

RIVER NEWS

February 2010

 NATIONAL
MISSISSIPPI RIVER MUSEUM
& AQUARIUM

DUBUQUE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

www.rivermuseum.com
563-557-9545

YOU'RE INVITED! TO THE CHILDREN'S AFTER-HOURS EVENT



The National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium invites you to a special Children's After-Hours Event, Friday, February 26, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. This year's event will have a river otter theme and feature "Sippi" the River Otter, the Museum & Aquarium mascot.

Bring the entire family down for a fun-filled evening of activities including games and prizes, live animal demonstrations, Museum & Aquarium Gift Store bargains, and more! Enjoy some complimentary snack food and beverages or purchase a slice of pizza.

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Party admission costs \$5 per adult and \$5 per child 3 years of age and older. Please note that Membership does not apply towards admission to this after-hours event.

TAKE A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM & AQUARIUM



The Museum & Aquarium will open a portion of its usually off-limits areas to the public for a *self-guided* Behind-the-Scenes Tour this Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14.

The tour will give guests special access to the building's lower level including the Historical Society Archives and Library, the Exhibits Department, mechanical operations, plus certain areas of the Animal Husbandry Department. Volunteers and staff members will supervise the tour route and will answer any questions you may have along the way.

The tour will operate from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, February 14, only. There is no extra charge for this self-guided tour, but regular admission fees will apply. So don't miss your chance to get a peek at what goes on behind-the-scenes at the Museum & Aquarium!

YOU “OTTER” KNOW

The North American river otter is one of the most entertaining and well-liked attractions at the Museum & Aquarium. But don't let their soft and cuddly appearance fool you, these mammals have very sharp teeth that they use to eat clams, crayfish, frogs, fish and other small mammals.

River otters can make themselves at home in nearly any inland waterway. They are lively, active animals that enjoy sliding down muddy and snowy riverbanks, bouncing objects on their paws, playing tag and wrestling. These playful activities help river otters learn how to survive and hunt.

Built for swimming, these river otters have a streamlined body, short legs with webbed feet, a tapered tail, small ears and nostrils that close underwater. Their thick fur is waterproof and helps keep them warm, especially during the winter season.



River otters use their senses in a number of different ways. They communicate with each other by whistling, growling, chuckling and screaming as well as with their posture and body signals. Their scent glands, which are located at the base of their tails, produce a very strong, musky odor to mark their territory. River otters also have lots of large whiskers that are extremely sensitive to touch. The whiskers are used extensively when hunting to find their prey in muddy water. Come watch the otters play at the Museum & Aquarium!

FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 10-14

Mating & Dating animal education programs

February 10

Early Dismissal After-School Program,
“Earth Day, Every Day,” 2-4:30 p.m.

February 14

Behind-the-Scenes Tour

February 16

Toddler Tuesday program, 10-11 a.m.

February 26

Children's After-Hours Event, 6-9 p.m.

