

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ANNOUNCING - THE FIFTH SEASON AT THE LEDUC HISTORIC ESTATE

The LeDuc Historic Estate in Hastings opens for its fifth season on May 27, 2009 and continues tours through November 1, 2009. Perennial favorites Civil War Weekend, Victorian Holidays, and the Hastings Artist Show & Sale are joined by new youth summer camps, a national needlework competition and exhibits, Historic Hastings bus tours, and much more.

Tours are available Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (tours start at 10, 11:30, 1, 2:30 and 4) and on Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (tours start at 1, 2:30 and 4.)

Admission rates remain low and very family-friendly. Student admission is \$3 (ages 6-18) and children ages 5 years and younger are admitted free. Adult rates are only \$6 with a \$1 discount for seniors and military personnel. Members of Dakota County Historical Society always receive free admission and discounts in the museum store. During the month of August, on Sundays, a special tour at 5 p.m. will be offered, especially for guests attending the 7 p.m. free outdoor concerts sponsored by the Hastings Concert Association and hosted by the LeDuc Historic Estate. Regular tour rates apply for this special tour.

## SPECIALTY TOURS

**FREE SCHOOL TOUR PROGRAM** - Experiential learning is alive and well at LeDuc Historic Estate and the Dakota County Historical Society. All Minnesota educators are encouraged to participate in this free program. Guides are happy to work with teachers to develop a tour or visit that meets the needs of any classroom. If a field visit isn't possible, check out our virtual tour at [www.dakotahistory.org/leduc/tour](http://www.dakotahistory.org/leduc/tour), or go to [www.dakotahistory.org/education.asp](http://www.dakotahistory.org/education.asp) for fun classroom activities that illustrate Minnesota history for students of all ages. School tours may be scheduled any time of year by calling 651-437-7055 or by e-mail at [leduc@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:leduc@co.dakota.mn.us). The Free School Tour program is sponsored in part by the Friends of LeDuc of Historic Hastings. To become a sponsor please call Chad Roberts at 651-552-7548.

**VERMILLION FALLS WALKING TOUR** - There is another special opportunity being offered at 10 a.m. on the first Saturday of June, July, August, September and October, The Vermillion Falls Walking Tour. Participants will enjoy an historic walking tour of Hastings' most beautiful park, just blocks from the Estate. They will learn how the Vermillion River and the milling industry shaped Hastings while taking in the natural beauty of the river and falls. Tour rates are

the same as at the Estate or visitors may purchase a discount package for \$10 (for adults) which includes a tour of both the Estate and the walking tour. Reservations are REQUIRED and prospective participants should call 651-437-7055 or e-mail [leduc@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:leduc@co.dakota.mn.us).

NEW - HISTORIC HASTINGS BUS TOURS - NEW this year are bus tours of Historic Hastings provided by the LeDuc Historic Estate team. Tour groups coming by bus are invited to take this tour following or preceding a regular tour of the Estate. For \$85 a step-on guide will lead groups through the history, historic sites, and architecture of the second oldest city in the state for a one-hour tour. If this special tour is done in conjunction with a tour of the Estate, a discounted rate of \$75 will apply. Please call 651-437-7055 or e-mail [leduc@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:leduc@co.dakota.mn.us) to make reservations.

#### PRIVATE EVENTS AND PRIVATE GROUP TOURS

The LeDuc Historic Estate is a perfect venue for your special occasions. Weddings, showers, birthday parties, catered teas and luncheons and many other events will be made all the more memorable at the mansion. Private group tours can be included in your event and are also available as a stand-alone option for groups of 20 or more. Group tours and events are available YEAR-ROUND; please call 651-437-7055 or email [leduc@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:leduc@co.dakota.mn.us) for details and reservations.

#### SELECTED EVENTS - MAY - DECEMBER, 2009

NEW - SUMMER YOUTH DAY CAMPS - For the first time the Society is offering a youth day camp from June 15- 19 for 5th, 6th and 7th grade students. Based on LeDuc family history and 19th century life in Minnesota, students will live days "in the life" of a LeDuc. Campers will wear period clothing, run a late 19th century household, and create crafts common to the 1800s. The Day Camp program is offered through District 200 Community Education so registration needs to be done online. For questions on registration, contact Community Education at 651-480-7000. Space is limited, so make your reservation today!!

