstensing@yahoo.com  
 Visit the largest un-broken peatlands in the contiguous United States. Discover Minnesota's last true wilderness. Experience the Big Bog as never before possible. Guided interpretive field trips for groups of all sizes and interests.
- Covered Wagon Rides** Bemidji ..... **218-243-2231**

**CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAUS AND CHAMBERS**

- ▶ **Bemidji Visitors & Convention Bureau** ..... **218-759-0164**  
 PO Box 66 - Bemidji, MN 56619 ..... **800-458-2223**  
 gayle@visitbemidji.com / www.visitbemidji.com  
 Bemidji is the "First City on the Mississippi". Paul Bunyan and Babe his Blue Ox await your arrival on the shore of Lake Bemidji. Recreational and cultural experiences are available year round.

- ▶ **Crookston Convention and Visitors Bureau** ..... **218-281-4320**  
 118 Fletcher St. – Crookston, MN 56716 ..... **800-809-5997**  
 crookstoncvb@rvv.net / www.visitcrookston.com  
 Crookston, where the past lives comfortably with the present. Experience historic treasures and nearby Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge. Located on U.S. Highway 2, Highway 75 King of Trails Scenic Byway and Prairie Passage Route.
- ▶ **Detroit Lakes Chamber of Commerce** ..... **218-847-9202**  
 PO Box 348, 700 Summit Avenue - Detroit Lakes, MN 56502 ..... **800-542-3992**  
 dlchamber@visitdetroitlakes.com / www.visitdetroitlakes.com  
 Live theatre, state's first Birding Trail, Scenic Byway, National Wildlife Refuges, Farm Tours...at Detroit Lakes! East of Fargo, North Dakota 45 miles, or 3 hours northwest of Twin Cities on Highway 10. Dining, shopping, and accommodations.
- ▶ **Fergus Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau** ..... **218-739-0125**  
 112 West Washington Avenue - Fergus Falls, MN 56537 ..... **800-726-8959**  
 cvb@cpinternet.com / www.visitfergusfalls.com  
 Arts, nature and history are sure to please. On I-94, 2 hours NW of Mpls, Fergus Falls is an easy stop to/from Winnipeg. Hotels & restaurants eager to host. Call CVB for personalized itineraries.
- ▶ **The Lake of the Woods Tourism** ..... **218-634-1174**  
 PO Box 518 - Baudette, MN 56623 ..... **800-382-3474**  
 www.lakeofthewoodsmn.com  
 No matter what the season, your group will treasure the memories of a true, "Up North" Vacation. This year you could experience legendary Lake of the Woods.
- ▶ **New York Mills Civic & Commerce Association** ..... **218-385-3339**  
 Box 133 - New York Mills, MN 56567  
 info@explorenewyorkmills.com / www.explorenewyorkmills.com  
 New York Mills, gateway to the Finnish Triangle, is home to the Great American Think-Off and Lund Boats. Nearby are 1200 lakes, three state parks, and the best specialty & antique shopping in Central Minnesota.

- ▶ **St. Cloud Area Convention & Visitors Bureau** ..... **320-251-4170**  
 525 Hwy 10, Suite 1 - St. Cloud, MN 56304 ..... **800-264-2940**  
 jean@granitecountry.com / www.granitecountry.com  
 World-class gardens, history that abounds, unique and famous places to visit. Creativity is key to the success of your group tour. The St. Cloud CVB takes in helping you plan the perfect St. Cloud getaway.



Arrowhead Shores

# Welcome to Northeastern Minnesota!

- BEAVER BAY
- CARLTON
- CHISHOLM
- CLOQUET
- CRANE LAKE
- DULUTH
- ELY
- EVELETH
- GARRISON
- GRAND MARAIS
- GRAND PORTAGE
- GRAND RAPIDS
- HIBBING
- HINCKLEY
- INTERNATIONAL FALLS
- LUTSEN
- MCGREGOR
- OAK ISLAND
- ONAMIA
- PRINCETON
- TAYLORS FALLS
- TOFTE
- TWO HARBORS
- VIRGINIA

## NE REGION CITIES

Red-tailed Hawk taking flight



### calendar of events

- december*
- 2 **Weihnachtsfest**, Biwabik 218-865-4183
  - 9 **Candlelight Tours**, Pine City 320-629-6356
  - 15-17 **The Nutcracker**, Duluth 218-529-3742
- january*
- 12-14 **White Oak Classic Sled Dog Race**, Grand Rapids 218-326-9775
  - 25-28 **John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon**, Duluth 218-722-7631
- february*
- 1-11 **Ely Winter Festival**, Ely 218-365-6123
  - 3 **Palisade Mid-Winter Festival**, Palisade 800-526-8342
  - 3-4 **Grenade Strikes Back!**, Duluth 800-342-6377
  - 3-7 **Wolves and Wilderness by Dogsled**, Ely 218-365-4695
  - 9-11 **Carlton Winterfest**, Carlton 218-384-4464
  - 10 **Hook 'n Slice On Ice**, Carlton 218-879-4663
  - 15-18 **Blast on the Border**, International Falls 218-283-9400
- march*
- 1-4 **Winter Tracks Festival**, Grand Marais 800-338-6932
  - 2 **Nordic Ski and Snowshoe Carnival**, McGregor 218-426-3333
  - 23-25 **Duluth World of Wheels**, Duluth 952-278-3140

Contact the CVB's for a more complete calendar.

[escortnotes.com](http://escortnotes.com)

## Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory

One of nature's remarkable spectacles can be witnessed each fall in the sky above **Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve** overlooking east **Duluth**. Migrating raptors, originating from summer breeding areas as far north as the Arctic and with wintering destinations as far south as points in South America, concentrate in impressive numbers at the western tip of **Lake Superior**.

Most raptors are reluctant to cross large bodies of water. When they migrate south and encounter Lake Superior, the birds naturally veer southwest along the lakeshore. They concentrate in impressive numbers on the bluffs and can be easily seen from the overlook at Hawk Ridge. Of the 20 species of raptors and vultures most frequently visiting Hawk Ridge, they are all thrilling to watch as they traverse the ridge, often right at or below eye level. On days with northwest winds, hundreds to even thousands of birds can be seen migrating past the Ridge. Peak migration at Hawk Ridge occurs from mid-September to late October.

Sightings made at Hawk Ridge during Fall of 2006 have already accounted for more than 36,000 broad-winged hawks, 10,000+ red-tailed hawks, over 8,000 sharp-shinned hawks, more than 2,300 bald eagles...with total bird counts of over 61,000 raptors and vultures. Surprisingly, viewers have also observed about 200 Trumpeter Swans in the mix, too!

### other birding & wildflower stops in northeast minnesota

- Sax-Zim Bog** CR 7 & CR 28  
Some say this is the place to bird in Minnesota. Species difficult to find elsewhere are often much easier in 'the bog.' Upland Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Great Gray Owl, and several more.
- Park Point Recreation Area** Duluth  
A sand dune between Lake Superior and Duluth Harbor. Offers excellent opportunity for birding. See songbirds, common terns, and the occasional peregrine falcon.
- Peloquin Wildlife Management Area** Nashauk  
Watch for ducks, herons, woodpeckers, deer, black bears, and timberwolves. There are two small impoundments, one with an observation platform.
- Bass Brook WMA** Grand Rapids  
View Yellow-throated Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, Virginia and Sora rails, and nesting Great Blue Herons. You may also spot mink, otters, beavers, and muskrats.
- Boundary Waters Canoe Area** Ely  
One of 100 Globally Important Bird Areas and home to 155

- nesting species. Famous for its populations of Bald Eagles and Ospreys.
- Great Scott Wildlife Management Area** Virginia  
A wetland home to waterfowl, songbirds, loons, eagles, fisher, moose, bear, wolves, and deer. There are more than three miles of grassy hiking trails.
- Gunflint Trail Scenic Byway** Grand Marais  
Hot spot for Black-backed Woodpeckers, Boreal Owls, or Moose. The trail is actually a road, which wanders north from Lake Superior. Also see Spruce Grouse and Boreal Chickadee.
- Gold Portage Wildlife Management Area** International Falls  
24 acres of northern boreal forest, and 776 acres of wetland, inhabited every spring and fall by migrating waterfowl. Double-crested cormorants, great blue herons, and American black ducks.
- Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge** McGregor  
18,000 acres in a mixture of forest, bog, upland and open water habitats. Over 220 species of birds, 40 species of mammals, and 16 species of reptiles and amphibians.



Yellow Lady Slipper



Ox-Eye Daisy



Lupine



Lupine



## Wildflowers ALONG THE SHORE



Prickly Wild Rose

In May, with the spring rains and warmer temperatures, the forest not only begins to green up but the wildflowers begin to appear. In May you can discover emerging varieties of ferns covering the forest floor. Also, early wildflowers like Marsh Marigolds, Bloodroot, Field Violets, Wild Strawberries and False Lily-of-the-Valley start to appear along the trails.

The wildflower season really begins to take root in the month of June. Take a casual hike along the many trails or drive the back-roads for your wildflower safari. Some of the flowers to look for at this time of year are: Tall Buttercup, Wild Sarsaparilla, Columbine, Forget-me-nots, Wild Clematis, White Clover, Indian Paintbrush, Prickly Wild Rose, Ox-Eye Daisy, Yellow Lady Slippers, Common Dogbane and the Lupine. Lupine is probably the most popular wildflower in our area and can be found alongside many roads, including Hwy 61. For more information call 888-922-5000.

## Where Rails Meet the Water HAWTHORN SUITES: AN IMPRESSIVE HERITAGE

Today's Hawthorn Suites in Duluth's Canal Park offers your group an architectural heritage experience unique to this well-appointed property.

The Marshall-Wells Hardware Company was headquartered in Duluth in 1893, operating out of the unique building now housing the Hawthorn Suites. As the largest wholesale hardware dealer in North America, Marshall-Wells operated more than 1,000 retail stores throughout the United States and Canada. As exporters, this monolithic company sold merchandise worldwide, including the Hawaiian Islands, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and into China. Their 3,880-page catalogue carried the Duluth name around the world.

The huge building where the Hawthorn Suites are located was built in 1889 (many of the Washington State Douglas Fir timbers used are still visible). As the focal point of Marshall-Wells operations, this building (and one other one right alongside and equally as large, but no longer standing) were the third largest in the world. What made them so unique was that ships loaded with Marshall-Wells hardware arriving in the Duluth harbor could moor directly to the huge warehouse to unload. After employees inventoried the shipment they would load rail cars parked within the Marshall-Wells building and send them off to the farthest reaches of the Great Northwest.

With its 107 suites that take their design from the original Marshall-Wells building, your groups will be able to experience history at the Hawthorn Suites/Duluth. And don't miss the baby grand piano in the lobby!

