FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FAIRGOERS INVITED TO EXPERIENCE ILLINOIS WINE

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – The Illinois Wine Experience, located in the Twilight Ballroom, is giving fairgoers an opportunity to sample and purchase products from 17 different Illinois wineries.

Sponsored by the Illinois Grape Growers & Vintners Association, the Illinois Wine Experience is open every day of the fair from noon until 10 p.m.

“It’s a great way to see and meet people, and its great way to get my wine out to the public,” Brett Robling, owner of Lasata Winery in Lawrenceville, one of the attraction’s exhibitors, said.

Robling maintains Illinois wines are just as good or, possibly, even better than California or European wines.

“It’s just that people are used to Cabernet Sauvignon or Chardonnay,” he said, which are made from grapes that do not grow well in this part of the country.

Representatives of the Illinois wineries will explain to visitors the types of wines that Illinois is best suited to produce and offer suggestions for which wines to pair with beef, pork, chicken, cheese and desert.

If a glass of Chardonel, Vignoles, Noiret, or Marechal Foch does not suit the palate of visitors, perhaps a Springfield Wheat, Lincoln’s Lager, or Abe’s Ale will. Rolling Meadows Brewery, located in Cantrall, Ill., has brought some of its finest microbrews to the fair.

Caren Trudau is owner of the brewery, which began as a fun hobby and turned into a business. She said the brewery is an agriculture-based business that grows its own hops and is starting to cultivate organic wheat to use in its brews.

In addition to the sampling of wine and beer, the Twilight Ballroom also features a variety of
entertainment each evening beginning at 7 p.m.

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THE MARVELOUS MUTTS AMAZE AUDIENCES IN HAPPY HOLLOW

You would be hard pressed to guess the pedigree of The Marvelous Mutts based on their performances at the Illinois State Fair. Nadja Palenzuela and her assistant, Nate Bednar, have had Marci, Wee-La, Flick, Dutch, Rizzo, Ba-Ba-Lu, Yoo-Who and Squirt jumping, flipping, flying through the air and diving into a pool all week during their daily shows in Happy Hollow.

Although the dogs look like canine athletes, all of them come from shelters or rescue groups. Palenzuela advocates for dogs waiting to be adopted during her performances, advising fairgoers to consider a dogs’ energy level and needs before adding the pet to their family. She also emphasizes dogs do not have to be “perfect” to make excellent performers or excellent companions.

Visitors, for example, would never guess that Wee-La, the smallest performer of the bunch, has a degenerative eye condition by the way she catches Frisbees or that Squirt, has won the World Disc Dog Championship three times over, is deaf.

The Marvelous Mutts perform at 12:40, 2:40 and 4:40 p.m. on weekdays and at 1:20, 3:20 and 5 p.m. on weekends. The show is free of charge.

TRACK ENTERPRISES AND THE UNITED STATES AUTO CLUB HONOR MADONIA

Local radio personality and State Fair public address announcer Sam Madonia has been named the grand marshal for the 52nd running of the Tony Bettenhausen 100 auto race this Saturday at the Illinois State Fair. Madonia, host of the popular "AM Springfield" show on WMFB Sports Radio 1450, also will serve as the honorary starter for the event.

Fans can watch Madonia waive the green flag to start the race at 2 p.m. at the Grandstand.

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Your personal guide to everything that’s happening at the Fair! You can see contest results, find your favorite vendor, see where your favorite band is playing and much more!
UPCOMING EVENTS: Friday, August 16
Futures for Kids Day

Futures for Kids Day celebrates the state’s youngest fairgoers. Children are invited to compete in many different events, including the ponytail contest, the decorated diaper contest and the diaper derby.

The Shed: Ponytail Contest, 11 a.m.

Lincoln Stage: Decorated Diaper Contest, 3 p.m.
Diaper Derby, 4 p.m.

Illinois Building: The Association of Agriculture Fairs Talent Showcase, 6 p.m.

The Arena: Compact Figure 8 Boat Show, 7 p.m.

Concert on the Hill: Gracia Harrison, 5:30 p.m., Happy Hollow Stage

Grandstand: Gary Allan and Thompson Square with The Farm, Frankie Ballard, and Brushfire, 4:30 p.m.

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