

MAKING FAMILY LIFE MORE FUN

Riding The Rails Into American History

(NAPSA)—Railroads have long held a special place in the history of our country. In 1841, in a tribute to our nation's beginnings in Philadelphia, William Henry Harrison took the train from the "City of Brotherly Love" to Washington, D.C., to kick off his inauguration. In 2009, President Barack Obama continued the tradition.

Whether it is railroad history, fond memories or fictional characters of our youth, our fascination with railroads touches both children and adults. For example, one special engine, his friends and their adventures have enchanted Americans for years.

Thomas the Tank Engine, a blue steam engine created by a father for his son nearly 65 years ago, is fostering a love of train history in a new generation of kids and parents. Thomas is teaming up with historic railroads across the country for the Day Out With Thomas 2009: The Hero of the Rails tour, a program that encourages families to embrace the past and preserve their local history.

Tapping into the passion that children and their parents have for railroads, Day Out With Thomas events keep this spirit alive at more than 40 regional railroads across the country. Each railroad station stop has its own distinctive history for participants to explore; many stations have welcomed presidents, dignitaries and celebrities, and led passengers to great destinations.



A popular train from children's literature will pay tribute to America's history—and love of trains—on a nationwide tour.

Presented by HIT Entertainment and sponsored by The LEGO Group, the Day Out With Thomas 2009: The Hero of the Rails events run through December 2009. Rolling out of the station for its 14th consecutive year, the tour is expected to welcome more than 1 million passengers at approximately 300 event days. Each event offers fans the opportunity to take a ride on a 15-ton replica of Thomas the Tank Engine and features a variety of Thomas & Friends-themed entertainment.

This No. 1 blue engine, based on the real trains that traveled the English countryside in the 1940s, is a lens through which children experience and explore the magic of the railroad today.

The Hero of the Rails tour—named for the DVD special starring Thomas and his engine friends in a heroic adventure that tests their bravery, friendship and courage—will also honor local hometown heroes. At every stop, firemen and policemen will be invited as the guest celebrity story readers.

For tickets, please visit www.thomasandfriends.com/dowt. For general Thomas fun, log on to www.thomasandfriends.com.