For group accommodations information, contact Wendy Hoornstra at 218-727-4663.



Canal Park, Duluth



877-766-2665

**HAWTHORN SUITES®**

For your "tourific" group adventure!

325 Lake Ave. South  
Duluth, MN 55802

[www.hawthornsuitesduluth.com/bus](http://www.hawthornsuitesduluth.com/bus)



# Get more than a Bogey at the GREAT LAKES AQUARIUM

The world-class Great Lakes Aquarium in Duluth is host to its very own adult bald eagle, named Bogey. Hailing from Anchorage, he was found on a golf course (hence his name), after having fallen out of his nest. Bogey was eager to get out on his own, and just too young to fly. Injuries to his wing from the fall have prevented him from going back into the wild, so he's made GLA his home.

After visiting Bogey, you can step into the Aquarium's free-flying aviary. Containing the Kakagon Slough wetland exhibit, the aviary is home to wood duck, blue winged teal, goldeneye, shorebirds, and herons, as well as largemouth bass, crappies, carp, and pumpkinseeds.

Not far away from the aviary is the aquarium's centerpiece 85,000 gallon Isle Royale exhibit, holding fish that you would find swimming in the deeper waters of Lake Superior near Isle Royale. See all kinds of trout, salmon, eels, sturgeon, walleye, burbot, smelt, and herring.

Finally, don't miss the playful otters. Great Lakes Aquarium's Otter Cove is home to our two river otters, Anang and Zhoosh. Loving to show off, you can see them swimming, resting, eating an afternoon snack, somersaulting, and even belly-flopping off the rocks!

For information about bringing your groups for a fun visit, contact the GLA at 877-866-3474.



*Birding, Bakeries and Blackjack.  
And don't forget beautiful.*



Kettle River Overlook



Hinckley Fire Museum

**Have Fun Touring Minnesota's History**

- Grand Casino Gaming
- Historic Fire Museum
- Antiques & Collectibles
- Beautiful State Parks
- Group Dining

FREE Visitors Guide & Tour Planner

EXPLORE Minnesota.com

Just 1 hour north of the Twin Cities.  
106 Old Hwy 61, Hinckley, MN  
320-384-7338 800-952-4282  
www.hinckleymn.com

This itinerary is best all year long. You'll find it at coordinates J-12 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### DAY ONE

10 – 12:30 pm

Start your trip in Sandstone at the Audubon Center of the North Woods. Stop in for a lesson on birds of prey and take in all the animals that reside in their raptor rehabilitation center and sanctuary. You're welcome to take pictures of the great horned owls, red-tailed hawks and any other bird you can spot in their enclosures.

12:30 – 2:30 pm

Take a jaunt to Hinckley for a stop at the renowned Tobie's Restaurant & Bakery for a great lunch and dessert. Be sure to take home a little something from their famed bakery.

2:30 – 5:00 pm

Head to St Croix State Park, the largest in the state where you're sure to find the perfect spot for some quiet bird watching. Then take a seat on the banks of the St. Croix or Kettle River to kick back and enjoy the view.

5 – 10:00 pm

It's decision time. Which one of the five incredible restaurants will you choose at Grand Casino – Hinckley? After dinner, try your luck in the casino, take in some live entertainment in the amphitheater, or simply retire to your room for a good night's rest.

### DAY TWO

10 – 11:30 am

Start the day off with a trip to the Hinckley Fire Museum. Go back in time to 1894 and learn about the story of the huge fire that destroyed much of the town, and how it was rebuilt.

11:30 – 2:30 pm

Bust out the binoculars and bring your birding guides to Banning State Park. You can feast on a picnic lunch and take in the scenery of this wildlife area that boasts more than 60 species of birds that can be spotted year round. You can even print out your own bird checklist from their website.

For more information or to customize this tour for your group contact your tour operator or the Hinckley CVB, 800-952-4282.



## ACCOMMODATIONS

AmericInn Carlton ..... 218-384-3535

AmericInn Duluth/Proctor ..... 866-381-1406

AmericInn Lodge & Suites Virginia ..... 218-741-7839

▶ **Grand Portage Lodge & Casino** ..... 218-475-2401

70 Casino Drive, PO Box 233 – Grand Portage, MN 55605 ..... 800-543-1384

gportage@tbaytel.net / www.grandportagemn.com

Experience fun and excitement at Grand Portage Lodge & Casino ... the North Shore's only Casino Resort. Exceptional entertainment. Spectacular events. Exhilarating promotions, a perfect destination.

AC, AS, DC, DF, E, 24, YR, PO, RO, SA, SP

▶ **Hawthorn Suites** ..... 218-727-4663

325 Lake Avenue South – Duluth, MN 55802

wendyh@hawthornsuitesduluth.com / www.hawthornsuitesduluth.com/bus

Complimentary: full hot breakfast buffet, escort room, spacious motorcoach parking, welcome reception and personal greeting with gifts. Located in historic Canal Park. "All-Oversized-Suites" to pamper our guests. Indoor pool, whirlpool, and sauna. We add to your "tourific" group adventure!

Rodeway Inn Fargo ..... 866-239-8022

▶ **Sawmill Inn of Grand Rapids** ..... 218-326-8501

2301 South Highway 169 – Grand Rapids, MN 55744 ..... 800-235-6455

sawmill@uslink.net / www.sawmill.com

The area's largest full-service hotel. 124 rooms including six suites, indoor swimming pool, whirlpool and sauna. Cedars Dining Room and Lounge. Banquet and meeting facilities up to 400. Golf Packages and snowmobile rates available.

AC, AS, BH, DC, DF, GB, GD, H, KO, MG, 24, YR, PM, PO, PA, RO, SA, SP

## ATTRACTIONS

▶ **Hinckley Fire Museum** ..... 320-348-7338

106 Old Highway 61 South - Hinckley, MN 55037

An old depot now serves as the museum, which pays homage to the Great Hinckley Fire of 1894. Visit the museum to learn this unforgettable story of the firestorm that raged through the area destroying this prospering town and neighboring communities.

Mille Lacs Indian Museum Onamia ..... 320-532-3632

## CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAUS AND CHAMBERS

▶ **Hinckley CVB** ..... 320-384-0126

109 Tobies Mill - Hinckley, MN 55037 ..... 800-952-4282

hinckleycvb@scicable.com / www.hinckleymn.com

Halfway between the Twin Cities & Duluth on I-35, experience small town hospitality & big city entertainment! The Hinckley Fire Museum, Grand Casino, 6 hotels, 16 restaurants, antiques & collectibles shopping, birding & wildlife.

▶ **Iron Range Tourism Bureau** ..... 218-749-8161

403 North First Street - Virginia, MN 55792 ..... 800-777-8497

admin@irontrail.org / www.irontrail.org

A Great Way to Getaway! Unbeatable accommodations, unmatched recreational opportunities and our "Up North" hospitality make the Iron Trail the perfect location for groups and meetings any size, any time of year! Call today!

AC, AS, CA, DC, E, GD, GT, H, KO, MG, PM, PO

# MINNESOTA mystery.tour

Put yourself to the test and guess  
where this tour takes place.

Find the answer to this Mystery Tour on  
the Reader Response Insert.

This sample itinerary can be customized for anytime of the year.

### DAY ONE

11:30 – 1:00 pm

Upon arriving at this location, you and your guests will be seated to watch an hour-long live presentation on birds and birding areas of your interest. Once completed, take a gander at the 30 large birds housed here for rehabilitation until they are well enough to be released back into the Minnesota wild.

1 – 3:00 pm

After your visit, a short drive down the road will take you on a guided tour (optional) of this museum. If you like life-like dioramas, then you'll really like this place! Their museum has a whole room of critters, (some furry, some feathery). After your tour, you can explore on your own, and return to any favorite exhibits such as the "Touch and See" Room, Rainforest Canopy, or any one of the fascinating traveling exhibits.

3 – 7:00 pm

Travel a little further down the road and spend the remainder of your day taking in all the stores this massive shopping hub has to offer. Be sure you check out **The Wild Bird Center**; a small, family-owned shop that specializes in birds and bird feeding. They carry everything from books to birdseed, t-shirts to wildlife art, and even wave-makers for your birdbath.

7 – 8:30pm

Break from shopping in time to meet up with your gang at a naturally themed restaurant. Here you'll dine in a tropical environment bustling with vegetation, animatronic animals and delicious cuisine.

9:00 pm

Check in to the **Country Inn and Suites** to relax and rest up for the next day.

### DAY TWO

9 – 10:00 am

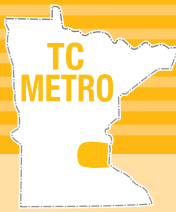
Enjoy complimentary breakfast at the Country Inn and Suites before boarding the bus.

10 – 10:30 am

Just a short drive to the new day's destination.

10:30 am – 3:30 pm

Guides and their guests will spend an entire day here watching the 408 species of animals that call this popular destination their home. Don't miss the bird show at 1:00 pm. Nowhere else in Minnesota will you see a Keel-billed toucan on the same stage as a great horned owl along with 17 other varieties of birds — with a message about the importance of habitat conservation. Lunch at one of the cafés, and make your way to the gigantic theater for a feature film.



*Skylines & Shorelines*

# Welcome to Twin Cities Metro MN!

METRO REGION CITIES

- AFTON
- ALBERTVILLE
- APPLE VALLEY
- ARDEN HILLS
- BLOOMINGTON
- BURNSVILLE
- CHANHASSEN
- CHASKA
- EAGAN
- EXCELSIOR
- LAKEVILLE
- MINNEAPOLIS
- ROSEVILLE
- SHAKOPEE
- SAINT PAUL
- STILLWATER



*Lady's slipper - Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden & Bird Sanctuary*

## calendar of events

*december*

- 1-Feb 4 **Snowball! Winter Fun**, Minnesota Children's Museum, Saint Paul 651-225-6000
- 1-Jan 3 **Arboretum Holiday Teas**, Chaska 612-624-7173
- 2 **Folkways of the Holidays**, Shakopee 763-694-7784
- 2 **No Coast Craft-o-rama 2006**, Minneapolis 612-281-1161
- 2-9 **Bird Watching Trek**, Burnsville 952-854-5900
- 3 **Old Fashioned Holiday at Holz Farm**, Eagan 888-324-2620
- Wknds **Saturday Special Features**, Saint Paul 651-296-2881
- 31 **Grande New Year's Eve Gala**, Burnsville 952-808-1111
- 31 **New Years Eve on Ice**, Roseville 651-792-7007

*january*

- 4-6 **Vanska Conducts Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake**, Minneapolis 800-292-4141
- 20-Feb 11 **100 Men's Wife**, Saint Paul 651-292-4323
- 26-Feb 4 **2007 Saint Paul Winter Carnival**, Saint Paul 651-223-4700

*february*

- 2-3 **Healthy Life Expo ~ The Big One**, Minneapolis 952-238-1700
- 10 **Valentine Snowshoe Event**, Monticello 612-529-0552
- 18 **Urban Expedition**, Saint Paul 651-292-3225
- 2-4 **MBOTMA's Winter Bluegrass Festival**, Plymouth 612-285-9133
- 17 **Cabin Fever Day**, Chisago City 651-257-1017
- 27 **American Ballet Theatre**, Minneapolis 612-624-2345

*march*

- 2-4 **MBOTMA's Winter Bluegrass Festival**, Plymouth 612-285-9133
- 17 **Cabin Fever Day**, Chisago City 651-257-1017
- 27 **American Ballet Theatre**, Minneapolis 612-624-2345

Contact the CVB's for a more complete calendar.

