

Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park in East St. Louis to Host Fourth of July Celebration

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Area residents region-wide are encouraged to take in the sights and sounds of Fair Saint Louis from a different perspective – Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park. Located directly across from the Gateway Arch on the banks of the East St. Louis Riverfront, just south of the Casino Queen on Front Street, this park has earned the reputation for having unmatched views of the downtown skyline and being the best seat in town for

the air shows and firework displays over the holiday weekend. The park is set to feature a wide array of free, family friendly activities leading up to the Fair Saint Louis fireworks the evenings of Thursday, July 4, through Saturday, July 6.

“Our 30-acre park offers a spacious lawn area for spreading out with your family and friends to take in the spectacular view of the fireworks in a family friendly, entertaining and patriotic environment,” stated Mike Buehlhorn, executive director of the Metro East Park and Recreation District. “I encourage people from across the area to come out and celebrate the Independence Day holiday with us, especially if you have never been here before. You will not be disappointed.”

During the daytime hours, Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park visitors can access the 43-foot-tall Mississippi River Overlook viewing platform; check out the Gateway Geyser when scheduled eruptions blast 8,000 gallons of water a minute 600 feet into the sky, matching the height of the Gateway Arch; and watch the Fair Saint Louis Air Shows set for noon and 4 p.m. on July 4 and 5, and at 5 p.m. on July 6 (schedule subject to change).

Other family-friendly activities will get underway each evening starting at 5 p.m. and will include free face painting, caricature drawings, balloon art, an inflatable obstacle course, hot air balloon display, magic shows,

juggling and fire performances, carnival games and a circus workshop. The Shades of Blue Jazz Ensemble from Scott Air Force Base will also be performing on Thursday, July 4, from 6 to 9 p.m. To obtain a complete schedule of events, visit www.meprd.org.

Refreshments will be made available for purchase throughout the duration of the event, beginning at 11:30 a.m. on July 4 and 5, and starting at 4:30 p.m. on July 6.

This independence celebration is being made possible thanks to the Gateway Center of Metropolitan St. Louis and the Metro East Park and Recreation District. Supporting sponsors include Re/Max, Ameren Illinois, Juneau Associates, Bank of Belleville, Bank of Edwardsville, Hydro Dramatics, Luby Equipment, The Hauser Group and Thouvenot, Wade and Moerchen.

Parking is limited. Attendees are encouraged to carpool or take the MetroLink to the East St. Louis Riverfront station and walk to the park.

The park opens at dawn and closes following the conclusion of the fireworks. The Mississippi River Overlook will be closed to the public each evening at 8:30 p.m. before the fireworks display. The rules of the park, which will be strictly enforced, include no alcohol, no weapons, no fireworks or sparklers of any kind, no glass containers, no grills

and no pets (service animals are permitted). All bags, backpacks, coolers, containers and purses will be searched upon entry. All persons are also subject to search.

For more information, and a complete listing of scheduled entertainment, visit www.meprd.org.

The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) was formed by voters in November 2000, and is responsible for the development of parks, greenways, and trails in Madison County and St. Clair County, Illinois. The District often supplements the efforts of local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions already engaged in the management of parks and recreation facilities. The park district is the first of its kind in Illinois, serving over half a million residents.