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VISITORS FROM MORE THAN 25 STATES TO TRAVEL TO SPRINGFIELD FOR LINCOLN MEMORIAL HALF MARATHON

More than one thousand expected to "Run Where Lincoln Walked"

Springfield, Ill., March 30, 2009 – The 45th annual Lincoln Memorial Half Marathon is set to take off on Saturday, April 4th at 7:30 a.m., with more than 1,000 runners expected to take part in this historic race. The race is officially endorsed by the Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission as an event celebrating the Lincoln Bicentennial.

This year's race is expected to have the largest turnout in 45 years of race history. It will be the third time the race is run on the 13.1 mile course that winds through the streets of Springfield, giving runners an up-close view of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM), the Old State Capitol, Lincoln's Home, Lincoln's Tomb and other historical sites.

The race starts at 7:30 a.m. in front of the ALPLM with remarks from Abraham Lincoln impersonator Michael Krebs, an appearance by Mary Todd Lincoln impersonator Debra Miller, and a musket volley from Civil War re-enactors from the 114th Volunteer Regiment.

"As we celebrate the Bicentennial of the birth of our greatest president, the Lincoln Memorial Half Marathon has become a destination race for those with an interest in Lincoln's legacy. St. John's Hospital is proud to host the race and appreciates the support from the City of Springfield, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the National Park Service, the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau and more than 200 volunteers. We are once again able to put on a professional race that showcases our historical city. We encourage local residents to line the half marathon course during the event and cheer on these athletes as they 'Run Where Lincoln Walked,'" said Brian Reardon, co-race director.

Runners will start the race in front of the ALPLM heading south on 6th Street, pass the Old State Capitol, then veer over to the Lincoln Home site, head back downtown and towards the State Capitol,

wind their way to Washington Park, loop through the park and exit on Lincoln Avenue. After heading north for almost two miles on Lincoln Ave., runners will head back to the east, pass Camp Lincoln, and then up to Oak Ridge cemetery, where they will pass the Lincoln Tomb. The course then loops through Lincoln Park before heading south through the Enos Park neighborhood to finish in the front of Prairie Heart Institute at St. John's.

As runners pass through the more than 100 intersections along the course, traffic control will be administered by Springfield Police, Leland Grove Police, Springfield Park District Police, Illinois State Police, Illinois National Guard and course marshals. Several downtown streets will be closed beginning at 6:00 a.m. the morning of Saturday, April 4, including 6th Street from Cook Street north to Madison Street and Capitol Street from Eighth Street to Second Street. **Motorists are asked to watch for runners along the course between 7:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.**

The public is also invited to the Prairie Heart Institute Health Expo and Packet Pickup for the Lincoln Memorial on Friday, April 3rd from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Prairie Heart Institute, 619 E. Mason Street in Springfield. Runners can interact with active lifestyle vendors and health-care representatives at this unique event. Pre-registered participants can also pick up their race materials. For those not pre-registered for the race, registration is available at the Prairie Heart Institute Expo on Friday or on race morning beginning at 6:00 a.m. The registration fee for the race is \$40 at the expo or on race day.

The Springfield Road Runners Club organizes the Lincoln Memorial Half Marathon. The Prairie Heart Institute at St. John's Hospital is the presenting sponsor of the race. Additionally, members of the 183rd National Guard Fighter Wing will be participating in the race and volunteering at one of the water stops along the course.

For more information or to register for the race, visit www.RunAbe.com.

Anyone interested in volunteering for this event is encouraged to email Jim Dahlquist at dahlquist2000@yahoo.com.

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