[escortnotes.com](http://escortnotes.com)

## Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden & Bird Sanctuary

The oldest public wildflower garden in the nation. The woodland, swamp and prairie areas provide visitors with a seasonal display of native wildflowers. The meandering trail through this garden is approximately 2/3 of a mile long. Due to the trail structure, this park is not wheelchair accessible. April and May feature blooms of bloodroot, wild ginger, trilliums, marsh marigolds and other spring ephemerals in the woodland. Lady's slippers, irises, and turtleheads bring color to the wetland in June and July. The prairie comes into its glory in mid-to-late summer as the asters, black-eyed susans, blazing stars, and goldenrods come into bloom. The golden glow of big bluestem and other prairie grasses keep the prairie beautiful throughout the fall.

### other birding & wildflower stops in tc metro minnesota

**Battle Creek Regional Park** Saint Paul  
Over 750 acres of oak woods, old fields, creek and second-growth woodlands provide habitat for a variety of wildlife, such as warblers, horned owls, pileated woodpeckers, and more.

**Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area** Forest Lake  
Over 20,000 acres of marshland, lakes and swamp, best visited in migration when the songbirds come through in large numbers. Summer brings the Bald Eagle, Sandhill Crane, Sedge Wren, and Golden-winged Warbler.

**Cliff Fen Park** Burnsville  
Marsh, prairie and fen surrounded by forests provides homes to migratory waterfowl, songbirds, shorebirds, eagles year-round, and other raptors. Wildflowers and butterflies, seasonally.

**Crosby Farm/Hidden Falls Park** Saint Paul  
On the east bank of the Mississippi River, Hidden Falls begins 7 miles north of the Mississippi's confluence with the Minnesota River, continuing south to Crosby Farm Park. Great egrets, belted kingfishers, herons and black-billed cuckoos are just some of the birds to look for.

**Friends of the Mississippi River** Saint Paul  
Offering free interpretive tours and outings for the public. Programs include birding and wildlife watching at natural areas in the metro region.

**Lost Valley Prairie SNA** Afton  
A series of limestone ridges and dry swales, or lowlands,

where a rich collection of native prairie grasses thrive. Birds found within the 200-acre area include clay-colored and Vesper sparrows, and indigo buntings.

**Maplewood Nature Center & Neighborhood Preserves** Maplewood. Wetland exhibit; 620' floating boardwalk; bird feeding station; binocular and snowshoe rental. Water garden, prairie restoration, butterfly and rainwater gardens.

**Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge** Bloomington  
Offering a wide variety of activities year round. See the hundreds of species of birds that use the Refuge as a stop over in their long migration. The rains will bring the flowers -- look for the many different colors of the prairie grasslands.

**Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge** Zimmerman  
Wildlife refuge/sanctuary preserving and restoring oak savanna, wetland, and prairie habitat for an array of wildlife. Bald eagles, sandhill cranes, hawks, loons, ducks, and geese may be seen.

**T.S. Roberts Bird Sanctuary** Minneapolis  
13 acre preserve that lies within the busy area of Lake Harriet in Minneapolis. Wetlands, wet prairie, and forest, attract a variety of birds. Over 200 species have been identified.

**The Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota**  
An up-close experience with live raptors that you will always remember. Specializing in the medical care, rehabilitation, and conservation of eagles, hawks, owls, and falcons.

## *Blazing Fall Color & Fabulous Fall Blooms*

This sample itinerary is best fall or spring. You'll find it at coordinates F-12 on your 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### **9 – 12:00 pm**

Start your tour at the **Minnesota Arboretum** as you take in the splendor of the autumn season by boarding the **Tram** for a trip through the Arboretum's Sugar Maple collection in the peak of fall color. Enjoy the prairie wildflowers, chrysanthemums, dahlias, and ornamental grasses at their best. Observe the birds, learn their calls and discover the creatures and plants that share habitats.

### **12 – 1:30 pm**

Enjoy lunch at the Arboretum – uniquely served in a flowerpot your group can take home, followed by some fun shopping in the gift store.

### **1:30 – 5:30 pm**

Hear the history of the **Shakopee** area as a guide boards your bus and takes you to areas that are decked out in beautiful fall color as you head down to **Emma Krumbee's Orchard & Farm**. The fun and exciting activities will begin as you have a chance to view the **Great Scarecrow Festival** going into its 23rd year with 100 unique and handcrafted scarecrows on display. Climb on board a wagon to take a tour of the magnificent orchard and the great pumpkin patch. Pick up some of your favorite apples to take home.

### **5:30 – 7:00 pm**

Eating at Emma Krumbee's will bring back memories of sitting at grandma's table in the fall. Enjoy plates piled high with delicious homemade food, and served with a warm and friendly smile.

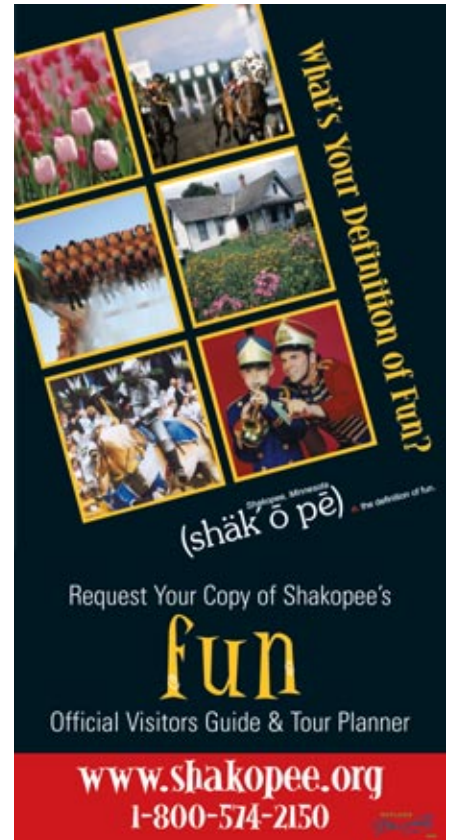
### **7 – 8:00 pm**

Check into your Shakopee hotel and receive a great welcome from the staff.

### **8 – 9:30 pm**

Participate in the **WALK WHEN THE MOON IS FULL** program and you will experience this wonder and discover the nighttime world of **Three Rivers Park District**. Enjoy this award-winning outdoor interpretive program that takes place on the night of the full moon.

**For more information or to customize this tour for your group, contact your tour operator or Carol Anderson at the Shakopee Chamber and Visitors Bureau, 800-574-2150.**


Minnesota Landscape  
**ARBORETUM**

## *A spectacular year-round destination.*

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## Macy's/Bachman's FLOWER SHOW 2007

Saturday, March 24 through Saturday, April 7

The show will have an African theme inspired by Rwandan "peace baskets" crafted out of papyrus and banana leaves, by female Rwandan weavers, many widowed by genocide. South African celebrity horticulturist, Keith Kristen will direct the selection of plant materials that will represent several geographic regions in Africa.

In a departure from the past, the flower show will be held entirely on the first floor of Macy's downtown Minneapolis store. Flowers will be displayed in planters and on ledges and overhead bridges, similar to the shows at Macy's Herald Square location in New York City.

For more information please call Bachman's Floral/Garden Center, 612-861-7600.



## *A Tropical Rain Forest in Southern Metro?*

This itinerary can be customized for any time of the year. You'll find it on coordinates K-16 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of *Itineraries Minnesota Magazine*.



### DAY ONE

12 – 2:00 pm

Enjoy lunch aboard the elegant cruise liner, **Spirit of the Water**, while you float down the scenic **Mississippi River**. Note: Summer & Fall Cruises available with special group rates.

2 – 6:00 pm

Golfers are challenged with each hole at **Mt. Frontenac's** 18-hole golf course. Play with beautiful views along

the rolling hills of southeastern **Minnesota** and the **Mississippi River Valley**. Non-golfers can enjoy shopping in the area towns or try their luck at the casino!

6 – 7:00 pm

Experience the taste of the tropics every day. From fine dining to a quick snack – **Treasure Island Resort & Casino** offers four restaurants that are sure to satisfy any appetite.

7 – 10:00 pm

With more than 2,500 state-of-the-art slot machines, 44 blackjack tables and a 550-seat high stakes bingo hall all in the Caribbean-themed casino, your group is sure to have a blast — and maybe even win some treasures of their own.

10:00 pm

Relax in a tropical-theme hotel room, or take a swim in the lush, rainforest pool environment.

### DAY TWO

9 – 10:00 am

Before you head home, enjoy brunch in the **Tradewinds Buffet**, with a variety of creative cuisines to tempt any palate.

For more information on this sample itinerary contact your tour operator or **Treasure Island Resort & Casino**, 800-7077 ext. 2863.

## Stop and Smell the Roses in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul Area

This sample itinerary is good in the fall, spring or summer. You'll find it at coordinates I-6 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of *Itineraries Minnesota Magazine*.

### DAY ONE

**3 – 4:00 pm**

Arrive in **Minneapolis** and check into a downtown hotel.

**4 – 5:00 pm**

Discover the sites and sounds of **Nicollet Mall**, from a variety of shopping venues, dining, and the newly constructed **Minneapolis Public Library**.

**5 – 6:00 pm**

Enjoy a free concert on **Peavey Plaza** or at the **Minneapolis Riverfront District**.

**6 – 8:00 pm**

Dinner and bird-watching overlooking the **Mississippi at Pracna on Main**, the oldest restaurant on the oldest street in Minneapolis.

**8 – 10:30 pm**

Take in a Broadway play downtown or a performance at the Tony award-winning **Guthrie Theater**.

### DAY TWO

**8:30 – 10:00 am**

Enjoy breakfast downtown at any one of the fabulous restaurants.

**10 – 11:00 am**

Drive the 50-miles of **Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway** and discover the beauty of the **Mississippi River & the Chain of Lakes**.

**11 – 12:00 pm**

Stop at **Eloise Butler Garden & Bird Sanctuary**, the oldest public wildflower garden in the U.S.

