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NEWS RELEASE

RE: May 7-8, Kansas Sampler Festival

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PICTURES: If you'd like festival pictures, contact WenDee

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KANSAS SAMPLER FESTIVAL LAUNCHES TRAVEL SEASON

Winfield, Kansas. For the 27th year, the Kansas Sampler Festival will act as a launch to the statewide travel season. The largest outdoor travel show in the state attracted nearly 12,000 in 2015 to discover what there is to see, do, hear, taste, buy, sip and learn in Kansas.

This will be the first of two years that the festival will be held in Winfield. Nearly 300 exhibitors from 150 communities will help the public learn about the architecture, art, commerce, cuisine, customs, geography, history, and people of Kansas when the gates open in Winfield's, Island Park.

The festival hours are Saturday, May 7 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday May 8 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children ages 7-12. Children 6 and under are free.

The primary focus of the event is to help the public plan day trips around the state. Every part of the state is represented from Humboldt to Wallace and Ulysses to Bonner Springs. The week-end long event is like a brochure of Kansas brought to life.

Kansas musicians on three different stages and historic performers showcase themselves for hire; food vendors either promote a restaurant or serve a food product made in Kansas or an ethnic recipe. A wine and beer tent features six Kansas wineries, a distillery and two microbreweries.

In addition, entrepreneurs in the two Kansas Product tents and the From the Land of Kansas tent will sell everything from honey, meat, fine art, pottery, salsa, sauerkraut, steam punk jewelry, jellies, quilted bags, books, fudge and much more.

Some favorite free standing exhibitors and cultural demonstrations are McNally Metal Design featuring owner Pake McNally demonstrating his blacksmithing skills, the Paradise Ranch Pack Goats and Mammoth donkeys, a variety of small animals from Hedrick's Exotic Animal Farm in Nickerson, and the Abeldt Family Sheep Farm of Hope showcasing their popular sheep shearing demonstrations in the Dickinson County tent. A few new exhibitors include live reindeer from Fulton Valley Farms of Towanda, the Old Abilene Town Gunfighters recreating a rowdy day in the old west and a group of artists demonstrating painting, sketching, drawing, a pottery wheel and a chance to create your own raku pot on site. The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and

Tourism will return with the popular mobile aquarium. A complete list of exhibitors can be found at the festival [website](#).

The [Kansas Explorers Club](#) tent will instruct people on the basics of exploring the state. Marci Penner will ask Kansas questions on The Stump where visitors will vie for donated prizes.

The festival is a project of the Inman-based [Kansas Sampler Foundation](#) but the Winfield Chamber of Commerce, led by Sarah Werner and supported by the City of Winfield are in charge of local arrangements and preparation of the site. Sarah Werner, local festival director said, "It's been a lot of work and many months in preparation for this huge event and we are on schedule and ready to welcome all of Kansas to Winfield."

WenDee LaPlant, Foundation assistant director said, "Island Park is set to be the perfect backdrop for a festival this large. It's a lovely setting where visitors can enjoy discovering the best that Kansas has to offer including art, scenic drives, specialty shops, attractions, events, and so much more. It's guaranteed that no one will leave this park without being amazed at all that Kansas has to offer."

Festival History

The pre-cursor to the Kansas Sampler Festival was a book-signing party in 1990 for Mil and Marci Penner's book, "Kansas Weekend Guide". The event was held on the Penner Farm near Inman with one tent full of exhibitors. The event was such a success it was given the name, Kansas Sampler Festival. The festival was held for eight years (1990-1997) on the Penner Farm near Inman.

The decision was made to take the festival on the road to expose more people to the exhibitors and purpose of the festival. Two-year hosts, selected through a stringent application process, have been Pratt (1998- 1999), Ottawa (2000-2001), Independence (2002-2003), Newton (2004-2005), Garden City (2006-2007), Concordia (2008-2009), Leavenworth (2010-2011), Liberal (2012-2013) and Wamego (2014-2015).

Earlier this year, the foundation announced that 2017 would be the last year for the festival. A new Kansas Road Festival is now being planned with assistance from communities, tourism region organizations and members of the Kansas Explorers Club. Details about the new festival will be announced in 2017.

For more information go to kansassamplerfestival.com.

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For more information

Contact Sarah Werner, kssamplerfest@gmail.com or call 620.221.2420

Festival website: kansassamplerfestival.com

A complete list of communities, entertainers, historic performers, food vendors, products and cultural/heritage demonstrators can be found at kansassamplerfestival.com.

For high resolution photographs contact [WenDee LaPlant](#), 620.585.2374.