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Chicago Sings! Free Family Sing-Along Concert in Millennium Park

**Sunday, July 22 at 3pm *

Part of the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival, Presented by Target

Chicagoans of all ages are invited to join in the fun and sing-along during the first **Chicago Sings!** concert in Millennium Park. Part of the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival, presented by Target, the free concert will take place in the Jay Pritzker Pavilion at 3pm on Sunday July 22.

Acclaimed **Grant Park Chorus Director Christopher Bell** will host the event, which will feature audience participation in all-American classics, folk tunes, traditional hymns, Gospel, Children's favorites and music from around the globe. Chicago's famed Old Town School of Folk Music, currently celebrating its 50th anniversary, is the program partner for the event. Popular Chicago artists who have performed with the Old Town School, including **Robbie Fulks and Family** and **Mariachi Perla de Mexico**, will join the School's vocal staff to lead the sing-along.

"Last year, we started the annual Caroling at Cloud Gate holiday sing-along and it was a huge hit with Chicago families," said Millennium Park Executive Director Helen Doria. "This year, we decided to expand on that idea with the Chicago Sings! concert. We expect it to be every bit as fun and popular as its holiday counterpart."

Currently celebrating its 50th Anniversary, Chicago's not-for-profit **Old Town School of Folk Music** is the largest independent community arts school in the United States. The Old Town School teaches and celebrates music and cultural expressions rooted in the traditions of diverse American and global communities. Each week close to 6,000 students of all ages participate in hundreds of classes and workshops in music, dance, theater and art, and over 160 concerts and performances are produced yearly in the School's concert hall. Upcoming Old Town School 50th Anniversary events scheduled for 2007 include: the 10th Anniversary Chicago Folk & Roots Festival (July 14 & 15); the "World's Largest Music Lesson" in Welles Park (August 7); an Open House and Homecoming Dance (November 3); and to culminate the celebration, a 50th Anniversary Concert at the Auditorium Theatre on December 1, 2007 (the actual date of the 50th Anniversary).

"The Old Town School of Folk Music is thrilled to be partnering with Millennium Park for the Chicago Sings! concert," said Old Town School of Folk Music Director of Education and Programs Kerry Sheehan. "This event embodies the spirit of the Old Town School which is that music is for everyone. Group singing is a major part of the Old Town School's educational philosophy. From Wiggleworms to adult guitar, singing is a constant presence. We are grateful to the Chicago community for participating in our programs over the past 50 years, and honored to have our community partners at Millennium Park join us in celebrating our anniversary!"

Grant Park Chorus Director Christopher Bell was recently praised by the Chicago Tribune as "the city's most inspiring choral director." A native of Belfast and current resident of Scotland, Bell is now in his sixth season with the Grant Park Chorus. He is also Chorusmaster of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) Junior Chorus and of the Belfast Philharmonic Choir. He was largely responsible for the formation of the National Youth Choir of Scotland (NYCoS) in 1996 and has been its Artistic Director ever since. Bell is also Artistic Director of the highly successful Children's Classic Concert series. Before his current posts with the RSNO and NYCoS, Bell directed the TOTAL Aberdeen Youth Choir for six years. He was the first Artistic Director of the Ulster Youth Choir between 1999 and 2004, a group which he developed into a critically acclaimed ensemble. For his work with singers, and particularly his encouragement of young singers in Scotland, Christopher Bell was awarded a Scotsman of the Year 2001 award for Creative Talent.

Chicago Sings! is part of the 2007 Millennium Park Family Fun Festival, presented by Target. The Family Fun Festival features daily kids' performances, hands-on activities and unique artistic and ethnic experiences in the Family Fun Activity Tent and Performance Stage. In addition to the Chicago Sings! concert, the Festival also includes a Ralph's World concert by popular Chicago kids rocker Ralph Covert on the stage of the Pritzker Pavilion at 3pm on Sunday, September 3.

For more information about Chicago Sings! or the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival, please contact 312-742-1168 or visit www.millenniumpark.org.

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