*Closed Bud Hyssop*



**12 – 2:00 pm**

Enjoy lunch at one of our group-friendly restaurants in eclectic **Uptown**, Minneapolis.

**2 – 3:00 pm**

Take a free step-on-guide tour of **Lakewood Cemetery**, where 95,000 flowers are planted annually and impressive Byzantine mosaics can be found.

**3 – 4:30 pm**

Take tea in the **Medicinal Garden** at the **Bakken Science Museum** on the west side of **Lake Calhoun**.

**4:30 – 6:00 pm**

Take a ride back in time on a **Como-Harriet Street Car Line** at **Lake Harriet**. Visit the bird sanctuary, rose gardens and peace gardens near Lake Harriet.

**6 – 8:00 pm**

Enjoy a catered picnic box lunch while listening to live music (seasonal) at the **Lake Harriet Bandshell**.

### DAY THREE

**8 – 9:00 am**

Breakfast at your hotel.

**9 – 10:30 am**

Stroll the largest urban **Sculpture Garden** in the country, and visit **Frank Gehry's Standing Glass Fish** located in the **Cowles Conservatory**.

**10:30 – 12:30 pm**

Enjoy a free rose as you tour **Bachman's Floral, Gift & Garden** in South Minneapolis.

**12:30 – 2:00 pm**

Unique flowerpot lunch at the **Minnesota Landscape**

**Arboretum.**

**2 – 6:00 pm**

Explore over 1,000 acres of unique public gardens at the **Minnesota Landscape Arboretum**.

**6 – 10:00 pm**

See a show at the nation's largest dinner theater - **Chanhasen Dinner Theatres**.

For more information on this sample itinerary contact your tour operator or **Lori Kampa Kearney** at the **Greater Minneapolis CVA, 800-445-7412**.



Contact Lori Kearney:

[lorik@meetminneapolis.com](mailto:lorik@meetminneapolis.com)

1.800.445.7412, ext. 8114

[www.minneapolis.org/grouptravel](http://www.minneapolis.org/grouptravel)

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MEET Minneapolis

Official Convention + Visitors Association

Guthrie Theater



Holidazzle Parade



American Swedish Institute window

*Bak Humbugs Need Not Apply*

This itinerary works best December 3, 17 or 23. You'll find it at coordinates I-8 on the 2007 Annual Showcase Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

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**DAY ONE**

**3 – 5:30 pm**

Check into your hotel. Then experience Minnesota's warmest holiday tradition as the **Guthrie Theater** stage is transformed into Victorian England for the annual presentation of **Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol**. Rekindle your own Christmas spirit as Ebenezer Scrooge reawakens to the real meaning of the season's peace and goodwill.

**5:30 – 7:30 pm**

Stroll **Nicollet Mall** and enjoy the holiday displays. Enjoy a cup of hot cocoa and a snack at one of the many downtown coffee shops. Secure your spot in the Skyway system or join the hustle and bustle on Nicollet Mall to view the **Holidazzle Parade** – a 30-minute holiday extravaganza filled with all the energy and excitement of the season. A very special guest always makes an appearance here (HINT: he wears a red suit and has an impressive white beard).

**7:30 – 9:00 pm**

Enjoy dinner at any one of dozens of Downtown cafes or restaurants (some reservations requires) or simply continue your exploration of the vibrant Minneapolis Downtown.

**DAY TWO**

**9 – 10:00 am**

Enjoy a hot, full breakfast at your hotel before you start your Christmas in Sweden, so to speak, at the **American Swedish Institute**.

**10:30 – 1:30 pm**

Tour the beautiful 33-room mansion's **Christmas in Scandinavia** with traditional decorated trees and table settings for each Nordic country. Learn about Swedish traditions through the exhibit of illumination of a Saint. Schedule a **Fika Tour** of traditional coffee and cookies, a traditional **Swedish Smorgasbord** or a savory soup and open-faced sandwiches, always a satisfying lunch.

**1:30 – 2:00 pm**

Experience distinctive shopping at the Institute's **Museum Shop** offering imported Swedish and Scandinavian gifts.

For more information on planning this sample itinerary contact your tour operator or the Guthrie Theater, 877-44-STAGE; Holidazzle Parade, 612-376-SNOW; or American Swedish Institute, 612-871-4907.



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This delicious event is the very popular Annual Chocolate March that teams up the Inns of the Scenic St. Croix River Valley with area Chocolatiers. Three different itineraries are available Sundays in March of 2007. Groups can tour up to 4 or 5 unique and exceptional Bed and Breakfasts, Country Inns and Victorian style inns - and at the same time enjoy delectable chocolate tastings at every stop in each itinerary. Many of the inns offer special weekend packages that include tickets to the Chocolate March, and in many cases work together to accommodate and cater to group needs.

Private Tour dates also available with selected Inns along with optional wine tasting stops. For advanced reservations and availability call Kathy at 651-436-8883.



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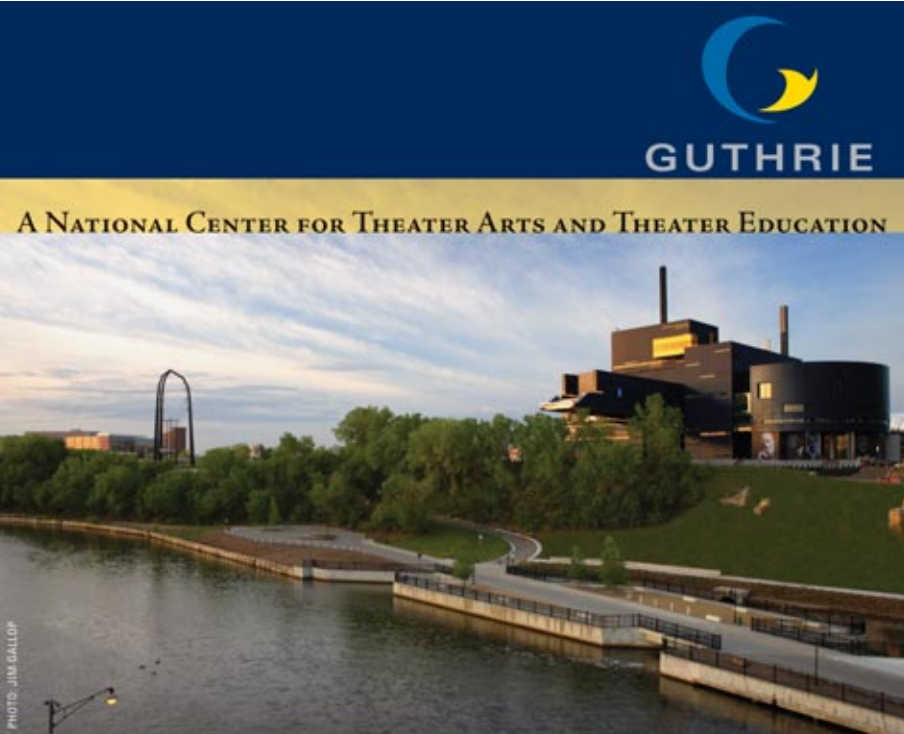
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[www.scandiamn.com/gammelgarten](http://www.scandiamn.com/gammelgarten)



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*Experience the Wonders of Nature in Bloomington*

This sample itinerary is good in the fall, spring, or summer. You'll find it at coordinates J-10 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of *Itineraries Minnesota Magazine*.

**DAY ONE**

**3 – 3:30 pm**

Check into your **Bloomington** hotel and dress for the crisp fall outdoors.

**3:30 – 6:00 pm**

Explore 2,200 acres of floodplain forest, ponds, spring-fed streams and marsh in the **Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge**. The refuge has more than 260 bird species. Stop by the visitors center to learn about area wildlife and migrating water fowl.

**6 – 7:00 pm**

Back to the hotel to freshen up before dinner.

**7 – 9:00 pm**

Imagine you're in the movies with dinner at **Bubba Gump Shrimp Co.** located on the third level of **Mall of America**.

**DAY TWO**

**9 – 10:00 am**

Breakfast at your hotel.

**10 – 12:00 pm**

Take a self-guided tour through **Normandale Japanese Gardens**. Experience traditional Japanese Garden elements including bridges, stone lanterns, streams and

waterfalls. Call ahead of time to schedule a guided tour for your group.

**12 – 2:00 pm**

**Hyland Lake Park Reserve** is a great location to bird watch and enjoy the natural surroundings. Six major bodies of water and wetlands provide a habitat for Cooper's hawks, woodpeckers, common loons and



woodcocks to name a few.

**2 – 3:30 pm**

Hop on the bus and head over to **Mall of America** to enjoy country Italian lunch in a charming and rustic setting at **Tucci Benuccii**. Indulge yourself with pasta, thin crust pizza and fresh fish.

**3:30 – 8:00 pm**

Discover over 520 retail offerings, an indoor amusement park, and the underground aquarium at the country's largest shopping mall.

**DAY THREE**

**9 – 10:00 am**

Have breakfast at the hotel and check out.

**10 – 3:00 pm**

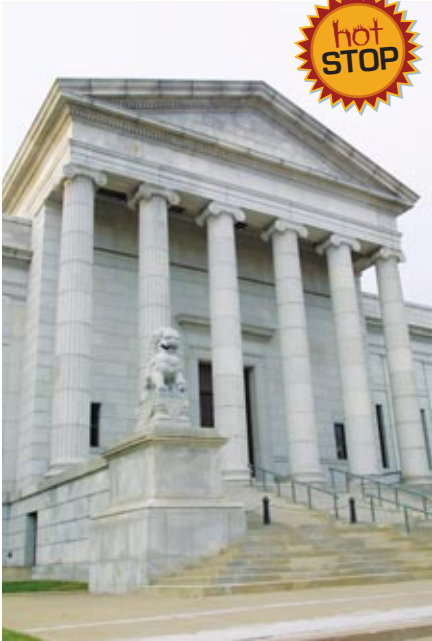
Catch the miracle of flight by attending the **World of Birds** show at the **Minnesota Zoo**. The show introduces birds from around the world including owls, hawks, parrots, macaws, and was designed to educate viewers of the birds' free-flight natural behavior.

**3:00 pm**

Say good-bye to Bloomington until next time, and depart for home.

**For more information or to customize this itinerary for your group, contact your tour operator or Julie Giorgio at the Bloomington CVB, 866-435-7425.**

# The Minneapolis INSTITUTE OF ARTS



**T**he Minneapolis Institute of Arts is one of the leading comprehensive fine art museums in the country. Located in a beautiful landmark building near downtown Minneapolis, the museum houses nearly 100,000 works of art representing more than 5,000 years of world art and culture. General admission, parking, and public tours are all free of charge.

