



Kid'Cation returns with family fun

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ALTON - The Alton Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau is once again hosting Kid 'Cation, a family-friendly getaway designed to bring families together for a last summer adventure. Movie night by the river, super hero training camp, free kids' admission to Raging Rivers Water Park, Train Day and opportunities to explore nature are just a few of the events planned throughout the 10-day promotion. Families who stay overnight can also receive great lodging incentives at the Best Western Premier hotel in Alton to sweeten the deal.

Returning for its third year is the ever-popular Amtrak Train Day. On Tuesday, Aug. 1, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the historic Alton train station located at 3400 College Avenue will be the gathering place for train enthusiasts of all ages. Kids can get a look at model trains, receive a free train conductor hat, have a free cookie and take home a coloring book while supplies last. The Alton train station is scheduled to close when the new Alton Multi Modal Transportation Center opens later this summer, so Train Day will be a farewell event for the station.

New this year for Kid'Cation is "Pizza, Planes and Pilots" at St. Louis Regional Airport in East Alton. On Saturday, Aug. 5 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., children and their parents can see the inside of a plane and talk to pilots about what it's like to fly in the sky. Afterwards head to High Flyers Grille at the airport where kids can enjoy a free, one topping pizza with purchase of an adult entrée.

Also debuting this year is take a hike with a ranger at the Audubon Center in West Alton on Saturday, August 5, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. A free, ranger-guided, two hour hike will allow young visitors and their parents to learn about the plants and animals that live in and around the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Young participants may earn points towards the new Jr. Ranger badge. Deadline for registration is Friday, August 4, at 5 p.m. Call 618-462-6979 to register.

Step back in time with discovery days at Lewis and Clark State Historic Site in Hartford, IL. Kids' can complete a scavenger hunt, create their own journal and explore

replica artifacts anytime during Kid'Cation. For additional adventures, take a ferry ride into Calhoun County and explore the Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge where you can enjoy self-guided hikes on the trails.

“We know families are looking for ways to spend the last few weeks of summer before school starts up and Kid'Cation gives them family-friendly options,” Brett Stawar, President and CEO of the Alton Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau said. “Kid'Cation is designed to give families with children a great way to explore the region in ways which are also affordable.”

Special deals are also available during Kid'Cation. Beat the summer heat and cool off at Raging Rivers Water Park in Grafton, IL with free kids' admission when purchasing an adult ticket. Or drift back in time to the carefree days of pirates on the Hakuna Matata which sails out of Grafton Harbor on July 29 and Aug. 5 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Make your own towboat flag at the National Great Rivers Museum in Alton throughout the 10-day event from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. And there is even more fun to be had with \$1 bowling at Bowl Haven Lanes in Alton and get an inside look at Alton's history with free admission for children at the Alton Museum of History and Art.

To ensure Kid'Cation isn't a strain on the wallet, a variety of dining deals, free treats and attraction discounts are included. Bring the kids to meet Spongebob Squarepants at the Cookie Factory Bakery & Café and Olga's Kitchen, located inside the Alton Square Mall, on Aug. 3 and 5 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-2 p.m. The Cookie Factory also invites children to enter a drawing for a 15" decorated cookie, a case of Pepsi soda, Great Godfrey Maze tickets or Raging Rivers Water Park tickets. For full details on how to enter visit www.VisitAlton.com/Kidcation.

Other deals and specials include a free Mississippi Mud Bar at My Just Desserts and 50 cents worth of 5 to 10 cent candies for children at the 1904 General Store. After a day in the sun at Raging Rivers, stop by the Elsay General Store for a free Icee Freeze Pop with any purchase and head into the Mineral Springs Mall for a free dreamcatcher from It's Raining Zen. For more specials visit www.VisitAlton.com/Kidcation.

Kid'Cation kicks off on Friday, July 28 with a free outdoor movie night at the Liberty Bank Alton Amphitheater. Bring blankets and chairs to enjoy the family-friendly movie “Sing” against the great backdrop of the river starting at 8:30 p.m. Learn about the environment at Old Bakery Beer on Tuesday, Aug. 1 from 4-7 p.m. Kids will enjoy environmental activities and demonstrations and farm to table kid's meals will be available.

Test your physical talents to join the hero league on Wednesday, Aug. 2 at Glazebrook Park. The Godfrey Kid 'Cation Superhero Training Camp includes a series of fun,

physical events that will be spread throughout the park in addition to some back to school preparedness stations. On Saturday, Aug. 5 spend the day outdoors at Pere Marquette State Park in Grafton from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and hike to Twin Mounds with a park guide.

Kid 'Cation is sponsored by Phillips 66, OSF Saint Anthony's and Alton Memorial Hospital.