"MODERN INTERPRETATIONS OF HISTORIC DESIGNS" - Exhibit opening - Join the Society on June 27 for the opening of the much-anticipated "Modern Interpretations of Historic Designs" exhibit. Guests will see the results of a year-long competition featuring artist's interpretations of patterns designed by Alice LeDuc for the Hastings Needlework Company. Throughout the season, guests will be able to view these beautiful pieces plus a special display of original LeDuc textiles on loan from the Minnesota Historical Society. Special lectures on Hastings Needlework will be offered at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. by Dr. Ann Braaten of NDSU, who has done considerable research on the topic. The lectures are free and open to the public, but reservations are REQUIRED. Please call 651-437-7055 or e-mail [leduc@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:leduc@co.dakota.mn.us).

NEW - AGRICULTURE DAY - To celebrate the LeDuc family and their interest in agriculture, the FIRST Agriculture Day will be held on August 22. General LeDuc, as Commissioner of Agriculture under President Rutherford B. Hayes, sought to produce tea and sugar beets in the United States to bolster the economic landscape of agriculture, especially in the South where farmers were struggling in the aftermath of the Civil War. His attempt to grow tea was less

successful than producing sugar from beets. Visitors will be able to enjoy demonstrations of traditional woodworking, blacksmithing, harvesting, and canning. Farm animals will be present and there will be opportunities to purchase fresh produce. A pickle contest will be held and information on entering this will be available on the website: [www.dakotahistory.org](http://www.dakotahistory.org) in June.

**CIVIL WAR WEEKEND** - Back by popular demand, Civil War Weekend is on September 12 and 13, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Re-enactors will camp on the grounds and will provide demonstrations in marching, music, and firearm displays. Visitors will be able to learn history while observing debates and participate in cooking over an outdoor fire. This is an especially "family friendly" event. Food will be abundant.

**LEDUC/SIMMONS COUNTRY MARKET** - The LeDuc/Simmons Country Market takes place September 26, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is free and open to the public. There will be art, antiques, fine crafts, home baked goods, fruits and vegetables, and plants offered for sale under the trees around the LeDuc Historic Estate.

**HARVEST HAUNTING** - October 24, 5 to 9 p.m. marks Harvest Haunting. There will be candlelight tours of the cellar, storytelling, the making of apple cider, and the making of s'mores. New this year is a scary walk in the woods with story tellers. Ghosts and goblins of all ages are invited to attend (in costume if preferred) this event which is designed for families. This is an exceptional value @ \$5 per person.

**HASTINGS ARTISTS SHOW & SALE** - The LeDuc Historic Estate will again be filled with fine art by local artists November 7-15. The art work consists of almost every artistic media from oil painting to textiles to photography. The show is open and free to the public during regular business hours each day.

**VICTORIAN HOLIDAYS** - Victorian Holidays will be celebrated the first two weekends of December. Come see this spectacular house in all its splendor. It's magic!! A special dinner will be held on December 13 and details will be announced on the Society website: [www.dakotahistory.org](http://www.dakotahistory.org) in October. Shopping in our special museum shop and tours will be available each weekend day, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For More Information - Please call the LeDuc Historic Estate @ 651-437-7055 or check the website: [www.dakotahistory.org](http://www.dakotahistory.org) for more information on tours or special events at this perfectly restored Estate. Keep in mind that the LeDuc House is air conditioned in summer and heated in winter.

**THE LEDUC HISTORIC ESTATE**, now owned by the City of Hastings and managed by Dakota County Historical Society, was given to the State Historical Society on July 16, 1958 by renowned antique dealer, Carroll Simmons, the second owner of the Estate.

**THE LEDUC HISTORIC ESTATE** is located on the east side of Highway 61, south of Highway 55 in Hastings, and on the southeast edge of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. To get to the free Leduc Historic Estate parking lot, turn on to 17th Street East and enter the lot behind the buildings.