**Free Tours:** Guided tours are free Tuesday through Sunday at 1 p.m.; Thursday at 7 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. For groups of 15 or more, call (612) 870-3140. **Audio Tours:** Quick Stops audio tours allow visitors to connect with art at their own pace (\$4 rental for adults, \$3 for children). **Museum Shop:** Distinctive gifts, jewelry, and books are on display in the shop, open during museum hours. **Dining:** ArtsBreak and ArtsCafé by D'Amico & Sons offer delicious on-site dining options. **Museum Hours:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday 10 am–5 pm; Thursday 10 am–9 pm; Sunday 11 am–5 pm; Monday Closed.

**Upcoming Exhibitions:**

October 8, 2006 to January 7, 2007

A Passion for Paintings: Old Masters from the Wadsworth Atheneum

February 18, 2007 to May 6, 2007

An American Vision: Henry Francis du Pont's Winterthur Museum

June 24, 2007 to September 2, 2007

A Mirror of Nature: Nordic Landscape Painting 1840-1900

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## Gourmet Getaway

This itinerary is great for any time of the year. You'll find it at coordinates K-10 on the 2006 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### DAY ONE

#### 2 – 4:00 pm

Begin your culinary experience at the centerpiece of the world's flour milling industry, the **Mill City Museum** in **Minneapolis**. An elevator ride takes you to all eight stories of the **Flour Tower**. See legendary Betty Crocker through the ages and visit the baking lab to sample the daily baked goods.

#### 4:30 – 5:30 pm

Check into your **Eagan** hotel to unpack and relax before dinner.

#### 5:30 – 7:00 pm

Have dinner at one of the best restaurants in the **Twin Cities** — **Jensen's Supper Club**. Prime rib, seafood and spirited entertainment give Jensen's that classy, intimate dining experience.

#### 8:00 pm

**Plymouth Playhouse** serves up laughter with the new



Church Basement Ladies

musical comedy, "**Church Basement Ladies**." The play is based on the bestselling book, "Growing Up Lutheran."

### DAY TWO

#### 9:30 – 11:00 am

Start your day off in true Swedish style with a trip to **IKEA**. This one-of-a-kind home furnishings retailer is located adjacent to the **Mall of America** and features a delicious breakfast for only \$.99. You'll also want to try their delicious Swedish coffee while browsing through the store.

#### 11:30 – 2:30 pm

Have a light lunch at the **American Swedish Institute** and tour the magnificent mansion and gift shop afterwards. The **Turnblad Mansion**, which houses the Institute, is on

the National Register of Historic Places and is the only castle in the Twin Cities!

#### 3 – 5:30 pm

Put on your own apron and roll up your shirtsleeves as you prepare to master your own culinary interests at the **International Chef's Culinary Institute**. Let "Chef Jeff" help you prepare your tasty dinner and pair it up with a fine wine.

For more information or to customize your itinerary, please contact your tour operator or Denise Olsen at the **Eagan Convention & Visitors Bureau** at 1-866-EAGAN-20.



American Swedish Institute  
Architecture

## Outdoors to Explore...



Padelford Riverboats

This sample itinerary is best in the Fall, Spring or Summer. You'll find it at coordinates K-7 on your 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

### DAY ONE

#### 3 – 5:00 pm

Upon your arrival to the **Twin Cities**, you'll have "**An Electrifying Experience**" at the **Bakken**. This unique museum focuses on the history of electricity and magnetism. After the tour, you'll check into your hotel

in **Roseville**.

#### 5 – 10:00 pm

This evening discover sharks and stingrays at **Underwater Adventures** in the **Mall of America**. Explore this wonderful exhibit filled with 4,500 sea creatures. End your evening with free time to explore the massive Mall of America.

### DAY TWO

#### 8 – 10:00 am

Rejuvenate with breakfast at your hotel before heading to the **Raptor Center**, one of the nation's premier homes to "birds of prey" research.

#### 10 – 11:30 am

Next up, the **Bell Museum of Natural History** will teach you some facts and highlights about wildlife.

#### 11:30 – 2:00 pm

After your tour, it's off to see the beauty of the **Marjorie McNeely Conservatory**. You'll begin your adventure with lunch, followed by a behind the scenes tour. Half an acre under glass, the elegant conservatory is a celebration of the living earth. Plentiful collections of orchids, bromeliads, palms, ferns and bonsai. In winter, its steamy glass dome is a perfect escape from Minnesota's rigorous climate.

#### 2 – 4:30 pm

Tonight, come aboard the **Padelford Riverboats** for their

**Fall Color Cruise**. Your journey begins with dinner and proceeds with a narrative tour about the **Mississippi River**. See spectacular fall colors with the occasional bald eagle soaring overhead.

#### 4:30 pm

The evening is of your own accord. Enjoy a theatre performance or just relax at the hotel.

### DAY THREE

#### 9 – 10:30 am

Have breakfast at your hotel before you check-out. Prior to departure, you'll receive a special send off from the **Roseville Visitors Association**, a complimentary rose for every guest.

#### 10:30 – 1:00 pm

Next, it's time to visit your friends at the **Minnesota Zoo**. You can watch a dolphin show, ride the monorail, go to the **IMAX Theater** and see more than 3,000 animals in their natural habitats.

#### 1:00 pm

Depart for home.

For more information on this sample itinerary please contact your tour operator or the **Roseville Visitors Association**, 877-980-3002.


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# PADEL FORD



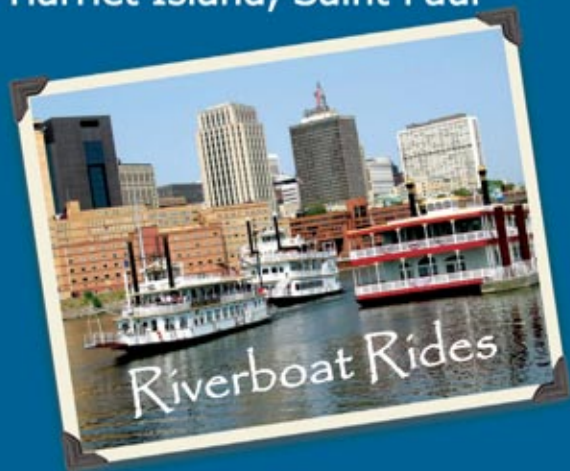
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## Pre-Holiday Trumpeter Trip

This sample itinerary is suggested for November thru December. You'll find it at coordinates B-2 on your 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of Itineraries Minnesota Magazine.

Within mid-Minnesota lies the beautiful river city of **Monticello**. Winter always brings a treat to our **Mississippi River** in the graceful form of the **Trumpeter Swans**. Nearly 1000 of these incredible birds appear at our **Mississippi Drive Park**.

### DAY ONE

**11 – 11:45 am**

Bring your cameras, because there is no place like this in Minnesota. View hundreds of once-endangered Trumpeter Swans as they visit the 'swan lady' for lunch. You will definitely be up close - within 100 feet of some of the most fabulous birds to grace our planet. More than a 1000 pounds of food per day keep the Trumpeters returning for holiday treats.

**12 – 1:30 pm**

**Crostini Grille** awaits your arrival with a freshly prepared lunch of Italian pastas, salads, and wonderful sandwiches. This restaurant is sure to satisfy.

**1:30 – 2:30 pm**

Check in at the **Best Western Chelsea Inn and Suites**.

This wonderful hotel offers a beautiful breakfast area, pool, whirlpool and a variety of nicely appointed rooms and suites.

**2:30 – 4:00 pm**

Peruse downtown Monticello and enjoy **Dragonfly Home Décor**, one of central Minnesota's largest gift stores. Sneak in the biggest piece of homemade pie you'll ever see at **Dino's Cornerstone Café** (no calories, of course!)

**4:15 – 6:00 pm**

Hop to it, you're heading to the **Outlets of Albertville**, just four miles away. You will be shopping at only half of the outlets on day one. The Outlets are full of bargains and you'll be visiting again tomorrow, so take it slow and enjoy yourself.

**7:00 pm**

Visit one of Minnesota's largest movie theaters, where the new gigantic screen will bring action even close. With sixteen screens, it's a great place to get away and slow down this holiday season.

### DAY TWO

**9:30 – 11:00 am**

The **Historic Rand House Bed and Breakfast** awaits your arrival for coffee, tea and famous homemade scones. Tour this mansion and relax a minute or two in old world elegance, surrounded by incredible antiques and a



Trumpeter Swans

gracious hostess.

**11 – 11:30 am**

Take one last peek at the lovely Trumpeters and a few more photographs, but save a little film for your next stop.

**11:30 am**

Lunch with a great view and beautiful atmosphere awaits you as **Russell's on the Lake** offers you fine dining, and their fantastic famous salad bar.

**For more information and to customize the tour for your group, call your tour operator or contact Monticello Chamber of Commerce at 763-795-2700.**

# Check Our Daily Flights...

## It's a departure from the ordinary.

- Shop our Antique, Art & Specialty Shops then visit the Outlets at Albertville just four miles away
- Enjoy the show at the Monticello Comfort Inn Dinner Theatre
- View nearly 800 Trumpeter Swans on the Mississippi River

For additional information please call the Monticello Chamber of Commerce at (763) 295-2700 or visit our web site:

[www.monticellochamber.com](http://www.monticellochamber.com)

## Discover Monticello!

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## *On Wings of Miracles and Joy*

This sample itinerary is best in spring. You'll find it at coordinates I-12 on the 2007 Annual Group Travel Map distributed in this issue of *Itineraries Minnesota Magazine*.

Burnsville is located just 20 minutes from the downtown areas of both **Minneapolis** and **Saint Paul**. With more than 3,300 acres of parks and wildlife refuge lands, **Burnsville** offers easy access to the **Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge** at **Cliff Fen Park**.

### **DAY ONE**

**4 – 5:00 pm**

Arrive in **Burnsville** and receive the "red carpet" welcome at your Burnsville Hotel. Relax before the evening's activities.

**5 – 7:00 pm**

Dinner choices in Burnsville are many. **The Chart House** just south of Burnsville, has been a favorite for groups tours with their award-winning cuisine and impeccable service. Guaranteed a unique dining experience.

**7 – 10:00 pm**

(2007 dates: **March 30, 31 and April 1, 5, 6, 7**)

Enjoy an outstanding new production by Lowell Lundstrom at **Celebration Church**. Experience a joyous Easter celebration "**Beyond the Cross**" as you journey back in time to when Jesus transformed the lives of ordinary people – one person, one miracle at a time.

