



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Kristin Paltzer
(262) 789-7630, ext. 126
kristinp@celticinc.com

Milwaukee Irish Fest Celebrates 35 Years of Irish Music and Culture *2015 Festival to be the Largest Celebration to Date*

MILWAUKEE (July 30, 2015) – Milwaukee Irish Fest has been bringing the sights and sounds of Ireland to Milwaukee since 1981. In honor of its 35th anniversary, this year's festival will be the largest celebration to date, with more than 100 acts on 17 stages and all sorts of special surprises. Taking place August 13–16 along Milwaukee's beautiful lakefront, Milwaukee Irish Fest will offer festivalgoers plenty of new things to see and do. Highlights for the 2015 festival include:

New This Year

- **Entertainment** - Milwaukee Irish Fest is thrilled to welcome 11 new acts to the festival, including: Irish comedian Joe Rooney, and musicians Ten Strings and a Goat Skin, Mórca and Hearthfire. The festival will also feature special themed shows, including:
 - Americana – Irish Style with We Banjo 3, Scythian and Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul
 - A Celebration of Irish Traditional Music with Cherish the Ladies
 - A Special Tribute to Tommy Makem
- **Limited Edition 35th Anniversary Bobblehead** - The first 500 people through the gates on Saturday, August 15 will receive an exclusive 35th Anniversary Paddy McFest Bobblehead.
- **Food and Spirits** - Straight from Bunratty, County Clare Ireland, visitors can indulge in the Durty Nelly's Irish Coffee Dessert featuring Gilles frozen custard. For those looking to quench their thirst, Jameson will be offering the official 35th anniversary commemorative beverage, the "Black 35," a whiskey Manhattan with Jameson Black Barrel Whiskey.
- **35th Anniversary Exhibits** - Four special exhibits will be located throughout the grounds, giving festivalgoers the opportunity to relive favorite memories from the past through photos, posters, videos and more.

(more)

- **Sports** - Expert boat builders from the North American Currach Association will be rebuilding a currach – a traditional Irish boat – on the grounds during the festival.

Music

Milwaukee Irish Fest is known for music. The festival has been introducing traditional and contemporary Irish and Celtic musicians to American audiences since the beginning. The 2015 festival will continue that trend with the “Living Tradition Showcase.” A sampling of showcase performers include: Dallahan, Liz Carroll, Flashpoint, FullSet, Goitse, John Whelan, Keane and O’Connell, Lúnasa, Socks in the Frying Pan, Myserk and Pride of New York.

Returning this year are fan favorites Gaelic Storm, Red Hot Chilli Pipers, as well as The Willis Clan – who were most recently featured on their popular TLC reality show. The lineup will also include Evans and Doherty, Tom Sweeney, The High Kings, Celtic Tenors, Screaming Orphans and more.

Arts, Culture and More

Offering more than music, festivalgoers can also take an Irish journey in culture and time. Visitors are invited to stop by the Cultural Village where they can take in a play, shop for wares at the Moore Street Market, watch basket weaving and other artisan demonstrations, trace their roots with the help of expert genealogists, meet authors in the Literary Corner and learn to speak Gaelic at the Irish language workshop. New this year, Milwaukee Irish Fest is offering free Irish language lessons for children, ages 6-13. The Cultural Village is the hub for all cultural activities and exhibits on the grounds, including the Hedge School, Archives, the Cultural Pavilion, the Harp Stage and the Celtic Roots stage.

For those interested in learning about traditional Irish dance, instructors will be teaching the basics of traditional céilí and set dancing all weekend long at the Dance Pavilion.

Fun for the Whole Family

With the wee ones in mind, children 12 and under receive free admission to the festival all weekend long. Families are invited to visit the children’s area, which features free activities, including: mini-golf, Pot O’Gold prizes, stories and snacks in the Children’s Tea Room, coloring and craft areas, as well as highland games. Visitors are also welcome to take in a performance on the two children’s stages, which include music, Irish dancing and interactive storytelling. For those looking for entertainment of the four-legged variety, festivalgoers can stop by the Celtic Canines area to meet all nine native dog breeds of Ireland.

Food & Spirits

In addition to the new Durty Nelly’s Irish Coffee Dessert and the “Black 35” commemorative drink from Jameson, festivalgoers can stop by one of the many food vendors throughout the

(more)

grounds to enjoy sweet and savory options, such as the Irish Cream Puff, Gilles Jameson Custard or Irish Nachos. Or, stop by the Jameson Lounge for a whiskey tasting. For the foodie in the group, visitors are invited to stop by the Celtic Kitchen to view live cooking demonstrations throughout the weekend.

Sports

Festivalgoers looking to watch and learn more about hurling, currach racing or competitive tug-of-war are invited to stop by the sports activity areas. While there, guests can try their hand at hurling in the hitting cage or watch currach boat races in the lagoon. As the sun sets, visitors can relax with a cold beverage in the Irish Fest Sports Pub while watching hurling matches on TV or participating in a trivia contest hosted by Quizmaster.

Promotions

Milwaukee Irish Fest makes it easy and affordable to enjoy the festival. There is a wide variety of special promotions and discounts, including discounts for college students, seniors, military personal and their families. Discounts and promotions include:

- **Thursday:** Free admission with a donation of school supplies for the Hope House of Milwaukee
- **Friday:** \$5 Buck Friday between 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
- **Saturday:** Free limited edition 35th Anniversary Paddy McFest Bobblehead for the first 500 visitors
- **Sunday:** Free admission with a donation of a non-perishable food item for the Hunger Task Force by 11 a.m.
- **2-Day Pass:** Purchase a pass for Saturday and Sunday for only \$25

To learn more about discounts and special promotions, visit www.irishfest.com. General admission for the festival is \$17 for adults, \$12 for seniors 60+ and free for kids 12 and under.

About Milwaukee Irish Fest

Milwaukee Irish Fest is the world's largest celebration of Irish music and culture. The four-day festival showcases more than 100 entertainment acts on 17 stages at Henry W. Maier Festival Park on Milwaukee's lakefront. The annual festival occurs every third weekend in August. The 35th annual festival takes place August 13-16, 2015.

More than just a festival, the Milwaukee Irish Fest organization is passionately committed to igniting a love of Celtic culture in all people. With the help of more than 4,000 volunteers, Milwaukee Irish Fest promotes Celtic music, dance, drama, sports, culture, children's activities and genealogy through year-round programming. For more information visit www.irishfest.com.

###