



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**For more information contact:**  
Jamila Wicks  
C: 706-207-7836  
[jamila.wicks@ismsociety.org](mailto:jamila.wicks@ismsociety.org)

## **Oh, Deer! Dickson Mounds Presents Tot Time on October 1**

*Museum offers free outdoor programming for young children*

LEWISTOWN, Ill. – The Illinois State Museum presents "Tot Time: Oh Deer!" on Thursday, October 1, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. outdoors at Dickson Mounds Museum in Lewistown.

Adults and their tots will have fun exploring and learning about Illinois' state animal, the native white-tailed deer. Program participants will learn about how deer live, what they eat, and how vital they are to the ecosystem and human survival. Tots will receive take-home activity bags.

"The fact that the children of Illinois chose the beautiful and graceful white-tailed deer as the state animal 40 years ago is testimony to the historical importance of our largest wild mammal," said Dickson Mounds Director Duane Esarey. "It is also testimony to these wild creatures' exceptional resilience and the vigor of the Illinois environment itself. Until just 20 years before they were voted state animal, few Illinois citizens had ever seen a white-tailed deer living free, since they had been locally extinct for close to 100 years before spreading back across the state in the 1960s."

Dickson Mounds is pleased to continue to make its monthly Tot Time programming available to the community in compliance with Illinois' safety guidelines. As a result, the Museum has modified its programming to occur outdoors with spacious seating, limited the capacity to 40 participants, and requires face coverings for everyone over the age of 2.

Please note that space and supplies are limited. Registration is not required. In the case of inclement weather, the staff at Dickson Mounds will cancel the program.

Canton Chamber of Commerce, Havana National Bank, Jeff and Linda Sisson of Havana, Barbara Jackson of Peoria, Lewistown VFW Post 5001 Auxiliary, Prairie State Bank, Spoon River Electric's Operation Round-Up, and an anonymous donor sponsor the 2020 Tot Time program series.

### **About the Illinois State Museum**

Established in 1877, the Illinois State Museum is a dynamic institution that inspires the exploration of Illinois' past and present to inform and enrich everyday life and promote stewardship of cultural and natural resources. Headquartered in Springfield with branch facilities in Lewistown and Lockport, ISM is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and a proud member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. To learn more, visit [www.illinoisstatemuseum.org](http://www.illinoisstatemuseum.org).

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