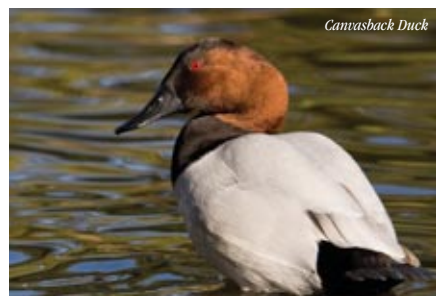
### **DAY TWO**

**5 – 6:00 am**

Rise and shine with breakfast at your hotel and board your motorcoach.

**6 – 2:00 pm**

Head to **Fort Snelling State Park**, where you'll find one of the highest totals for bird species recorded then any Minnesota state park. On **Gun Club Lake**, waterfowl congregate by the thousands in spring and fall. This is a great lake to see Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked



*Canvasback Duck*

Duck, and Lesser Scaup. You'll also see many other species. Field Lunch.

**2 – 3:00 pm**

Take a break as we head out to the next location. A quick shopping stop into one of the many **Wild Birds Unlimited Nature Shop** for any new gear or gifts you might be needing or even a lesson in choosing the right binoculars.

**3 – 4:30 pm**

A popular birding spot is the **Bass Ponds** and **Long**

**Meadow Lake** area of the **Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge**. The refuge is one of the best places for conveniently viewing birds during spring migration. Your group can see large numbers of ducks, geese and Tundra Swan congregate to feed and rest.

**4:30 – 5:30 pm**

Head back to your Burnsville hotel to freshen up before the night's entertainment!

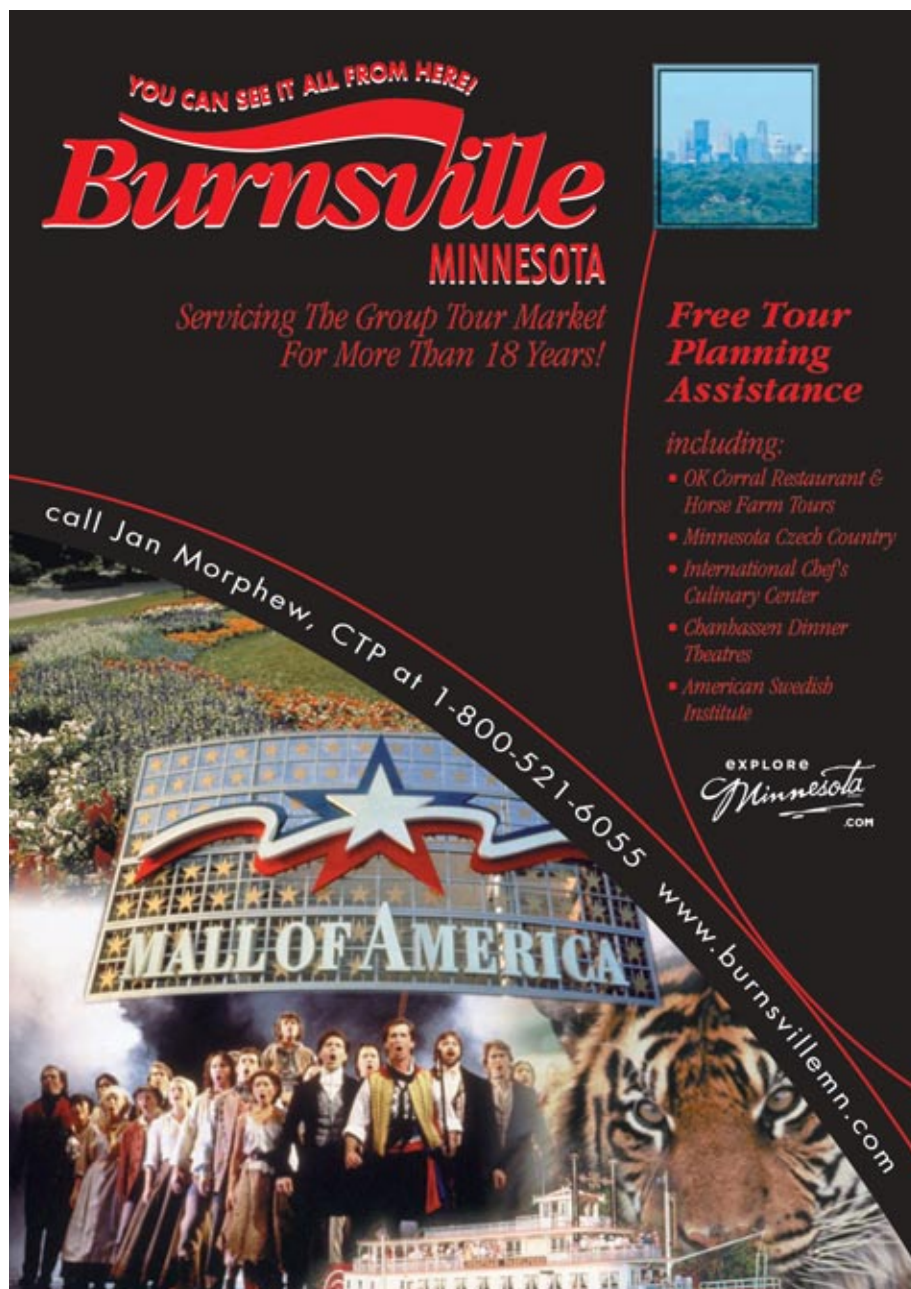
**5:30 – 10:00 pm**

(2007 dates: **February 9 thru June 9**)

Depart the hotel to the **Chanhassen Dinner Theater** to

see the musical, "**Easter Parade**". "Easter Parade" follows the hopes, dreams and loves of a classic song & dance team. Currently being created by **Brindisi, Briggs and Co.** will transform songs into production numbers and showstoppers, filling the stage with lush colors, sizzling dance sequences and a magical story.

For more information or to customize your tour into the Burnsville area, contact your tour operator or Jan Morphew, Burnsville CVB, 800-521-6055.



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## KEY SYMBOLS

**AC**-Air Conditioned **AS**-Alcohol Served **BH**-Baggage Handling **CA**-Call Ahead **DC**-Dining/Casual **DF**-Dining/Fine **E**-Entertainment **GB**-Group Buffet  
**GD**-Group Discounts **GT**-Guided Tours **H**-Handicapped Access **KO**-Kids OK **MG**-Meet/Greet Service **24**-Open 24 hours **YR**-Open Year Round  
**PM**-Parking/Motorcoach **PO**-Parking/Onsite **PA**-Pets Allowed **RO**-Restaurant Onsite **RN**-Restaurant Nearby **SA**-Smoking Allowed **SP**-Swimming Pool

## ACCOMMODATIONS

### ▶ **AmericInn** ..... 952-445-6775

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 shakopee.mn@americinn.com  
 Something for everyone! Great central location; less than 4 miles from Mystic Lake Casino, Canterbury Park, Valleyfair, and Murphy's Landing. Less than 20 miles from the Mall of America and MSP Airport. 108 foot waterslide.

### AmericInn Airport/Mall of America Richfield ..... 800-634-3444

### AmericInn Lodge & Suites Brooklyn Center ..... 763-566-7500

### AmericInn of Annandale Annandale ..... 320-274-3006

### AmericInn of Chanhassen Chanhassen ..... 952-934-3888

### AmericInn of Hastings Hastings ..... 651-437-8877

### AmericInn of Long Lake Long Lake ..... 952-475-4422

### AmericInn of Moundsview Moundsview ..... 763-476-2140

### AmericInn of Stillwater Stillwater ..... 651-275-0980

### ▶ **Dolce Oak Ridge Hotel & Conference Center** ..... 952-368-1422

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 kparkhurst@or-cc.com / www.oakridge.dolce.com  
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### ▶ **Mystic Lake Casino Hotel** ..... 952-496-6528

2400 Mystic Lake Blvd. - Prior Lake, MN 55372 ..... 800-262-7799  
 sales@mysticlake.com / www.mysticlake.com

Mystic Lake gives you a combination of gaming excitement and luxurious accommodations. Enjoy our award winning international buffet, 600 beautiful rooms and the Midwest's largest casino.

**AC, BH, DC, DF, E, GB, GD, HA, MG, 24, YR, PM, PO, RO, SA, SP**

## ATTRACTIONS

### ▶ **American Swedish Institute** ..... 612-871-4907

2600 Park Avenue - Minneapolis, MN 55407  
 info@americanswedishinstitute.org / www.americanswedishinst.org

Bring your group to the most unique destination in the Twin Cities! Tour the 33-room Swan Turnblad mansion, indulge in one of our Swedish lunch or dessert packages, then enjoy the museum shop and bookstore.

### ▶ **Bachman's Floral, Home & Garden Center** ..... 612-861-7692

6010 Lyndale Avenue South - Minneapolis, MN 55419  
 www.bachmans.com

Free group tours of America's largest floral retailer. Watch designers at work. See gorgeous holiday displays, blooming plants & gardens (in season). Dine onsite at Patrick's French cafe. Shopping discount & complimentary rose. Custom demonstrations & room rental available.

**AC, AS, CA, DC, GT, H, KO, YR, PM, PO, RO, RN**

### ▶ **Chocolate March** ..... 651-998-0185

Hastings, Afton, and River Falls; Stillwater, Marine, Tayors Falls, and Center City; Osceola and Hudson. Tickets available online at [www.innsofthevalley.com](http://www.innsofthevalley.com).

### ▶ **Gammelgarden Museum** ..... 651-433-5053

20880 Oliinda Trail North - Scandia, MN 55073  
 www.scandiamn.com/gammelgarden

Experience Swedish Immigrant life in Scandia-first Swedish settlement in Minnesota, 40 miles NE of the Twin Cities. Guided tours through 5 historic log buildings on 11 acres. Visitors Center, gift shop; restrooms and picnic area. Open May 1 thru October.

### ▶ **Gibbs Museum of Pioneer and Dakotah Life** ..... 651-646-8629

2097 West Larpenture Avenue - Falcon Heights, MN 55113  
 www.rchs.com  
 Compare the lives of 1800s MN pioneers and the Dakotah people who lived in MN before Europeans arrived. Costumed guides share the original farmhouse, replica dugout sodhouse, schoolhouse, bark lodge, tipi, heritage orchard, prairie.  
**GD, GT, H, KO, PM, PO**

### ▶ **Historic Murphy's Landing** ..... 952-445-6900

2187 East Highway 101 - Shakopee, MN 55379  
 hmlstaff@threeriversparkdistrict.org / www.Murphy'sLanding.com  
 Experience the charms and challenges of 1800s-era life along the Minnesota River Valley at this 88-acre living history museum. Costumed staff spins tales, demonstrate crafts and depict the daily lives of MN's European settlers.

### ▶ **Landmark Center** ..... 651-292-3225

75 West 5th Street, Suite 404 - Saint Paul, MN 55102  
 www.landmarkcenter.org  
 Tour the historic and beautifully restored Federal Courts Building, which houses the Schubert Club Instrument and Document Museums, TRACES Center for History and Culture, American Association of Woodturners Gallery, and more. 651-292-3225.

