

Governor Rauner announces roll out of first Illinois Bicentennial activities

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SPRINGFIELD – Governor Bruce Rauner today announced the first activities planned for the Illinois Bicentennial in 2018. Events include a craft beer competition and a video contest with students in Illinois.

“The Illinois Bicentennial is an opportunity for us to come together and celebrate our great state,” said Governor Rauner. “I can’t think of a better way to kick things off than reflecting on the influential history that brought us here.”

Illinois high school and college students will have a chance to help kickoff the Bicentennial Celebration by entering a video contest called Something to Learn about Illinois History.

From July 17 to August 31, high school and college students registered in Illinois can submit 45-60 second videos on an Illinois historical fact, event, place or person at www.illinois200.com.

One hundred winners will be chosen and will be posted each day as part of the 100 Day Countdown on Illinois200.com, Bicentennial social media platforms and on the digital platforms of media partners WGN Radio Plus and the State Journal Register.

The countdown will begin on Constitution Day, August 26, 2017 and run up to the State's birthday December 3, 2017, the first day of the 200th year.

BMO Harris Bank is the sponsor of the 100 Day Countdown to the Bicentennial Celebration.

“We are proud and excited to support the 100 Day Countdown, especially as it is occurring during a year in which BMO is celebrating its own bicentennial,” said David Casper, President and CEO, BMO Harris Bank.

The winners of the Something to Learn about Illinois video contest will each receive two tickets to the December 3, 2017 Chicago matinee performance of Hamilton, the start of the Illinois Bicentennial celebration.

Public events to kick off the Bicentennial on December 3 will take place with family activities on Navy Pier. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield will be open for free and attendees will have a chance to preview the 2018 Bicentennial exhibit.

At this year's Illinois State Fair, the Illinois Bicentennial is inviting Illinois Craft Brewers to compete in a craft brew competition to determine who will brew an official Illinois Bicentennial craft beer. Fair attendees will have the opportunity to vote on their favorite brewer at the Craft Beer Garden. The winner will brew a commemorative beer that will be distributed throughout the Bicentennial celebration in 2018.

“A Bicentennial craft beer will be an exciting offering to the millions of craft beer lovers,” said Danielle D'Alessandro, Executive Director of the Illinois Craft Brewers Guild. “We are pleased to highlight the Illinois made craft beers.”

Illinois was recognized as a State on December 3, 1818 and the official Illinois Bicentennial will be celebrated in 2018 with events planned across the State on Constitution Day August 26, 2018 and the grand birthday celebration at the United Center on December 3, 2018.

Statewide partners and event and project managers who are planning activities between December 3, 2017 and December 3, 2018 can apply for endorsement by Illinois Bicentennial. Visit the PARTICIPATE page at www.illinois200.com for more information and to submit an Application for Endorsement.