### ▶ **Minneapolis Institute of Arts** ..... 612-870-3131

2400 Third Avenue South - Minneapolis, MN 55404  
 www.artsmia.org  
 Visit the Minneapolis Institute of Arts' world-class collection, ranging from ancient sculpture to contemporary photography. Ranked as one of the top comprehensive U.S. art museums. Free general admission every day.

### Minnesota Historical Society ..... 888-727-8386

### ▶ **Minnesota Landscape Arboretum** ..... 952-443-1411

3675 Arboretum Drive - Chaska, MN 55318  
 Bonnie@arboretum.umn.edu / www.arboretum.umn.edu  
 Discover 32 beautiful display gardens and extensive plant collection on 1,000 acres by taking a guided tram or walking tour. The new Visitor Center features a soaring Great Hall, expanded gift store and restaurant, plus 6 new outdoor terraces and gardens.

### ▶ **Minnesota Zoo** ..... 952-431-9200

1300 Zoo Boulevard - Apple Valley, MN 55124 ..... 800-366-7811  
 www.mnzo.org  
 The Minnesota Zoo Welcomes Groups! Open 363 days a year and located in Apple Valley just minutes south of Mall of America. Advance group reservations required, 20+ = 20% discount on zoo admission.  
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### ▶ **Padelford Packet Boat Company** ..... 651-227-1100

Harriet Island - Saint Paul, MN 55107  
 jim@riverrides.com / www.riverrides.com  
 Four Mississippi riverboats at Harriet Island (Saint Paul) for group excursions May - September. Dinner, Lunch & Lock, Sunday Brunch Cruises, school field trips. Private charters for 50-710 passengers. Heated/Air Conditioned. Bar/D'Amico catering available.  
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### ▶ **Treasure Island Resort & Casino** ..... 800-222-7077 ext. 2786

Box 75 - Red Wing, MN 55066  
 www.treasureislandcasino.com  
 Treasure Island is a perfect getaway, whether you're planning a romantic evening or a lavish banquet. Your special event will take on an elegant, tropical feel. More than 25,000 sq. feet of top-notch meeting and events space.

### ▶ **Wabasha Street Caves** ..... 651-292-1220

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 www.wabashastreetcaves.com  
 Down In History has exciting historic tours done by costumed characters. Historic Walking Cave Tours in St. Paul & Stillwater. Motorcoach Gangster Tours, Irish Tours, Tacky tours, Ghost & Graves Tours, & more. We make history fun!  
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## CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAUS AND CHAMBERS

### ► **Bloomington Convention & Visitors Bureau** ..... 952-858-8500

7900 International Drive, Ste. 990 - Bloomington, MN 55425 ..... 800-346-4289  
 cvb@bloomingtonmn.org / www.bloomingtonmn.org

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### ► **Burnsville Convention & Visitors Bureau** ..... 952-898-5646

101 W. Burnsville Pkwy. Ste 150B - Burnsville, MN 55337 ..... 800-521-6055  
 jan@burnsvillemn.com / www.burnsvillemn.com

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### ► **Eagan Convention & Visitors Bureau** ..... 651-675-5546

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 mlawrence@eaganmn.com / www.eaganmn.com

Count on the Eagan Extreme team to build your next unique itinerary. Personal services include greetings, goodies and greenbacks (ask how to qualify for a \$100 cash rebate), plus, we offer Mall of America coupon books for overnight groups!

### ► **Meet Minneapolis** ..... 612-767-8114

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### ► **Monticello Chamber** ..... 763-295-2700

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Monticello is conveniently located at the intersection of Interstate 94 and Highway 25. With easy access to both St. Cloud and the Twin Cities, each just 30 minutes from Monticello.

### ► **Roseville Visitors Association** ..... 651-633-3002

2100 N. Snelling Avenue, Suite 59 - Roseville, MN 55113 ..... 877-980-3002  
 cdonovan@visitroseville.com / www.visitroseville.com

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### ► **Shakopee CVB** ..... 952-445-1660

PO Box 717 - Shakopee, MN 55379 ..... 800-574-2150  
 cschultz@shakopee.org / www.shakopee.org

Home to world-class attractions such as Valleyfair, Canterbury Park Racetrack & Card Club, Historic Murphy's Landing, Mystic Lake Casino Hotel, Raceway Park and the Renaissance Festival. There's always something exciting happening in Shakopee!

### ► **Visit Minneapolis North CVB** ..... 763-566-7722

6200 Shingle Creek Parkway #248 - Minneapolis, MN 55430 ..... 800-541-4364  
 brent@justaskmn.com / www.justaskmn.com

Are you looking for a different type of tour for the Minneapolis area to WOW your customers? Put Brent Haugen, the Mystery Tour Guru on the case for tour itineraries that your customers will love!

## ENTERTAINMENT & THEATER

### ► **Celebration Church** ..... 952-898-7200

16655 Kenyon Avenue - Lakeville, MN 55044  
 Alan.M@CelebrationChurch.net / www.celebrationchurch.net

One of the season's best events! A country Christmas for the whole family (Branson-style musical variety show), with a cast of 60 and live band. 10 performances Dec 2-4, 9-11 & 16-18. Call Alan for details.

### ► **Chanhassen Dinner Theatres** ..... 952-934-1547

501 West 78th Street - Chanhassen, MN 55317 ..... 800-355-6273  
 www.chanhassentheaters.com

Since 1968 Chanhassen Dinner Theatres have been recognized for quality theatre entertainment and fine dining. The nation's largest professional dinner theatre is AAA Magazine recommended, "Any Twin Cities visit should include an evening at Chanhassen!"

AC, AS, DC, GB, H, YR, PM

### ► **Guthrie Theater** ..... 612-225-6000

818 South 2nd Street - Minneapolis, MN 55415 ..... 877-44-STAGE  
 carolr@guthrietheater.org / www.guthrietheater.org

The Guthrie features a vibrant mix of stunning public spaces and three unique stages presenting timeless classics and triumphs of the modern stage alongside new works. Group discounts, guided tours, on-site restaurant. Possibilities beyond imagination.

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### ► **History Theatre** ..... 651-292-4320

30 East 10th Street - Saint Paul, MN 55101  
 groupsales@historytheatre.com / www.historytheatre.com

### ► **Ordway Center for the Performing Arts** ..... 651-282-3111

345 Washington Street - Saint Paul, MN 55102  
 pwright@ordway.org / www.Ordway.org

Overlooking Rice Park in downtown Saint Paul, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts best of Broadway and off-Broadway, as well as exceptional classical music, opera, & dance. Visit www.Ordway.org for a full calendar.

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### ► **Plymouth Playhouse** ..... 763-553-1600

2705 Annapolis Lane - Plymouth, MN 55119  
 groups@minter.net / www.plymouthplayhouse.com

Celebrating 31 years of hits, Plymouth Playhouse is best known for producing comedies. This intimate 211-seat theater is located in the Best Western Kelly Inn on the lower level. Church Basement Ladies now playing to sold out audiences.

### ► **State, Orpheum and Pantages Theatres** ..... 612-373-5665

805 Hennepin Avenue - Minneapolis, MN 55402  
 groupsales@orpheum.com / www.HennepinTheatreDistrict.com

Located in the heart of the Hennepin Theatre district are the "entertainment gems of Hennepin Avenue." Renovated to their full grandeur, the Theatres present Broadway series, concerts and dance performances.

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

### ► **Minnesota Renaissance Festival** ..... 952-445-7361

1244 S. Canterbury Road Ste 306 - Shakopee, MN 55379 ..... 800-996-8215  
 info@renaissancefest.com / www.renaissancefest.com

Queen Margaret welcomes you to our 36th anniversary. Enjoy the group discount program for 15 or more, plus complimentary tickets for driver and coordinators. Weekends and Labor Day in August & September 2006.

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### ► **Mall of America** ..... 952-883-8843

60 East Broadway - Bloomington, MN 55425 ..... 800-879-3555  
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Mall of America is the largest shopping and entertainment complex in the nation, featuring 520 stores, 50 restaurants and attractions galore. Enjoy no sales tax on clothing and shoes. Valuable coupon books, Meet and Greet Service and other group travel services available.

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## TOUR OPERATORS

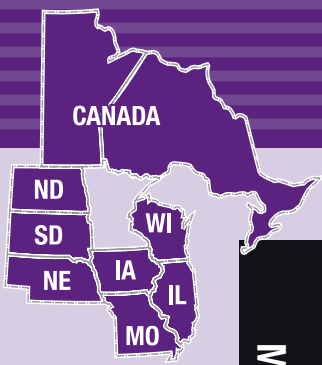
### ► **Heartland Tours & Travel** .. TC. 651-777-7170; Roch. 507-288-1330

805 Hennepin Avenue - Minneapolis, MN 55403 ..... 888-735-7118  
 info@heartlandtoursandtravel.net / www.heartlandtoursandtravel.net

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**calendar of events**

*Wisconsin*

- Dec 1-10 **Festival of Trees**, Appleton 920-733-4089
- Feb 18 **Blue Suede Shoes: The Ultimate Tribute**, Oshkosh 920-424-2350

*North Dakota*

- Jan 5-6 **NPRA Bull-A-Rama**, Grand Forks 701-772-5151
- Feb 2-4 **7th Annual Norski Days**, Fort Ransom 701-973-4811

*Nebraska*

- Feb 14 **Sandhill Crane Spring Migration**, Grand Island 800-658-3178
- Mar 1-26 **"Spirit of the Cranes,"** Grand Island 308-381-4001
- Mar-Apr **Annual Duck and Geese Migration**, York 402-362-4575

*South Dakota*

- Dec 9 **Walk in the Park: Exploring Eagles**, Yankton 605-668-2985
- Jan 27-28 **Living History Fair**, Watertown 605-693-4589

*Illinois*

- Jan 27 **Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobats**, University Park 708-757-4682
- Nov 22 - Dec 3 **"Twelfth Night,"** Chicago 312-595-5600

*Missouri*

- Nov 1 **Branson Area Festival of Lights**, Branson 800-214-3661

*Iowa*

- Jan 27 **Chili Bowl Shoot Out**, Chariton 641-774-4059
- Jan 13-14 **Eagle Watch Weekend**, Guttenberg 877-252-2323
- Feb 10 **Owl Prowl**, Harpers Ferry 563-873-3491

*Canada*

- Jan 26-28 **St Claude's Carnival**, St. Claude, MB 204-379-2276
- Feb 1-2 **IMAX Festival**, Sudbury, ON 800-461-4898

Contact the CVB's for a more complete calendar.

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Ten Chimneys - Genesee Depot, WI

*International Crane Foundation*

Since its founding in 1973, the **International Crane Foundation** (ICF) has focused attention on the conservation of the world's cranes and the wetland, grassland, and other ecosystems on which they depend. Cranes are among the most threatened families of birds in the world, yet their cultural significance, extraordinary beauty, and striking behaviors, inspire care and action. Based in **Baraboo, Wisconsin**, the foundation is committed to preserving the ecosystems that sustain cranes, people and the diversity of life on earth. Visitors will meet the 15 species, including the endangered Whooping Crane, view crane chicks, enjoy art exhibits and trails winding through tallgrass prairie. Group tours by appointment. Located between Baraboo and Wisconsin Dells on Shady Lane Road.

**other birding & wildflower stops in midwest minnesota**

**Alfred Hole Goose Sanctuary** Winnipeg, Manitoba  
 Able to accommodate large groups on its trails this sanctuary offers open viewing of 150 plus birds in the summer, including four different species of Canadian geese.

**Chequamegon National Forest** Northwest Wisconsin  
 Covering 858,400 acres with more than 225 species. 200 miles of trails, wildlife viewing platforms, interpretive exhibits and trail guides.

**Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge** Ullin IL  
 This park is home to many kinds of warblers and vireos, and as you walk along the Cache river great blue herons are especially plentiful.

**Desoto National Wildlife Refuge** Desoto IA  
 Over 40 years old, this refuge has 240 species of birds on record including Great horned owls, Woodpeckers & Bald Eagles.

**Hitchcock Nature Area** Hitchcock IA  
 Bald Eagles, falcons, and ten species of hawks make this one of the best places to spot them in North America.

**Reiman Gardens** Ames IA  
 Take in the sights, sounds, and smells of these 13 different gardens showcasing living wildflowers from all over the United States and a butterfly conservatory.

**Theodore Roosevelt National Park** Medora ND  
 Birds ranging from Meadowlarks, to vultures, to the golden

eagles this park features some of the best bird watching.

**Madison Wetlands** Madison SD  
 Rarities like the Eurasian Collared Dove and Snowy Owl have been spotted viewing platforms provided at this 450-acre prairie/wetland.

**Notebart Nature Museum** Chicago IL  
 Learn about conservation through interactive exhibits, like the Judy Istock Butterfly Haven that has wildflowers growing and butterflies emerging all year round.

**Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge** Mound City MO  
 An extensive wetland in the Missouri River floodplain, this area abounds in geese, ducks and shorebirds during the spring and fall migrations.

**Ted Shanks Conservation Area** Hannibal MO  
 Stretching nearly seven miles along the Mississippi River, this area provides extensive marshlands and bottomland forests for many types of birds in all seasons.

**Wind Cave National Park** Hot Springs, SD  
 The park is over 25,000 acres, features one of the world's longest caves, and is home to over six species of hawks.

**Valentine National Wildlife Refuge** Prairie Valentine NE  
 Chickens, pelicans, swans, and majestic golden eagles all call this 72,000 acre park their home.



*Discover the beauty of birding  
and the luck of the cards.*

This sample itinerary is best in the spring or can be customized for any time of the year.

**DAY ONE**

**4 – 10:00 pm**

Check into the **Royal River Casino**. Enjoy dinner at the **River's Bend Buffet** located inside the casino. After dinner, joint the excitement of the casino crowd with Vegas-style gaming, poker, blackjack and a variety of entertainment.

**DAY TWO**

**5 – 6:00 am**

Stroll down to the River's Bend Buffet and wake up with a hearty breakfast.

**6 – 7:00 am**

Board the bus as it departs South to the **Gitchie Manitou State Preserve**, Northwest Iowa's best places to bird in the state.

**7 – 3:00 pm**

The rest of the day can be spent spotting Whooping

Cranes, Trumpeter Swans and Prairie Chickens in the tall grasses and flowers that grow in Gitchie Manitou State Preserve. In addition to all the flora and fauna, the park also has a **Jasper Pool** with the oldest bedrock in Iowa, and some of the most aged North America. Hint: Here's a great place for a picnic lunch in the park.

**3 – 4:00 pm**

On your way home take a step back to a quieter time when you stop in for a malt or root beer float at the **Old Fashioned Soda Fountain** in **West Bend, IA**. As the name implies, it's an old-time soda shop designed to set the mood of the 1930's.

For more information on this sample itinerary contact your tour operator, the Royal River Casino, 800-833-8666 or the Gitchie Manitou State Preserve call the IA DNR, 515-887-2801.

Orange City, Iowa

# Tulip Festival

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Making the journey the destination



## THE TUNDRA SWAN WATCH at Alma, Wisconsin



**E**xperience a fall phenomenon among the Mississippi River bluffs as tundra swans descend on Riecks Lake Park in Alma, Wisconsin. Formerly known as whistling swans, these majestic birds regularly pass through the area on their annual migration from northern Canada and Alaska to the Chesapeake Bay area.

Tundra swans are known by the comical way they “take off”. Facing the wind, they run along the surface of the water for 15 to 20 feet, flap their wings, and beat the water with their feet alternately until they have gained sufficient headway to launch into the air. During flight in almost perfectly shaped v-formations, swans can achieve speeds up to 100 miles an hour with a tail wind. And they’ve even been sighted at amazing elevations of 6,000 to 8,000 feet.

Each year, avid bird lovers visit Alma to see the (at least) 1000+ tundra swans from the Riecks Lake Park Wildlife Observation Platform. The best season has been from mid-October until November (or the winter freeze-up). For more information about the bringing your groups, call 608-248-3499.

## The whole is greater than the sum of its parts AT WEST BEND’S GROTTO

### Meet the bird everyone looks up to.

**T**he International Crane Foundation (ICF) is an unforgettable experience and a Midwestern treasure. The majestic crane is the tallest bird with the amazing capabilities of flight. Their size, beauty, and grace demand attention, and ICF is the only place in the world that has all 15 species for visitors to enjoy. Observing the rarest of all cranes wading in a tranquil wetland at the Amoco Whooping Crane Exhibit is a delight. Visitors have an unobstructed view of the birds from a sunken amphitheater just a few feet away, and paved trails surrounding the bird exhibits are handicap accessible. Miles of self-guided nature trails wind through restored tall-grass prairie, oak savanna and wetland landscape give walkers, birders and nature lovers a new place to explore. For planners, the best time to see the prairie in bloom is late July and early August. ICF’s new Donnelley Family Education Center provides a focal



**A**miracle in stone, the Grotto of Redemption in West Bend, IA, is truly an inspiring stop on your trip. The legend of the grotto started when Fr. Dobberstein made a deal with God in exchange for his healing; he would build a shrine to the Virgin Mary, and 42 years later it still stands as the largest grotto in the world. The Grotto walls and sculptures are made with petrified wood, pearls, rubies, jasper, topaz and glass. The museum walls have agates from all over the world that took 16 years just to cut and polish! This is truly a beautiful site not to be missed. For more information visit [www.westbend-grotto.com](http://www.westbend-grotto.com) or call 800-868-3641.

Visit a world renowned conservation center!  
Meet the ancient & endangered family of cranes.



Guided & Self Guided Tours  
Open daily April 15 thru October 31, 9 am-5 pm.



**KEY SYMBOLS**

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**ACCOMMODATIONS**

▶ **Holiday Inn Conference Center** ..... 515-287-2400  
 6111 Fleur Drive - Des Moines, Iowa 50321  
[www.holiday-inn.com/dsm-airport](http://www.holiday-inn.com/dsm-airport)  
 217 rooms. Holidome features include indoor pool, whirlpool, sauna, game pavilion, fitness center, restaurant. Group tour rates available. Free parking. Free wireless internet. Meeting rooms/catering available. Easy access from I-80 & I-35.

**ATTRACTIONS**

▶ **International Crane Foundation** ..... 608-356-9462  
 E11376 Shady Lane Road - Baraboo, WI 53913  
[cranes@savingcranes.org](mailto:cranes@savingcranes.org) / [www.savingcranes.org](http://www.savingcranes.org)  
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▶ **Royal River Casino & Hotel** ..... 800-833-8666  
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[www.royalrivercasino.com](http://www.royalrivercasino.com)  
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▶ **North Dakota Tourism Division** ..... 701-328-2625  
 PO Box 2057 - Bismarck, ND 58502 ..... 800-435-5663  
[dkeller@nd.gov](mailto:dkeller@nd.gov) / [www.ndtourism.com](http://www.ndtourism.com)  
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**IOWA** ..... 1-888-472-6035  
**MINNESOTA** ..... 1-888-TOURISM (868-7476)  
**MISSOURI** ..... 1-800-519-2100  
**NEBRASKA** ..... 1-877-632-7275  
**NORTH DAKOTA** ..... 1-800-HELLO ND (435-5663)  
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## One-on-One IN FERGUS FALLS

BY KELLY SURLA

This year's 2006 Annual Showcase began Monday, October 16th at the Bigwood Event Center in Fergus Falls, MN. Tour operators and group travel planners/buyers from throughout the upper Midwest were treated to lively one-on-one presentations, information gathering times and productive itinerary planning by energetic exhibitors, who also came from all over the Midwest, and even Canada! After the show on Tuesday afternoon, the buyers were treated to a special "Fergus Falls Flair" FAM Tour and a picnic lunch at the Red Horse Ranch Arena.

Cami Nickelson of Northfield won the Grand Prize at this year's ANNUAL SHOWCASE. **She took home a FREE busload of tickets (45) to Bonanzaville in West Fargo!** Now there's a tour that will make money for her. Congratulations, Cami!

The sponsors proved they are group-friendly. Many thanks to Fergus Falls CVB for sponsoring the show location, evening entertainment and invaluable group-friendly partnering they provided; to the Bigwood Convention Center for the show space; to the Best Western The Inn of Fergus Falls, and the AmericInn for lodging; to Minn-Dakota Coaches, and Heartland Tours & Travel/Richfield Bus for taking care the transportation needs; and to Shooting Star Casino for sponsoring Tuesday morning's breakfast. Thanks also to all of the exhibitors for helping make this Show & FAM a success!

And buyers, now that you have so many new ideas for itineraries, we expect you to take them home and fill those coaches! 🚌

**"I had a wonderful time and gained so much more knowledge! I came back with more insight than I've had before. I am now gaining more interest in going other places!"**

--Penny Strongman | Strongman Travel | International Falls, MN

**"Networking with fellow operators, one-to-one itinerary planning customized to "my" clients' interests, along with gleaning ideas to include in future trips made the Fergus Falls 2006 Annual Showcase so valuable for planning future tours and events. What an exceptionally good and productive use of time, allowing each vendor to share their highlights and allowing us to ask questions of them when they came to "our" table!"**

--Jan Smith | SOAR Tours | Clitherall, MN

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